AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM OF THE RURAL SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT, RWANDA

(A CASE STUDY OF RUHENGERI DISTRICT)

By

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
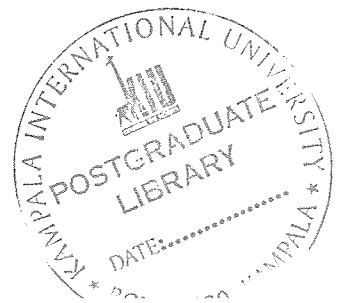
2007

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is a result of my own effort and has never been submitted for any award of a degree in any other university or institution of higher learning.
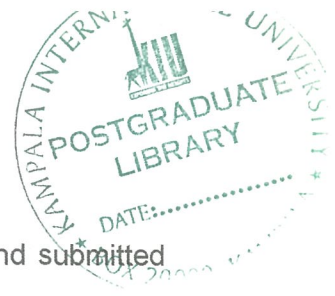
Signed: _____

BELLA R. NTAGUGURA

Date: _____25/10/07_____

APPROVAL

This work has been done under my supervision as a university supervisor, and submitted with my approval.

Signed: _____

Dr. N. O. Sunday

Date: _____

DEDICATION

Dedicated to my father, Mr. Anclete Rukwavu and my late mother, Ms Margaret Mukamugema for the foundation they laid in pursuit of my education. May the deceased's soul rest in eternal peace.
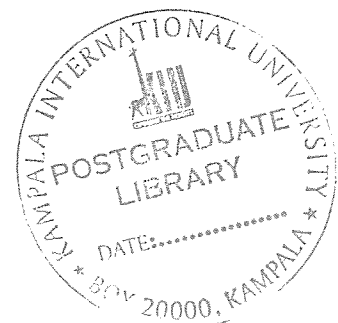
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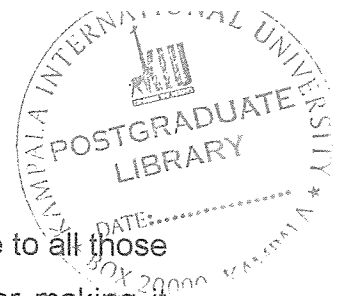
The researcher wishes to acknowledge and express her sincere gratitude to all those individuals and the management of Kampala International University for making it possible for her to carry out this study and complete it successfully.

First and foremost, to my supervisor Dr. N. O. Sunday for being vigilant, his continued guidance and positive criticism throughout the study.

It is also important to appreciate the contribution rendered by her colleagues at KIU in terms of support and advice. May the Lord reward you abundantly.

She further wishes to pay tribute to the respondents of Ruhengeri District in Rwanda, for giving honest responses to the questions that made the study feasible and reliable.

Lastly but not least, she wishes to extend her heartfelt appreciation to her husband and children for their encouragement and support during this relentless struggle to achieve success in her studies and above all, for missing her company for a period of one year while pursuing studies abroad.

Bella R. Ntagugura.

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ACRONYMS

BPA   –   Beneficiaries and Partner agencies

BRSS   –   Baseline Rural Sector Survey

ITO   –   Information Technology Officer

M & E   –   Monitoring and Evaluation

MEC   –   Monitoring and Evaluation Coordination

MED   –   Monitoring and Evaluation Division

MIS   –   Management Information System

NGO   –   Non – government Organization

PEAP   –   Poverty Eradication Action Plan

PSCU   –   Project Support and Coordination Unit

RSSP   –   Rural Sector Support Project of Rwanda
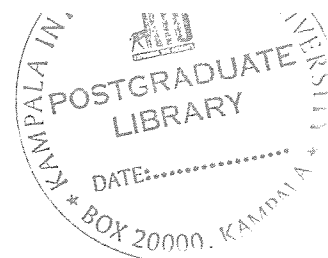
ABSTRACT

The study was carried out on the assessment of the monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP Ruhengeri District, District. The research problem was that there was slackness, faults and deficiencies in its implementation. The research objectives that guided the study included identifying the roles of monitoring and evaluation, establishing the accuracy of information gathered and assessing the relevancy of the Monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP. The methods used were simple random sampling to avoid bias and purposive sampling of key stakeholders to get reliable data. The instruments used were focus group discussion guides, questionnaires and perusal of secondary data.

The monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP has roles which are significant in ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of project activities; the analysis and dissemination of data gathered by RSSP's monitoring and evaluation system is inadequate leading to inaccuracy of information given; the RSSP monitoring and evaluation system is quite relevant given the high motivation among stake holders and the increased productivity level.

The monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP is the epicentre for entrepreneurship and development by the beneficiaries. The staff should be motivated continuously to perform their roles which were found to be significant for project success; the accuracy of information given had gaps to be filled and the relevancy of monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP was enhanced by participatory process of decision making that gave rise to increased investment and savings by the beneficiaries. The monitoring and evaluation technical staff should strengthen their roles which were found to be significant to the project success; accessibility to accurate information by key stakeholders of the project should be improved and to promote relevancy and sustainability; bottom-up planning, teamwork and regular focused feedback should be enhanced.

CHAPTER ONE

ıtroduction

This study is about an assessment of the monitoring and evaluation system in Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP) of Rwanda. It reveals the background of the problem the people of Ruhengeri district were facing, and shows clearly that certain interventions had to be sought to alleviate poverty and improve the livelihood of the people. It further captures what is exactly wrong out there that needed attention, the purpose, and objectives of the study, the questions to be answered, the conceptual framework, the theoretical and geographical scope that were explored. It also justifies why the study was under taken.

.1 Background of the study

The Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP) was designed in the belief that the most effective way to reduce poverty and thus achieve the stability goal was to raise productivity and expand the use of resources the rural poor owned or depended on for their livelihood which is primarily land and labour. Its main purpose was to contribute significantly to the efforts of Rwanda government to achieve the strategic goal of revitalizing the rural economy and thereby increasing rural incomes, reducing poverty and re-enforcing national stability.

Poverty alleviation could best be achieved by raising the productivity of the resources owned by poor people. This was not possible without effective monitoring and evaluation. In the context of Rwanda's agricultural sector, raising labour productivity called for a higher rate of intensification and faster commercialisation of production. Given the high rate of population density and growth, it would be necessary to complement the efforts to raise agricultural labour productivity with emphasis on monitoring and evaluation, hence enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of the project. Monitoring and Evaluation, therefore, became a critical aspect of increasing productivity in this project. It was absolutely necessary so as to ensure that things were done the right way. It was also a means of identifying gaps to be filled and challenges to be addressed before they reached crisis level (An Approach to the Poverty Reduction Action Plan for Rwanda, 2000).

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In this process, monitoring was defined as a continuous activity of checking on progress of the work, so as to identify negative deviations, their causes and take corrective measures. This would ensure all stakeholders got involved at various levels in the monitoring process to ensure ownership and sustainability.

The project would also be evaluated and assessed continuously for its achievements and impact vis-à-vis the predetermined project objectives, (Glickman, 1990). It was a form of feedback to the beneficiaries about project performance, advice on the necessary action to be taken to improve the situation. Owiny (1993), asserts that the aspect of evaluation is important in management. He adds that it is the ability of the manager to fix the value of the resultant performance. He has to look at the plans, the objectives and strategies. He also identifies successes and failures and reasons for them. He further states that unless one evaluates team performance with skill, the people working will miss a critical part of the feedback, which should be coming their way.

Monitoring and evaluation also motivates employees to improve on their performance. The monitoring role of a supervisor includes activities such as inspecting, observing and evaluating to ensure effective functioning of the activity processes in relation to public money and policies. Hence, monitoring and evaluation should be part and parcel of project implementation process. They are the opposite sides of the same coin, which ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of activities.

The project was estimated to cover a period of fourteen years and would be implemented in three main phases. The initial phase of the project would concentrate on strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of the target groups and institutions that would participate in the implementation of project activities. This phase would cover the first four years (2001 to 2004) and included a number of components.

Given the decentralized and participatory mode of implementation that was proposed for the project the program support and co-ordination component was put in place for two main objectives.

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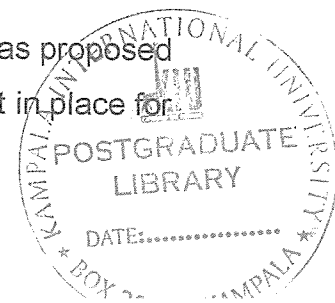
- Ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of project activities.
- Ensure effective co-ordination between the various implementing agencies and beneficiary groups.

The monitoring and evaluation of RSSP was essentially a practical tool for results-oriented management and an input to planning and decision- making at all levels. It was an integral part to the project's design as an appropriate effective and performance based tool tracking the project's progress and providing feedback on program goals as well as ensuring efficient assessment.

The function of monitoring is carried out by staff and other participants through field visits, reviewing service delivery and through management information systems (MIS). Emphasis was on quantitative data but some qualitative data was also gathered. Participatory monitoring and evaluation involved stakeholders at different levels working together to identify problems, collect and analyze information, and generate recommendations. Further more, participatory monitoring and evaluation might be used as a methodology that involves stakeholders at different levels working together to identify problems, collect and analyse information, and generate recommendations. Descriptive, analytical and documentary data were used to observe the "what "and understand the "why" of the project activities. An effective monitoring and evaluation system provided managers with information needed to analyse the current project situation, identify and find solutions, discover trends and patterns, keep in schedule and measure progress towards expected outcomes (The World Bank – Project Appraisal Documents on Proposed Credit, 2001. Report No. 21 048-Rw).

.2. Statement of the problem

The Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP) since its inception in 2001 had put in place a monitoring and evaluation system for control and co-ordination processes. But since then, no assessment had been done to gauge its effectiveness. Lack of assessment was associated with slackness in performance, faults and deficiencies in implementation of the project, loosing track and focussed vision of the expected performance, conflict and duplication of activities, corrupt tendencies and failure to achieve the project objectives.

This concern had been raised for quite some time by the project stake holders who were denied effective services, let alone lack of transparency and accountability. Consequently, the researcher was indebted to find out the roles, accuracy and relevance of the monitoring and evaluation system which was associated with the above factors.

.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to assess the monitoring and evaluation system of the Rural Sector Support Project in Rwanda so as to chart ways of improving its effectiveness and efficiency.

.4.1 Research objectives

.4.2 General Objective

To identify, establish and assess the roles, accuracy and relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation system in providing right and timely information to the management of RSSP.

4.3 Specific objectives

1. To identify the roles of the monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP.
2. To establish the accuracy of information gathered by the monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP.
3. To assess the relevancy of monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP.
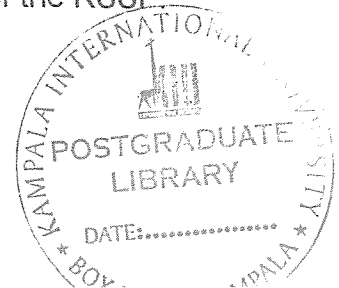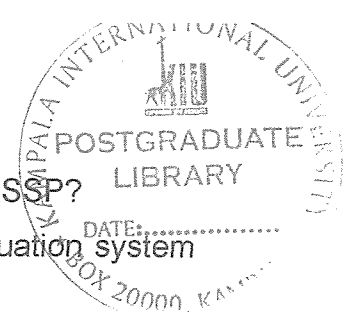
.5 Research questions

1. What are the roles of monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP?
2. How accurate is the data gathered by the monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP?
3. What is the relevancy of the information provided by the monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP?

.6 Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses: -

1. The roles of Monitoring and Evaluation system of RSSP are not effectively identified.
2. The data gathered by the Monitoring and Evaluation system of RSSP is inaccurate.
3. The information provided by the Monitoring and Evaluation system of RSSP is irrelevant.

.7 Scope of the study

The assessment was carried out in the Rural Sector Support Project, focusing on Ruhengeri District.

Three variables were treated which included the roles of monitoring and evaluation system, the accuracy of the data collected by the monitoring and evaluation and the relevancy of the information provided by the monitoring and evaluation system of Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP). The study was limited to revealing the gaps to fill, negative deviations to correct and bottlenecks to address within the project. The project management team were to be probed on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation.

8 Significance of the study

The assessment had to be done then in order to find solutions to existing gaps in relation to the roles, accuracy and relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation of RSSP. A big number of stakeholders believed that lack of assessment undermined the roles, accuracy and relevancy of information captured during monitoring and evaluation of project activities and management of the Rural Sector Support Project

(RSSP). What was known already was that the Project had some achievements, but its impact is what was questionable in terms of project indicators for success.

.9   Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework describes the interface between independent and dependent variables and how they can affect the quality and relevancy of the information gathered and the roles played by the various stakeholders.

Monitoring and evaluation is the independent variable affecting the information gathered which is a dependent variable in which the relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency of information gathered are key issues.

Under the monitoring and evaluation, the following methods, and tools are used that include, questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussion, observation and records perusal. It uses primary, secondary, print and electronic media as sources of data collection. The inputs include finance, materials, manpower, time, and space and community participation. The outputs involve quality of information gathered, decisions taken, sharing of ideas and correction of deviations. However, extraneous variables may affect the process as well as the out come of the project and these have to be controlled.

Conceptual framework

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable	Information Gathering	Extraneous Variables	Dependent Variable
Monitoring and Evaluation	• Goals and Objectives • Indicator formulated • Strategies adopted • Inputs; (money, material, skilled labour) • Outputs	• Adequate resources • Realistic targets • Capacity building • Participatory planning	• Effectiveness • Efficiency • Relevancy • Sustainability • Improved productivity
	Sources of Data • Primary • Secondary • Print of Electronic media	• Use of local experts • Extensive network of field officers • Involvement of key stakeholders • Systematic data collection and analysis • Regular focused feedback	
	Methods used • Questionnaires • Interviews • Focus Group Discussion • Observation • Records perusal	• Community Value systems • Community attitude • Political atmosphere • Project managers leadership style	

Source: Literature Review

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter tries to review literature of scholars who have emerged with various findings in the area of monitoring and evaluation of projects. For that matter related literature is reviewed around areas as noted in the foregoing paragraphs.

2.1 Roles of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

According to Choudhury (1996), monitoring is a process of inducing action for adherence to schedule. It is a kind of action small and routine in nature but can generate a series of one-time actions both small and big, and can end up in bridging the gap between achievement and targets. Monitoring starts with schedule and works for success of the schedule's implementation and effectiveness. There is no monitoring without schedule nor schedule without a monitoring support.

Furthermore, monitoring is collecting, recording and reporting information concerning any and all aspects of project performance that the project manager or other in the organization wishes to know. Monitoring as an activity, should be kept distinct from controlling (which uses the data supplied by monitoring to bring actual performance into approximate congruence with planned performance).

According to the organization of economic cooperation and development, monitoring is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an on going development intervention and with indicators of the extent of progress and achievements of objectives and progress of the use of allocated funds.
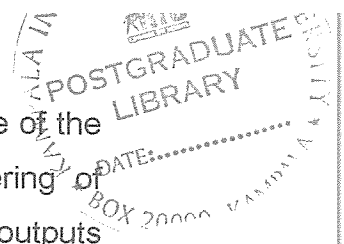
Monitoring in the words of other scholars is the continuous surveillance of the implementation and performance of a project through timely gathering of systematic information on the work schedules, input delivery, targeted outputs and in some cases other variables or assumptions that are required for the project to have the desired effects and impacts.

Sometimes data collection for the determination of effects and impacts may also be carried out at the same time especially to facilitate an ongoing project. Monitoring thus is an integral part of the management information system. It provides management with the following; selected information, the current status of implementation comparison with targets and milestones; gives an early indication of deviations, performance gaps and other problems requiring immediate attention of management; monitoring gives information on where information, program or project is at any given time and overtime relative to respective targets and outputs.

It is emphasized that every one concerned with the project should be sensitive that the monitoring system ought to be constructed so that it addresses every level of management but reports need not be of the same depth or at the same frequency for each level. Lower level personnel have a need for detailed information about individual tasks and the factors affecting such tasks. Report frequency is usually high.

In addition, since monitoring is part of MIS, its design and implementation should be governed by two basic factors; Specific features of the project or program design and work plan. Priority information needs of managers concerning project implementation. It should be an integral part of the reporting and information sub-systems which includes administrative, financial and technical reporting, hence necessary that monitoring system should be given serious attention at design stage and developed in full consultation with program promoters (decision makers).Successful monitoring involves many operations and procedures as well as time and resources. The following are he heck lists of questions that always guide to successful monitoring. How well articulated is the policy or the project to the monitors? How capable are

the policy makers or project designers in developing meaningful guidance as assistance to monitors? How capable are the monitors to develop and carry out new policy or project. Hence, any policy or project to be administered needs formulation procedures for compliance. Monitoring requires a wide variety of actions including the following; issuing policy directive that is clear and consistent. Creating organizational units and assigning personnel with information and authority necessary to administer the policies. Coordinating personnel, resources and expenditures to ensure benefits to the project. monitoring implementation actions of personnel. Monitoring strategy is to provide for necessary controls on staffing, cost and timing. The project structures should have opportunities for capably trained staff. Policy or programme progress must be continuously monitored because changing conditions result in deviation from intended policy designs. Prior analysis of the policy or project is another approach to improving implementation and monitoring processes. Facilities, time schedules and cost estimates are important criteria against which to measure the progress of the policy or programme. The time schedules and cost estimates also help and determine objectively the progress of policy or project designs. The key outputs of monitoring consist of various types of written and oral reports. They usually include periodic reports for example quarterly or adhoc reports especially on particular subjects or implementation period at the nearest of management, internal notes or oral presentation for management, review sessions for example tripartite reviews.

Monitoring reports should not be viewed as a bureaucratic requirement but should be used as a basis for internal review of the project operations both at the management and technical level. The presentation of these reports should be standardized so that the information received can easily be compared to previous reports and with those of other sections of the project or programme, be short and made increasingly shorter as it travels up through the management hierarchy, be timely, easy and interesting to read, highlight exceptional problems and departures from plans and schedules and indicate trends and not just single achievements.

Maintaining an accurate, timely information base concerning the project's products and their associated documentation through project completion, providing information to support status reporting, progress measurement and forecasting, providing update current cost and current schedule information and monitoring implementation of approved changes when and as they occur.

The monitor and control of project work as identified by project management institute include project management plan, work performance information, reported change requests which measure inputs, the project management methodology, project management information system, earned value techniques and expert judgment that measure tools and techniques and recommend corrective actions, preventive actions, forecasts, defect repair and requested changes that measure outputs.

The overseas development administration: A guide for NGOs identifies the existing sources of information as secondary data that include: project records, government statistics, development agencies, NGOs and published literature and explains that gathering further data requires a range of techniques for collecting data in evaluations. These can be qualitative, drawing on group discussions, interviews, oral histories and anecdotal evidence or quantitative using survey questionnaires and cost benefit analysis which can be used in combination. There are interviews and recall methods, open ended group discussions, focus-group discussions, individual interviews, questionnaires, key informants and oral histories and recording information.

The following monitoring methods will be used as recommended by World Bank (2001) evaluation department;

- Management information system that provides regular information on all aspects of project activities and costs and; expected changes.
- Periodic sample surveys that check on project parameters/elements that are critical to achievement of project objectives and occasional in-depth studies.

- The indicators of progress towards the achievement of the program's objectives would document the effectiveness of program activities.

In RSSP, there are two types of indicators. They are those that apply to the entire life of the program; and those that consist of complementary indicators that are added as the program activities are expanded and intensified over its three phases. The first set of indicators would include the change, compared to the baseline, in the average level of household incomes, percentage of population under the poverty line, the average level of crop yields per hectare, and the average returns per labour unit in the project areas. The additional set of indicators would document the progress towards program objectives in each phase. During phase one, the indicators which would document the extent to which the program has succeeded in strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of beneficiary groups and targeted central government services and local administrations would be monitored more closely. At the beginning of phase II, another sub-set of indicators would be added to phase III of the program and would document the success that has been achieved in diversifying productive activities in the rural areas of Rwanda.

Heneman *et. al* (2000) asserts that students resist the idea that project managers do not have immediate access to accurate information on every aspect of the project. But the project managers know that it is not always easy to find out what is going on when working on a project.

Furthermore, records are frequently out of date, incomplete, in error, or "some where else" when needed. The primary concern is to ensure that all parties interested in the project have available, on timely basis, the information needed to exercise effective control over the project. The other uses of monitoring such as auditing, learning from past mistakes or keeping senior management informed, important as they are, must be considered secondary to the control function when constructing the monitoring system. "The key issue, then is to create an information system that gives project managers the information they need to make informed, timely decisions that will keep project performance as close as possible to the project plan".

The researcher supplements that it is important that we know the type of data we want to collect, how and when to collect it. The same authors explain that a large proportion of all data collected take one of the following forms, each of which is suitable for some types of measure. The measures are; frequency counts, raw numbers, subjective numeric ratings, indicators and verbal measures.

It is emphasized that as a project or programme may undergo changes overtime and equally as the manager's information needs change over different phases of implementation, the list of data and information to be collected and its presentation should be kept flexible and be reviewed from time to time.

The term "evaluate" as explained by Samuel (2000) means to set the value of or appraise. Project evaluation appraises the progress and performance or compares to the progress and performance of other similar projects. The evaluation also supports any management decisions required for the project. Therefore, the evaluation must be conducted and presented in a manner and format that assures management that all pertinent data have been considered. The evaluation of a project must have credibility in the eyes of the management group for whom it is performed and also in the eyes of the project team on whom it is performed. Accordingly, the project evaluation must be just as carefully constructed and controlled as the project itself.

The purposes of evaluation as outlined by Samuel (2000) and others are; Identifying problems earlier, clarifying performance, cost and time relationships, improving project performance, locating opportunities for future technological advances, evaluating the quality of project management, reducing costs, speeding the achievement of results , identifying mistakes, remedying them and avoiding them in the future, providing information to the clients and reconfirming the organisation's interest in and commitment to the project. These purposes and many others, relate quite directly to how well the project team is meting the stated project objectives.

Meanwhile, evaluation is seen as a tool for communication, where reports can be prepared and produced with the following qualities, accessibility, accuracy, variety, mutual learning, diplomacy and efficiency. It is also identified as a way of striking compromises and adaptations for diversity of opinions, for logistical reasons, distribution of some sensitive reports in the interest of accuracy, some facts and opinions.

Evaluation is for disseminating views and sharing information where genuine opportunities for a variety of local voices to be heard at regional, national and international levels. It should also be an informative process, which makes plan to all project stakeholders the interpretations of lessons learned on which future policies and strategies will be based .Evaluation and control are said to be, at both, the opposite sides of project selection and planning. The logic of selection dictates the components to be evaluated and the details of planning expose the elements to be controlled. The ability to measure is prerequisite to either. (Cooper et al, 1984)

Owiny (1993) explains that Evaluation has two types: formative Evaluation which is carried out in the course of the program and gives room for correct measures to be affected before it is too late. The second type is summative evaluation which is very useful for the take off of the next program that may be in the Enterprise.

The researcher is convinced that to benefit from past experiences implies that one understands them and understanding them requires evaluation. Project evaluation, however is not limited to after fact analysis. While the project as a whole is evaluated when it has been completed, project evaluation should be conducted at a number of points during the life cycle.

Cooke and Slack (1984), define a project as a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique change or service. It is usually a one time activity with a well defined set of desired end results. The project is complex enough that the sub tasks require careful coordination and control in terms of
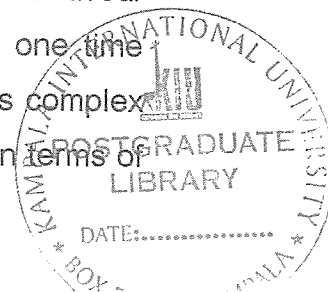
timing, precedence, cost and performance. Like organic entities, projects have life cycles; slow beginning-build up of size-then peak-begin a decline and finally must be terminated.
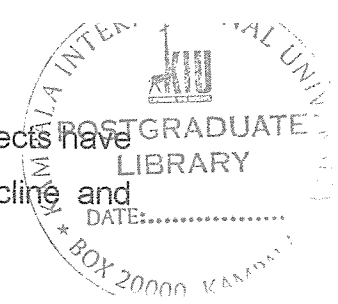
According to Project Management Institute Incorporation (2004), defines a project as temporary means that has a definite beginning and a definite end. The end is reached when the project objectives have been achieved, or it becomes clear that the project objectives will not or cannot be met or the need for the project no longer exists and the project is terminated. The institute clarifies that the monitor and control project work process is concerned with; comparing actual project performance against the project management plan, assessing performance to determine whether any corrective or preventive actions are indicated and then recommending those actions as necessary, analyzing, tracking and monitoring project risks to make sure the risks are identified, their status is reported and that appropriate risk response plans are executed.

Aggarwal (1996) points out some definitions of a project summarising the above views to include the following: a project is a purposeful activity, real life in a natural setting, problem-centred, cooperative, whole-hearted that results in concrete and positive achievement. It provides integrated view of a subject and through it a solution of a problem is found by the people themselves.

The above implies that project success depends on concerted efforts, commitment and control of project resources. This entails effective planning of activities, monitoring and evaluation, according to the researcher.

Stacy (1994) continues to clarify that project managers can benefit from seeing the project and the changing context together, taking a helicopter view and maintaining wide awareness helps to anticipate difficulties and opportunities. Being receptive to structured as well as unstructured information and allowing a high degree of self-control by those close to the action, who know what the information means and can interpret and use it responsibly.

Whereas Choudhury (1996), states that a project must have completion targets fixed for its various system and sub-system or facilities, the researcher believes that various agencies must be committed to these for the start of any monitoring. Unless the participating agencies have a common approach and understanding for implementation of tasks ahead, it may not be possible to attain discipline. In the interest of effective implementation, the monitoring agency should ensure that all follow some sort of standard. Irrespective of the difficulties in achieving the desired standardisation, this step is required to be brought within the purview of monitoring and carried through with as much perfection as possible.

Cadle and Yeates (2004), believe that the project needs to be managed from three perspectives: quality, time and cost constraints. Sometimes the management decision made can involve a trade-off between the above three elements. One might be able to deliver on time if a sacrifice on the performance of the system or guarantee the quality if the costs are allowed to rise. These decisions may be outside the project manager's control and may have to involve some hard bargaining with the project board or the customer or his own senior management before a revised approach can be agreed on.

An increasingly common prescription for those implementing change is to use the activities of monitoring and review to learn lessons for future practice because, if change is not monitored, how can the experience contribute to organizational learning, Doyle *et al* (2000).

The proponents of this view such as Doyle *et.al* (2000) believe that despite the frequent advice to managers to use experience as a source of learning and development, this is evidently difficult to achieve in practice. Project staff has to inevitably cope with uncertainties, unforeseen implications, wide spread ripples, conflicts and tension. These are not deviations from the norm; they are the nature of projects. Therefore, project managers can encourage their teams to learn from them.

2.2 Accuracy of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

Managers, according to Boddy (2002), regularly use formal techniques to help control large and complex projects. These are derived from the familiar planning and control cycle. They monitor events against a project plan, especially those that are relatively predictable and quantifiable. They exercise control by comparing where they are with where they are expected to be, so that they can take corrective action if necessary.

- Are the agreed goals being met?
- Are resources being used effectively?
- Should goals and resources be adjusted?

Project managers continuously monitor events by gathering relevant information on which people can act. The intention is to keep variances acceptably small.

In a related development, Brockner *et. al* (1999) believed that this was an example of project escalation, in which people continue to increase their commitment against all evidence. They ignore the fact that earlier resources have not produced results and that the project is unlikely to achieve the objectives.

It is further stated that technical difficulties require more resources, the scope of the work increases, initial bids or estimates become too low, reporting is poor or untimely, budgeting is inadequate, corrective control is not exercised in time and input price changes occur.

Kesav (1999) states that technical difficulties took longer than planned to solve, initial time estimates were optimistic, task sequences was incorrect, required inputs of material, personnel or equipment were unavailable when needed, necessary proceeding tasks were incomplete, customer generated change orders required remark and governmental regulations were altered. These he called "only a few mechanistic" problems that can occur. All problems have a human element too. For example "humans by action or

inaction set in motion a chain of events that leads to a failure to budget adequately, creates a quality problem, lead the project down a technically difficult path or fails to note a change in government regulations". These have consequences; frustration, pressure, determination, hopelessness, anger and many other emotions arise during the course of a project. They affect the work of the individuals who feel them for better or worse.

On information requirements for go and no go controls, milestones are the key events that serve as a focus for on-going control activity. These milestones are the projects deliverables in the form of process or final output. If the milestones occur on time, on budget and at the planned level of quality, the project manager can take comfort from the fact that things are proceeding properly.

Cadle and Yeates (2004), further assert that there are various techniques available for monitoring quality and the methods must be chosen that are appropriate to the project. The results of project quality control measures should properly document milestone slip charts so as to provide a visual way of illustrating project progress and cost variances that can be calculated to show the current status of the project against its planned targets.

According to Desai (2001), network analysis in project monitoring has the flexibility to be considered for adoption in the cases of particular activities. It is possible to watch movements in minute details, analyse reasons for deviations and revise the target dates, costs or physical components for completion in the most feasible time span. Further more, network analysis can considerably enhance managerial effectiveness in the context of time bound action programmes. Computer based network can handle these problems economically and efficiently on condition that the management is committed on effecting the economies in different areas of activities and events which are closely monitored for initiating corrective action in real time.

Stacy (1994) states that control systems only work if they reflect the task being controlled. To "keep control" the project manager needs to receive and interpret information about progress. This includes hard structured
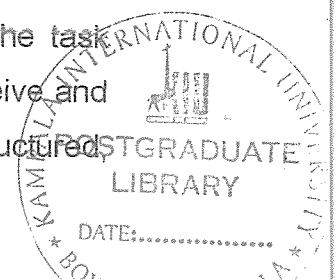
measurable information. For example; how did it perform? has the design been tested?, how much did it cost?, how many branches have been converted? Soft, unstructured, intangible information such as; are staff agreeing with the proposals? how much commitment is there towards overcoming difficulties? are people having doubts about the wisdom of the project, but are not speaking openly?

Further more, he points out the impossibility control practices in volatile conditions. He acknowledges that day-to-day control of a project requires comparison of progress against planned milestones and taking the corrective action. This requires a rational approach to control systems and rule familiar to any project manager. Effective control of activity in the open-ended, unknowable long term requires a different approach. Above all, it depends on the degree of self-control by the people doing the task, and who control each other through a subtle variety of internal processes.

Monitoring and evaluation is a set of planning, information gathering and synthesis, reflection and reporting processes along with the necessary supporting conditions and capacities required for the outputs of monitoring and evaluation to make a valuable contribution in decision making and learning. Key project stakeholders need to develop the different elements of the system together if they are all to use the outputs to improve implementation.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Hand Out (2006) states that monitoring is an integral part of the management information system. It provides management with selected information on the current status of implementation in comparison with targets and mile stones and gives an early indication of deviations, performance gaps and other problems requiring immediate attention of management. It further states that data and information that could be collected on implementation performance are quite numerous and in order to make the monitoring system cost-effective, there are two guides for deciding what data to be collected. One is by assessing the information needs of managers at various levels, what information, in which form, at what level, how often and for what purpose and to which decision and objectively assess

the information that is likely to be needed in terms of the logic of the project design and work plan.

The researcher acknowledges the contribution that monitoring and evaluation can make in ensuring effective project performance, control and order, useful information on project culture, ethical standards and effective utilization of project resources can further enhance the attainment of project goals, as well as motivate staff and other beneficiaries/stakeholders to support the implementation of the project.

Cooper *et al* (1984) states that project monitoring and evaluation is linked to project control of performance, costs and time. Unexpected technical problems arise, insufficient resources are available when needed, insurmountable technical difficulties are present, quality or reliability problems occur, client requires changes in system specifications, inter-functional complications arise and technological break through affect the project. Through monitoring and evaluation, such setbacks can be controlled and effort and skill committed towards accomplishment of desired goals.

According to the report on RSSP No. 21 048-Rw by the World Bank (2001), the Monitoring and Evaluation Division (MED) of RSSP was to be created within the PSCU to take overall responsibilities on the monitoring and evaluation of program activities. The MED was headed by monitoring and evaluation coordination (MEC), and supported by an information technology officer/statistician (ITO). MED would implement a systematic and detailed monitoring and reporting system focusing on both the output and outcome of the project. The system would allow for an effective evaluation of; the effectiveness of the project's delivery mechanisms and procedures, the impact of project activities on the basis of the stated objectives, the baseline data and the input, output and impact indicators as well as performance triggers. The key tasks under the monitoring arrangements would include, besides the regular monitoring of project activities: Updates in year four of the project of the baseline rural sector survey of the farm household and off-farm sectors, and of the beneficiary districts, analysis of the survey data through

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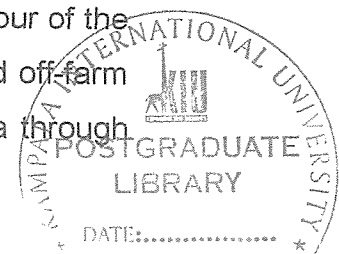
qualified and independent research entities (universities, research centres, consulting firms), and collection of additional information, as necessary, to document the progress status of project activities. Project performance will be carried out by year four through conducting baseline surveys (BRSS).

The first-hand data at sub-project level would be collected from the implementing beneficiaries and partner agencies (BPA) of the sub-projects. The responsibility of implementing BPA in collecting and reporting relevant information would be specified in the agreement signed between the BPA and the PSCU at the outset of sub-project implementation.

The researcher observed that some managers were not effective in ensuring that information system was efficient. This might have created a problem in monitoring and evaluation activities for both the internal and external assessors of Rural Sector Support Project (RSSP). Monitoring and control become more difficult when projects take place in a change linked context and are difficult to plan. Drummond's study of the Taurus project (1996), to computerise many core functions of the London stock exchange, shows these dangers. She concluded that one; amongst several factors in the failure was ineffective project control, which allowed requirements to change continuously throughout the project. Management also ignored repeated warnings about technical risks, as powerful interests pushed for the development to continue.

The researcher suggests that monitoring and evaluation should be underpinned by the motivation factor to inspire subordinates and beneficiaries to increase on productivity. Koontz and Weihrich (1990) also share this view.

They explicitly assert that motivation as a managerial technique is a vital factor in human resource management and can affect the performance of work and the overall efficiency and effectiveness in an organisation.

The Monitoring and Evaluation of the Rural Sector Support Project collected data for decision making, feedback systems on rehabilitation of farmed marshlands and hillsides, how export and commercial agriculture were

promoted and support rendered to Agricultural Services Delivery Systems. How Small Scale Rural infrastructure was developed, how off farm activities in rural areas were developed and whether program support and coordination is rendered as well as stake-holder participation. Monitoring and Evaluation was for developing specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and valid indicators to create conditions that signal success and inform the beneficiaries of the project of the learning opportunities. It was for provision of information for management to assess progress of implementation, take timely decisions to ensure that progress is maintained; and to measure quality and effect of processes and procedures (Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources Report, 2004).

Current situation is analysed, problems are identified, and solutions found, trends and patterns are discovered. Progress is measured against intermediate goals and revises action in order to achieve these goals, formulate key questions and make decisions about human, financial and material resources.

The PEAP (2004) of the ministry of finance, planning and economic development reveals challenges for monitoring and evaluation to include; limited flow of relevant information, to top decision makers, weak monitoring and evaluation coordination arrangements resulting into wasteful duplication and repetition of efforts, MIS operating in isolation, inadequate performance based public management culture in planning and management of public service delivery processes based on long term objectives and gaps in information and under used information.

2.3 The Relevance of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

The highly decentralized implementation mechanism envisaged in the RSSP required a solid system for participatory monitoring and evaluation. The sound monitoring system suggested by Patton (1990) is through systematized data collection and analysis that would provide a significant guide for the program implementation unit. The primary objectives of monitoring the implementation of RSSP were:

- Systematic collection and analysis of project information which would help the implementation unit evaluate the progress vis-à-vis target indicators and enable timely intervention.
- To obtain adequate and balanced knowledge on the progress in the field which would provide a solid foundation for future planning; and
- To achieve efficient and effective use of project resources based on the accurate information on the field.

Koontz and Weihich (1990) observe that decisions which have not evolved from a consultative process may receive little cooperation during implementation.

The researcher in support of the above view recognised that implementation as a way of consummating plans and operationalising activities is difficult without involving all stake holders.

Meanwhile, the World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (2005) indicates that there are rapid appraisal methods which include among others key informal interviews, focus group discussions, community group interviews, direct observations and mini-surveys. It is further stated that participatory methods could be used to provide active involvement in decision making for those with a stake in a project, program or strategy and generate a sense of ownership in the monitoring and evaluation results and recommendations. In this, learning about local conditions and local people's perspectives and priorities to design more responsive and sustainable interventions, identifying problems and trouble shooting them during implementation, evaluating and providing knowledge and skills that are key to empowering poor people.

The researcher accepts that participatory methods are critical in promoting efficiency and effectiveness in project implementation. Issues are critically examined, partnerships established, ownership and sustainability enhanced, local learning, management capacity and skills improved as timely and reliable information for management decision making is provided.

Similarly, Cooper and Makin (1984) found out that participatory decision making provides personal benefits as well as desired organizational outcomes. The beneficiaries participate in making decisions that concern them and their organization as they develop a sense of belonging to that organization. With such a feeling, they work tirelessly to realize tangible results of the project.

In a related development, Nyachu (1998), argues that participatory decision making provides people with a means of identifying their own interests with those of the organization and provides them with an opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization.

The researcher believes that project staff and other stakeholders ought to make an input in what needs to be done so as to improve the organization. Hence, decisions have to be within the interests of the stakeholders, they put their heads together, share experiences and chart away forward for improving performance in monitoring and evaluation.

Luggya-Lwasi (1991) asserts that group decisions encourage staff to centre on what is right rather than who is right. To him personality and vested interest fade in the background.

The researcher observed that RSSP staff and other stakeholders have the capacity to produce good results in monitoring and evaluation information system if motivated to do so. Group decisions motivate workers to produce good results and attain the set goals.

For Heneman *et al* (2000), supported by Mukin's views, individual decision makers face a number of handicaps and the most serious one being "bounded rationality" , that is the limited capacity of the human mind to be aware of and consider all the information relevant to a particular decision.

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For many project staff, participatory monitoring and evaluation is about getting the community involved that is somehow, sometime and somewhere. For most projects monitoring and evaluation is another way of saying let us gather information from local people using some questionnaires and diagramming methods. In some projects for example, local people are only consulted when monitoring and evaluation staff are collecting data and only approached again when problems arise.

The researcher argues that if participation is to lead to sustained efforts and empowerment, then a common understanding and shared decision making are needed. This implies joint monitoring and evaluation as part of good governance. However, participatory monitoring and evaluation is not just a matter of using participatory techniques for information gathering in a conventional monitoring and evaluation setting or of organising a single workshop to identify local indicators. It is about radically rethinking who undertakes and carries out the process and who runs and benefits from the project.

One way of thinking about levels of participatory in monitoring and evaluation was suggested by Feurstein (1992), an evaluation specialist who came up with the following; when you only listen to local opinion and then take the information away to analyse yourself then you are only studying the specimen, when you are only sharing part of the analysing information with some shareholders then you are refusing to share results openly, when you have hired an external participator to guide the participatory monitoring and evaluation then you are locking out expertise and when a project team sits down with target groups, then you can talk about partnership in development. Thus, as a manager or monitoring and evaluation officer, you need to make a budget and staffing decisions about this learning moment for the project.

PEAP (2004) also reveals that when starting with participatory monitoring and evaluation, there are four scenarios that have to be met; be clear about different people's motivations for getting involved in monitoring and evaluation and do not force them together if they do not fit. Simply provide support so

that the different systems work and support each other. Many people think that making monitoring and evaluation participatory means that everyone's information needs can be met. But sometimes this information needs are so different that deciding on separate and complimentary trying to squeeze everything out of an indicator or one set of discussion.

Negotiate and agree on how much participation for whom assessing how much participation for which groups depend largely on the purpose of participatory monitoring and evaluation. Ensure that it is worth while for people to participate and decide what support is needed. Even if project , partner staff and primary shareholders are motivated, there is still need to see something come out of their efforts if they are to keep investing time and energy. Factors influencing people's sustained participation in monitoring and evaluation include; perceived benefits of monitoring and evaluation, relevance of monitoring and evaluation to the priorities of participating groups, flexibility of the monitoring and evaluation process to deal with the diverse and changing information needs, quick and relevant feedback of findings, capacity to act on recommendations that might arise from findings, capabilities, leadership, identity and degree of maturity of those involved including their openness to sharing power, local political history as these influence society's openness to shareholder initiatives, capacity to deal with short term survival needs of participants while pursuing longer term information needs and material support to make monitoring and evaluation possible for example pens, books, printing materials.

Merge participatory monitoring and evaluation and non participatory monitoring and evaluation in the project setting. Not all information needs are shared so any project will be a mix of more and less participatory monitoring and evaluation for example the operational areas will be monitored internally to the project, perhaps with partner organisations, if this involves them. However, assessing the process and impact will always require the opinions of primary stakeholders and hence will inevitably require a participatory approach

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY
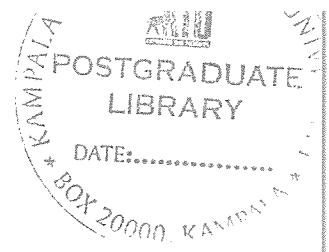
Introduction

This chapter comprises of how the study was conducted, the samples, participants and sample size. It clearly indicates the instruments used, how data was collected and analysed. It also explores the type of data collected and how quality control was ensured during the study proceedings.

3.1 Research design

The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Both primary and secondary data was collected.

3.1.1 A case study design was adopted because of its ability to generate information through in depth study of the case under investigation. This was designed to occur in a specific area and on a particular subject so as to learn the system of RSSP in Ruhengeri District.

3.1.2 Simple Random Sampling was used in selection of the sample. This was because the method eliminated bias and ensured fair selection of subjects. It was used in the selection process. It was done by drawing a kind of lottery with replacement till the required number of respondents was drawn using numbered pieces of paper, representing the number of subjects from whom to choose. 50% of the subjects were selected.

3.1.3 Purposive sampling: one hundred per cent of the subjects were purposively selected. Heterogeneity of subjects was ensured to generate more views to increase reliability of results; women, men, the youth, local leaders and technical staff were selected. The researcher chose all staff of monitoring and evaluation and all technical staff as required for a particular purpose. They were mature, cooperative and reliable.

3.2 Study population

Participants were selected from the RSSP Project management team and community members in Ruhengeri District, all totalling two hundred.

These were selected because they were core stakeholders in the investigation.

3.3 Area of study

The study was carried out on monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP in Ruhengeri District. RSSP Project management team members filled checklists, discussions held with community members and documents perused through.

The Researcher selected Ruhengeri District because of the concerns raised about the performance of the project that was perceived to have deficiencies and gaps to fill, ease of accessibility, bearing in mind the limited resources.

3.4 Sample size

Sampling was done by the use of Kelsley (1986)'s statistical formula below:

$$N = \frac{z^2 P(1-P)}{L^2}$$

Where:

N = refers to the desired sample size

Z = the standard normal deviation usually 1.96 which corresponds to 95% level of confidence.

P = Proportion of the target population estimated to have a particular characteristic (in this case lead farmers present). In the absence of a known estimate, the researcher used P= 0.5 since it gives the most conservative sample size.

$(1 - P)$ = Proportion of population without a characteristic
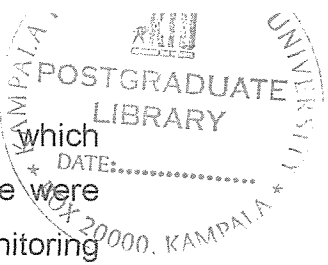
L = Precision of the study (degree of accuracy desired) in this case 6.4%

using substitution, $z^2 = (1.96)^2$; P = 0.5, (1- P) = (1 – 0.5), $L^2 = 0.064^2$

$$h = N = \frac{z^2 P(1-P)}{L^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5),}{0.064^2}$$

$$= \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.064 \times 0.064} = 234.47$$

Therefore, the sample size was approximately 200, a convenient number.

The target population was four hundred; therefore the sample size which represented about fifty per cent was two hundred participants. These were lead farmers, community members and district leaders and staff of monitoring and evaluation technical staff of Ruhengeri district because they had similar characteristics and they all hailed from the same district.

Table 1: The Sample.

N=200

Number	Category of respondents	No. of subjects	Out of	Percentage
1.	Staff of M and E	3	3	100%
2.	Lead farmers	5	10	50%
3.	District leaders	12	24	50%
4.	Technical staff	20	20	100%
5.	Community members	160	343	47%
Total		200	400	

Source: Primary Data

3.5 Data collection instruments and methods

3.5.1 Focus Group Discussion Guide;-

Some of the major themes for discussion are: the roles of key players in the RSSP monitoring and evaluation information collected and the relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation system in Ruhengeri District. This consisted of eight participants each, guided by research assistants. This method was suitable for adults both men and women, since it involved story telling and eliciting views and exchanging ideas with respondents. In a friendly atmosphere created by the researcher, the respondents were able to give honest responses. The researcher achieved this by using Focus Group Discussion Guides.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed comprising of items to be monitored and evaluated. Each item was rated accordingly and was the basis for selecting views related to the item being assessed. The items included on the checklist sought responses on roles, accuracy and relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP in Ruhengeri District. The checklist was found

ideal for the monitoring and evaluation exercise in view of the project performance indicators.

3.5.3 Documentary Analysis;-

This was a secondary method of data collection whereby baseline survey reports, financial reports, program monitoring guide, minutes of meetings held and monitoring and evaluation reports were scrutinized. The records provided information that the primary source would not easily provide and act as evidence of effective performance or lack of it.

3.6   Data analysis

Data collected was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods for purposes of competence, uniformity, accuracy and consistency. That is to say, tables were drawn and interpreted so as to make an opinion on the issue being assessed. For that matter the method of data collection involved sorting out categories of data interpretation by use of a computer.

3.7   Limitations of the study

The study was limited to monitoring and evaluation systems of RSSP in Ruhengeri District. It was likely to be faced by extraneous variables such as bias which was dealt with using probability sampling, strictly observing ethical standards as the researcher dealt with respondents. She also kept in focus of the objectives and questions set earlier to avoid deviation.
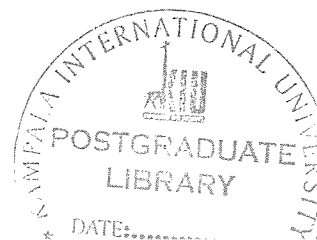
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents findings and indicates how data collected was presented, interpreted and analyzed. The findings of this chapter are consistent with the research questions and objectives. Fortunately, all the intended respondents turned up and the questionnaires given to the respondents were returned. For each analysis and interpretation, the findings are presented as per research questions.

The roles of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

4.1   **What are the roles of monitoring and evaluation system of the RSSP?**

Table 2: Roles of Monitoring and Evaluation system of RSSP

Roles	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Providing feedback to the beneficiaries & vice verse	180	90
Making effective decisions using the data generated	199	99.5
Guiding implementation of project activities	30	15
Identifying errors and taking corrective measures	190	95
The basis for improvement of performance	43	21.5
Enhancing accountability	36	18
Learning and empowerment	198	99

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 1: Roles of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP
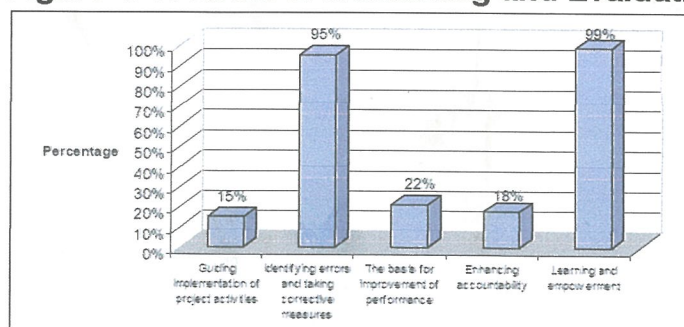
The researcher established that making effective decisions using the data collected, learning and empowerment, identifying errors and taking corrective measures and providing feedback to the beneficiaries and vice versa as major roles performed by monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP.

Other roles which were given low emphasis or support include; monitoring and evaluation being the basis for improvement of performance, emphasizing that RSSP staff were goal directed and industrious; it also enhances accountability stating that RSSP staff were self starters and that monitoring and evaluation guides implementation of project activities, expressing that teamwork, collegiality and commitment to objectives were their guiding principles and not monitoring and evaluation parse.

4.2   What are the reasons for not supporting some roles?

Table 3: Reasons for not supporting some roles

Reasons	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Implementers are self directed and require minimal supervision	196	98.0%
There is timely accountability even without monitoring and evaluation	198	99.0%
There is lack of effective communication	41	20.5%
There is centralized decision making	6	3.0%
RSSP staff are well trained	190	95.0%
There is effective and efficient implementation of activities even with inadequate monitoring and evaluation	197	98.5%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 2: Reasons for not supporting some roles
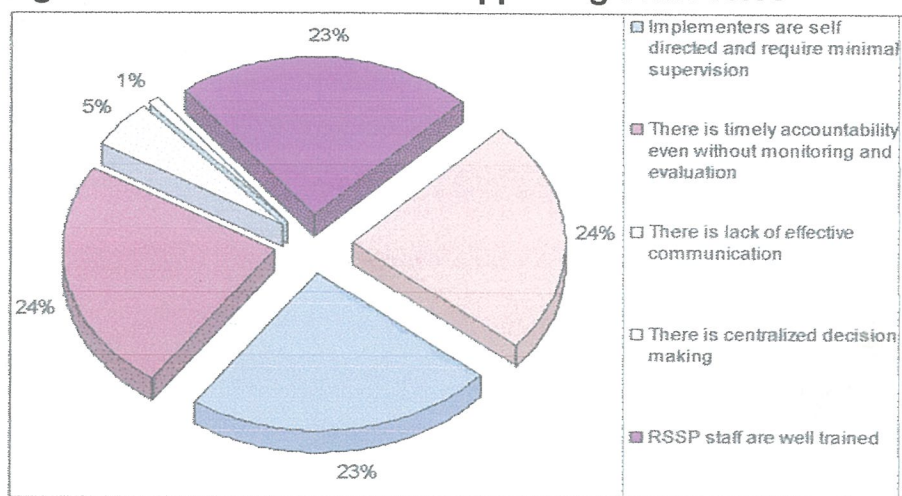
The researcher established that there was timely accountability even without monitoring and evaluation. There was effective and efficient implementation of activities even with inadequate monitoring and evaluation; implementers were self-directed and required minimal supervision and RSSP staff was well trained.
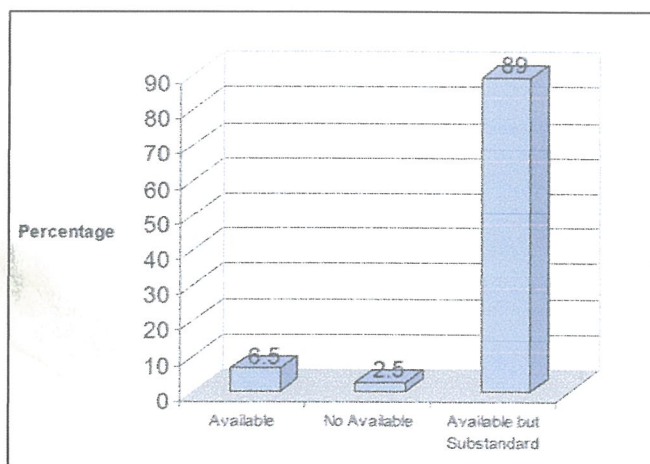
4.3   Availability of baseline rural sector survey.

Table 4: Showing availability of Baseline Rural Sector Survey report.

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Available	13	6.5
Not Available	5	2.5
Available but Substandard	178	89

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 3: Bar graph representing information on Baseline Rural Sector Survey report.

As per the information given above, thirteen respondents accepted that the baseline rural sector survey report was available, representing 6.5% of the total number of respondents, one hundred eighty respondents supported that the baseline rural sector survey report was available but substandard, representing 89% of the total number and only seven respondents said the report was not available, representing 2.5% of the total number of respondents. It is quite evident that the baseline rural sector survey report was available but not up to standard.
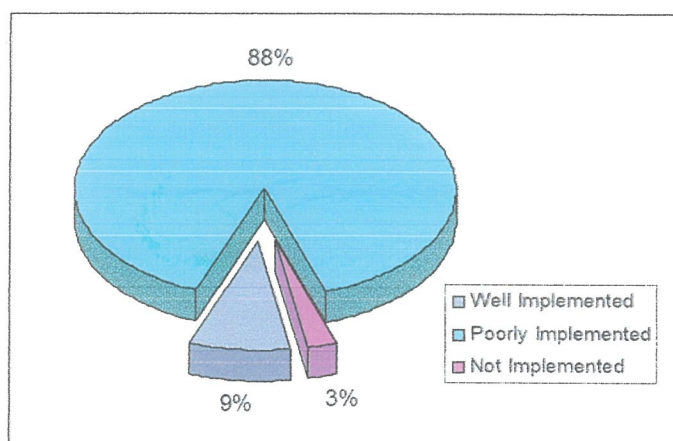
4.4 Was the Baseline Indicator Database 2001 Implemented?

Table 5: Baseline Indicator Database 2001 Implementation

Item	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Well implemented	18	9
Poorly implemented	176	88
Not implemented	6	3

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4.4: Pie chart showing the implementation of the Baseline Indicator Database 2001

It is implied that the baseline indicator data base of 2001 was poorly implemented and thus the researcher is skeptical about the existing monitoring and evaluation system now in use at Ruhengeri District.

4.5 Table 6: Availability of the program monitoring guide.

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Available and efficient	160	80%
Available but sub standard	39	19.5%
Not available	1	0.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

As revealed above, 80% accepted that the program monitoring guide was available. Meanwhile, those who said the guide was available but was sub standard were 19.5% of the total and only 0.5% reported that the guide was

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not available. It is evident that the monitoring guideline was available and efficiently used.
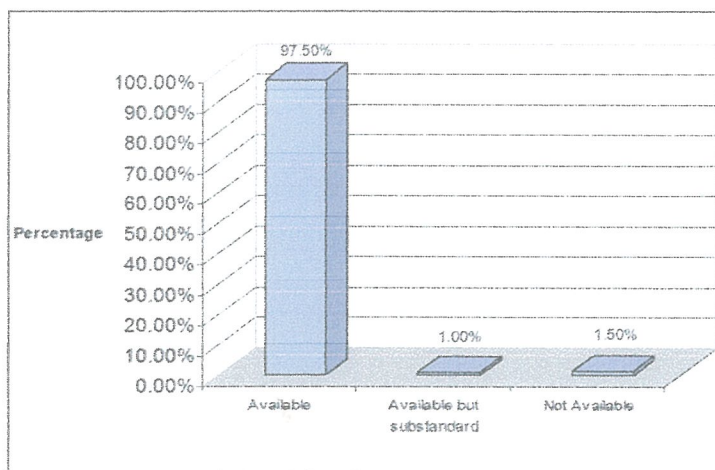
4.6 Is the impact evaluation guide available?

Table 7: Representing availability of the impact evaluation guide.

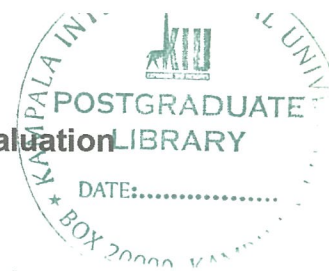| Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Available	195	97.50%
Available but substandard	2	1.00%
Not Available	3	1.50%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 5: Bar graph representing availability of the impact evaluation guides.

The information given above reveals that one hundred seventy five respondents agreed that the impact evaluation guides were available, representing 97.5% of the total number; two respondents revealed that the guides were available but were substandard. This represents 1% of the total number of respondents. Meanwhile, those who denied that the impact evaluation guides were available were twenty three in number, representing 1.5% of the total number of respondents. It is hence, almost manifest that the impact evaluation guides were available.

The accuracy of information gathered by Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

4.7 What methods are used for collection of monitoring and evaluation data?

Table 8: Methods used in Data Collection

Methods used	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Interview guides	160	80.0%
Monitoring guides	130	65.0%
Check lists	89	44.5%
Impact evaluation guide	53	26.5%
Records perusal	120	60.0%
questionnaires	173	86.5%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 6: Bar graph showing Methods used in Data Collection
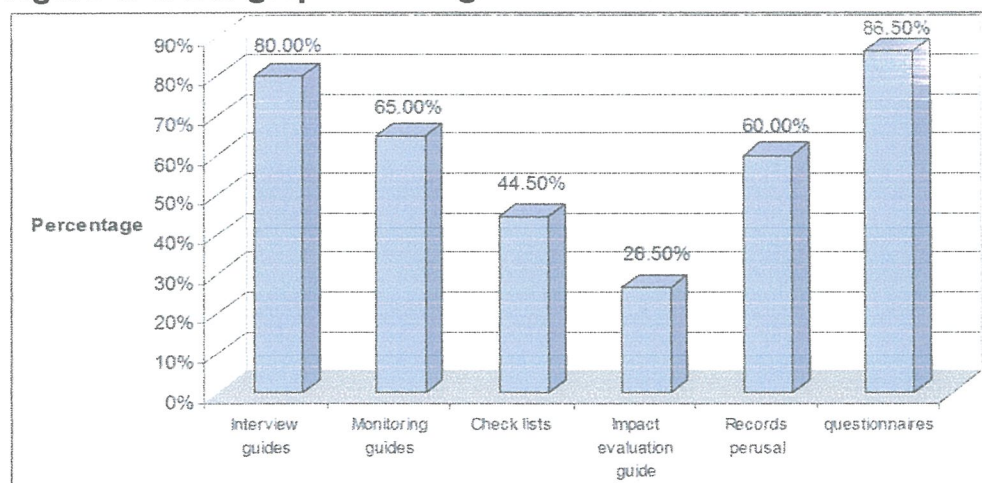

As indicated above, 80% of the respondents supported that they used interview guides, 65% used monitoring guides, 44.5% of the respondents accepted that check lists were being used, 26.5% supported impact evaluation guides, 60% were for records perusal and 86.5% respondents for questionnaires. In the analysis, questionnaires seem to be outstanding as data collection instruments.

4.8 **Table 9: Showing how timely Monitoring and Evaluation Reports are submitted to the relevant authorities**

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Timely	3	1.5
Timely	165	82.5
Untimely	32	16

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 7: Pie chart representing submission of timely monitoring and evaluation reports to relevant authorities.
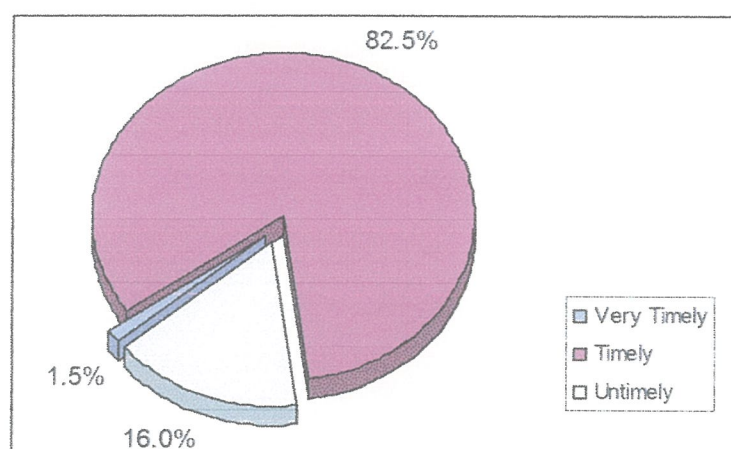
As revealed above, thirty two respondents accepted that very timely monitoring and evaluation reports would be submitted to relevant authorities representing one hundred sixty five of the total number of respondents, whereas one hundred sixty five respondents agreed that timely reports would be submitted represented by 82.5% of the total number. Those who said reports were untimely submitted were only three, representing 1.5% of the total number of respondents.

4.9 **Table 10: Showing how the monitoring and evaluation information was being processed.**

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Using a computer	180	90
Using a type writer	2	1
Manually	17	8.5
I don't know	1	0.5

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 8: Bar graph showing how the monitoring and evaluation information was being processed.
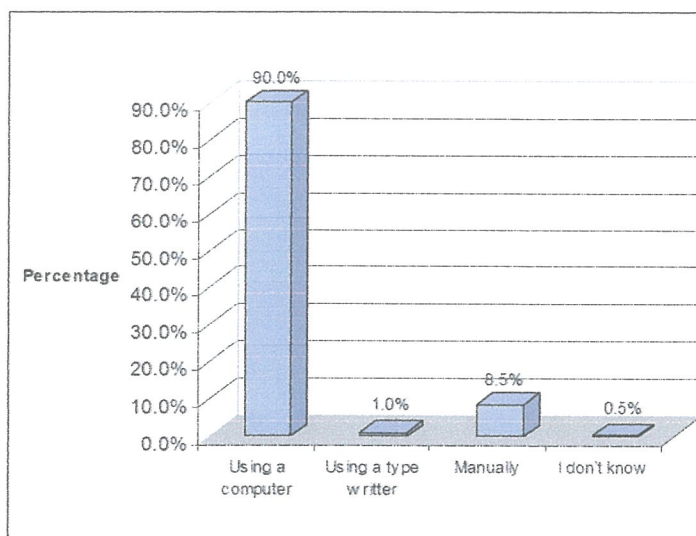
As revealed by the information on figure 4.8 above, 90% of the respondents accepted that the computer was being used in processing monitoring and evaluation information, meanwhile, only 1% of the respondents agreed that typewriters were being used for information processing. However, 8.5% respondents accepted that monitoring and evaluation information would be processed manually and only 0.5% of the respondents said they did not know how monitoring and evaluation information was being processed.

It is evident that computers were being used to process monitoring and evaluation information. However, manual work would also be used in developing drafts and formulating plans. Though outdated, typewriters are still

being used, it is expressed highly that this affects the quality and accuracy of information processed.

4.10 How is information disseminated for decision making purposes?

Table 11: Means of disseminating the monitoring and evaluation information for decision making purposes

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Radio/TV	30	15%
Writing reports	110	55%
Oral Presentation	20	10%
By E-mail	33	16.5%
Newspapers	07	3.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 9: Means of disseminating the monitoring and evaluation information for decision making purposes
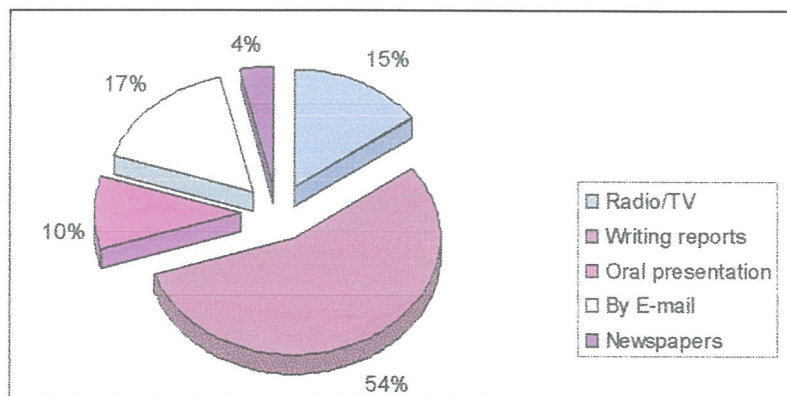
It is implied that written reports were prominently used to provide information and feedback to the concerned authorities and stakeholders. This may act as evidence for accuracy, accountability and responsibility for actions and reference as secondary source of data.

Further more, the researcher perused through major documents/records at the RSSP headquarters and established that: monitoring and evaluation reports, work plans, minutes of meetings, impact survey review reports, programme monitoring guides, financial reports and baseline survey review

reports were all present. Asked about the accuracy of the information given the technical staff confirmed that the information given was accurate though some of the information was scanty. This was confirmed by some of the community members during a discussion on issues related to roles, accuracy and relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP.
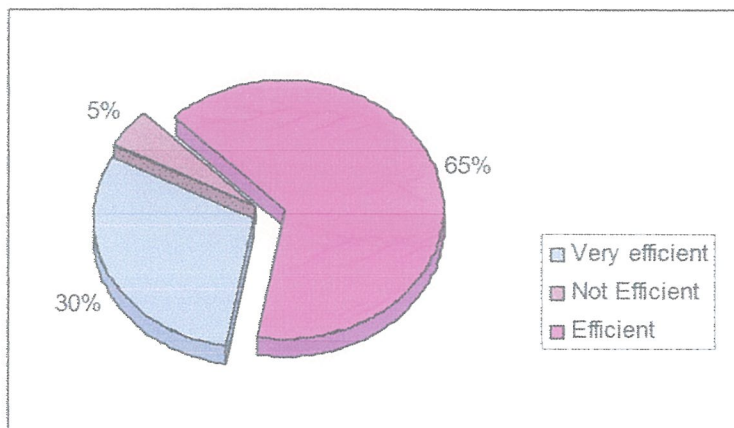
4.11 How is the quality of monitoring and evaluation information of RSSP?

Table 12: Table showing the quality of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very efficient	60	30%
Not Efficient	10	5%
Efficient	130	65%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 10: Pie Chart showing the quality of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP

As per the information given on figure 4.10 above, 30% of the respondents accepted that the quality of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP is very efficient. Meanwhile, 65% of the respondents reported that the quality of monitoring and evaluation system was efficient and only 5% reported that it was not efficient. This may imply that the quality of monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP was efficient as reported by most of the respondents.
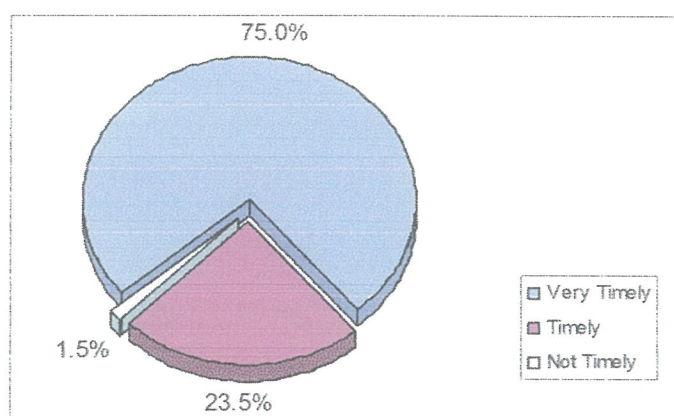
4.12 How timely is the financial reporting framework?

Table 13: Timeliness of the project financial reporting framework of RSSP

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Timely	150	75%
Timely	47	23.5%
Not Timely	03	1.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 11: Timeliness of the project financial reporting framework of RSSP

Out of those two hundred respondents, as indicated above, 75% agreed that the project and financial reporting framework of RSSP was very timely. Those who said that the framework was timely were 23.5% of the total number. Meanwhile, only 1.5% of the total number of respondents said the framework was not timely. On the basis of the information revealed above, the respondents confirmed that the project and financial reporting framework of RSSP was very timely, as this was supported by the biggest number of respondents.

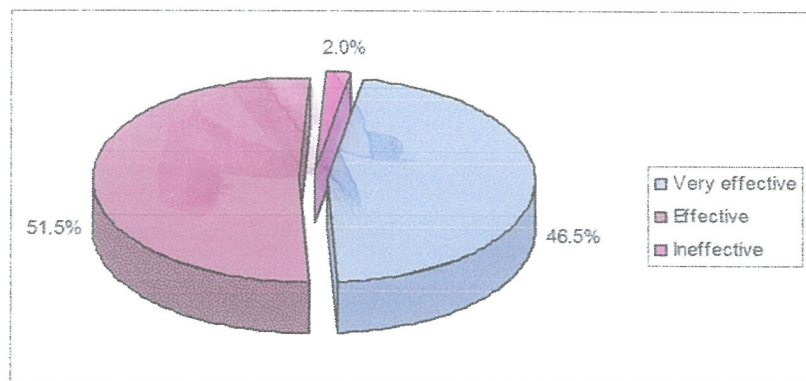**4.13   How effective are activities of stakeholders coordinated?**

Table 14: Effectiveness of the coordination of activities of stakeholders in RSSP

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very effective	93	46.5%
Effective	103	51.5%
Ineffective	04	2%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 12: Effectiveness of the coordination of activities of stakeholders in RSSP

This implies that the largest number of respondents believe that the coordination of activities of stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation of RSSP was effective.

**4.14   To what extent are the beneficiaries involved in the implementation of the activities of RSSP?**

Table 15: Showing involvement of the beneficiaries in implementation of RSSP activities.

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Highly Involved	40	20%
Involved	158	79.00%
Not involved	2	1.00%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 13: Bar graph showing involvement of the beneficiaries in implementation of RSSP activities.
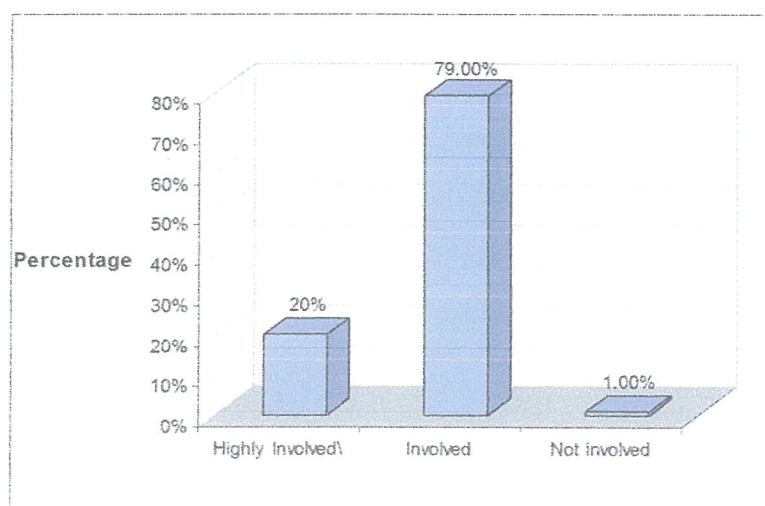
It is implied that the beneficiaries are involved in the implementation of activities of RSSP. Through animated discussions, the researcher also established that many projects had been established such as 'Dukunda Amahoro' dealing in maize and sweet potatoes, 'Tuzigamirabana' in maize and potatoes, 'Dukole' in animal husbandry and 'Turwanye' for agricultural produce. According to the researcher, the various projects were viable in terms of income generation, productivity and support to the education of their children and the projects were being manned efficiently.

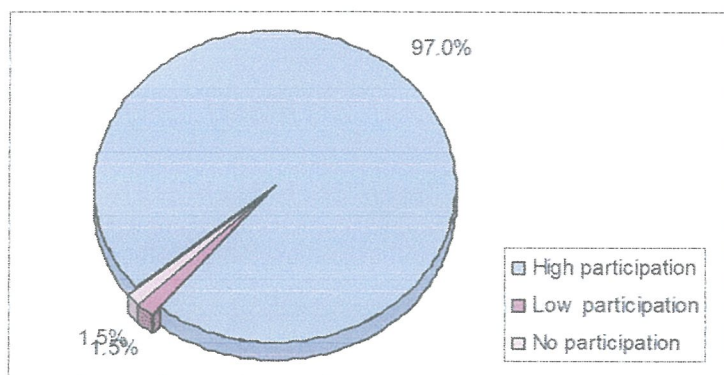**4.15 What is the level of participation of various stakeholders in decision making?**

Table 16: Participation of the various stakeholders in decision making

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
High participation	194	97%
Low participation	3	1.5%
No participation	3	1.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 14: Participation of the various stakeholders in decision making

It is evident that there was high participation of the various stakeholders in the decision making process at RSSP. This may be associated with the high involvement of the beneficiaries reported above because they feel affirmed/ empowered to belong there and implement decisions they have themselves participated in formulating them.

4.16 What is the level of output of activities under monitoring and evaluation of RSSP?

Table 17: Representing output level of activities under monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP

Response	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very High	32	16
High	165	82.5
Low	3	1.5

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 15: Pie chart representing output level of activities under monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP.
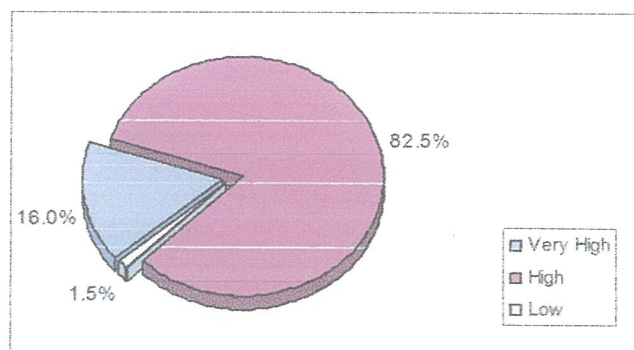
It is implied from the output level of activities under monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP was high as confirmed by the biggest number of respondents. This was also confirmed by discussions held among community members about the output level and whether their returns were superb. Though their commitment was manifest and apparently not tagged to monitoring and evaluation as they revealed, the monitoring and evaluation system seems to have greatly spiced their activities as a motivator and reminder of project goals, missions and objectives.
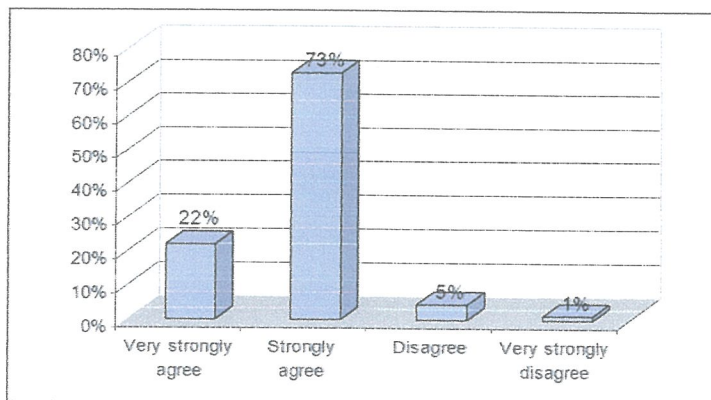
4.17 Is RSSP the right project for the people?

Table 18: Whether RSSP is the right project for the people

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very strongly agree	44	22%
Strongly agree	145	72.5%
Disagree	9	4.5%
Very strongly disagree	2	1.0%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 16: Bar Graph showing whether RSSP is the right project for the people

This is attributed to the wide consultations; involvement of beneficiaries in charting their destiny and high output level reported the study findings. It is therefore, relevant.

4.18 What are some of the benefits derived from monitoring and evaluation of RSSP?

Table 19: Benefits of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP

Benefits	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Increased productivity	70	35%
Attainment of set objectives of the project	162	81%
Motivation of staff and beneficiaries	130	65%
Increased access to information	80	40%
Reduced poverty	184	92%
Increased investment	182	91%
Increased access to credit schemes	25	12.5%
Market driven projects	35	17.5%
Capital accumulation	9	4.5%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 17: Bar graph showing Benefits of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP
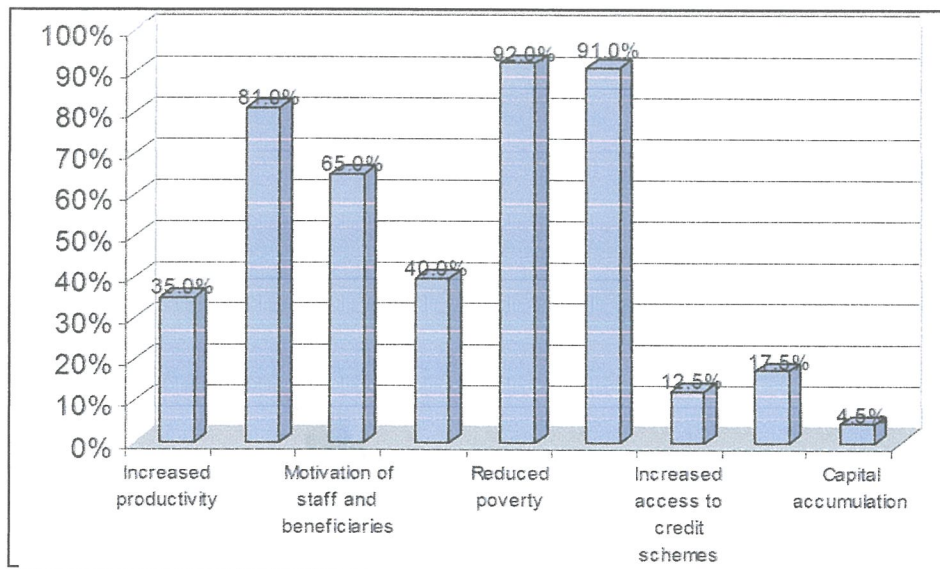
As per the information given above, reduced poverty, attainment of set objectives of the project, increased investment, motivation of staff and beneficiaries and increased access to information seem to be the major benefits derived from the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP. Increased productivity, market driven projects, capital accumulation, increased access to credit scheme were least supported. This may indicate that above issues appear as gaps that need to be filled because it has a few beneficiaries or little effect.

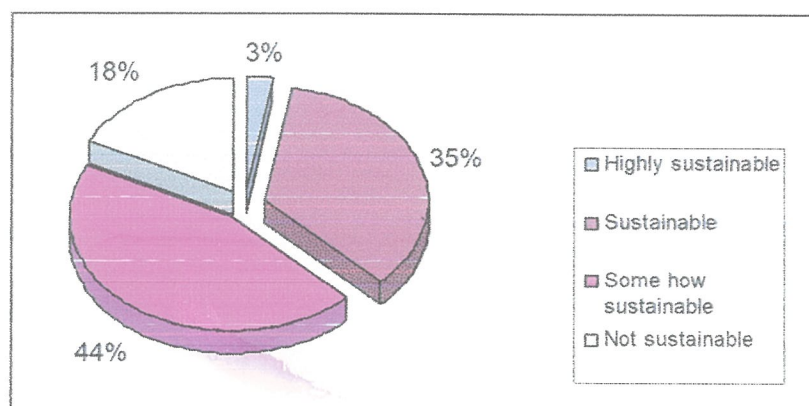## 4.19 How sustainable is the monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP?

Table 12: Sustainability of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP

N=200

Responses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Highly sustainable	5	2.5%
Sustainable	70	35%
Some how sustainable	90	45%
Not sustainable	35	17.5%
Total	200	100%

Source: Primary Data

Figure 4. 18: Pie Chart showing Sustainability of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP

This indicates that the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP is somehow sustainable. This implies that the information system is rather deficient and the feedback system is inadequate. This was supplemented by the low support given to the forth benefit related to "increased access to information" and receiving of feedback on table 19.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
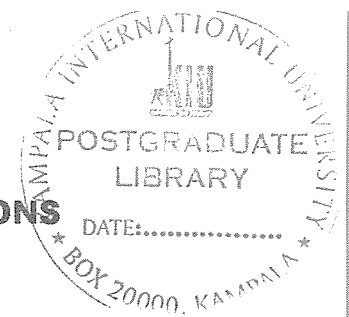
Introduction

This chapter discusses and interprets the results presented in chapter four relating to the views of other scholars. The researcher also supplements them with her personal views, she draws conclusions based on the discussion of the findings of the study and recommendations have been made arising from the conclusions reached and the areas for further studies have been made arising from the entire study.

5.1   Discussion

The findings from the study revealed that making of effective decisions, using the data collected, learning and empowerment, identifying errors and taking corrective measures and providing feedback to the beneficiaries are major roles of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP. These are commensurate with the argument advanced by the researcher in the background about the need for identifying the gaps to be filled and challenges to be addressed before they reach crisis level.

Glickman (1990) shares the above views as advanced in the background and literature review by Choudhury (1996). Furthermore, the findings are in line with Cadles and Yeates (2004)'s ideas concerning quality, time and cost constraints. He explicitly indicates that decisions may be outside the projects manager's control and may have to involve some hard bargaining with the project board or the customer. Hence, the researcher's assumptions and views seem to hold, Doyle *et al* (1998) also confirms the above assertions when he explains the role of managers as giving frequent advice and to use experience as a source of learning and development. He emphasizes that the project staff ought to cope with uncertainties, unforeseen implications, wide spread ripples, conflicts and tension.

The RSSP staff being well trained was playing their roles as expected of them, through timely accountability, effective and efficient implementation of activities. These suggest that formative and summative evaluation are effectively done that give room for corrective measures to be effected before it is too late and to allow the next program to take off. This is explained by Owiny (1993) and supported by the researcher in line with the findings. The roles of the RSSP however, are not without short comings. This view is also shared by Aggarwal (1996) and PEAP (2004).

Findings further reveal that the baseline rural sector support reports were available but sub standard, programme monitoring guide and impact evaluation guides are available and efficiently used, but the baseline indicator base was poorly implemented.

Stacy (1994) accepts that the control systems only work if they reflect the task being controlled. He expresses that to "keep control" the project manager needs to receive and interpret information about progress and points out the impossibility of control practices in volatile conditions. It is further revealed by the study findings that questionnaires, interview guides, monitoring guides, records perusal, checklists and impact evaluation guides were being used, evaluation reports were timely and computers were being used in processing monitoring and evaluation information and providing the feed back to the concerned authorities. According to the researcher, these were accurate methods of data collection.

The above finding is supported by Cadle and Yeates (2004) who assert that there are various techniques available for monitoring quality and the methods that must be chosen that are appropriate to the project. Desai (2001) also is in agreement with the above assertion, in his network analysis in project monitoring, considering flexibility as a variable to adopt in the cases of particular activities. The researcher accepts that analyzing reasons for deviations and revising the target dates, costs or physical components for completion in the most feasible time span is important in making projects achieve reasonable and necessary success. Computer net working as

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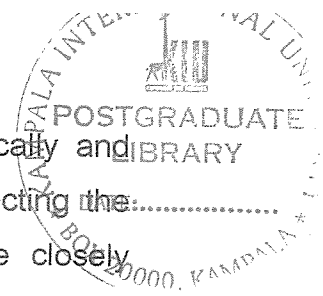
advocated by Desai (2001) can handle these problems economically and efficiently on condition that the management is committed on effecting the economies in different areas of activities and events which are closely monitored for initiating corrective action in real time. The back ground of the study and literature seem to confirm that the findings are consistently pertinent.

The quality of the monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP is efficient, project and financial reporting framework very timely, coordination of activities effective and beneficiaries participate and are involved in planning and implementation of activities and self help projects for poverty reduction through high output level. The above finding seems to be in conformity to participative monitoring and evaluation as advocated by Koontz and Weihrich (1990) who observe that decisions which have not evolved from a consultative process may receive little cooperation during implementation. The researcher also agrees that involving stakeholders in decision making builds confidence, trust and interest in implementing decisions they have themselves formulated.

As revealed in the background, it is almost confirmed that monitoring and evaluation are opposite sides of the coin and are part and parcel of project implementation process. Boddy (2002) confirms that the planning and control cycle helps in monitoring events against a project plan, especially those that are relatively predictable and quantifiable.

According to the researcher, the essence is to meet the agreed goals, effectively utilize the scarce resources and make the necessary adjustments in the goals set and resources identified. This is when the gap between what is real and what is expected can be bridged.

On relevancy of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP, the findings reveal that the RSSP is relevant, the right project for the people, though its information system is still deficient and its feed back system inadequate. Its strength is attributed to the wide consultations and bottom up planning that keeps them inspired, motivated and involved.

Boddy (2002) is in agreement with the above finding when he explains that project managers continuously monitor events by gathering relevant information on which people can act. The intention is to keep variances between the actual and ideal acceptably low.

This view is shared by Brockner *et al* (1999) who remarks that project escalation could occur in which people continue to increase their commitment against all evidence and ignore the fact that earlier resources have not produced results and that the project is unlikely to achieve the objectives. However, the findings indicate the high desire of achieving the set objectives.

This is commensurate with Owiny (1993)'s assertion that motivation is a managerial technique vital in human resource management and can affect the performance of work and the overall efficiency and effectiveness in an organization.

As revealed by Aggarwal (1996) and supported by the researcher, project success depends on concerted efforts, commitment and control of project resources which entail effective planning of activities, monitoring and evaluation.

It is further revealed by the study findings that there are benefits that hail from the participatory process of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP. These benefits include poverty reduction, attainment of set objectives, increased investment, motivation of staff and beneficiaries and increased access to monitoring and evaluation information. This is in line with Casley and Kumar (1998).
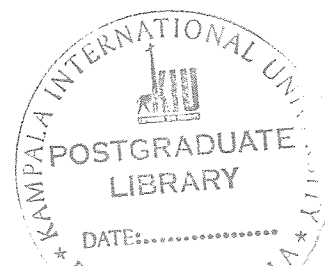
5.2   Conclusions

In view of the findings above, the researcher concludes as follows,

The monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP has roles which are significant in ensuring that there is efficiency and effectiveness in implementation of activities in Ruhengeri District of the Republic of Rwanda. However, the issue of accessing information has gaps to be filled and deficiencies to be addressed; in as much as the stakeholders strive to fulfil their obligations.

It should be reiterated that the RSSP Staff play their roles as expected and as manifested by prompt accountability, through effective and efficient implementation of activities, being self directed and having trained staff. This suggests that they are motivated by the consultative process of decision making.

The baseline rural sector support reports though available were not adequate in information giving to the various stakeholders. However, the programmes are available and efficiently used and the baseline indicator base that was poorly implemented was assumed to undermine the accuracy of the information given.

The methods used for information collection have a high degree of accuracy though time consuming. Primary sources of data collection may be free from distortion and secondary sources of information may provide evidence that one could have missed if for example, records were not available.

The quality of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP is efficient. That is, project and financial reporting framework is very timely, coordination of activities effective and participatory in planning as well as implementation of activities. This has precipitated establishment of self help projects for increased output level and poverty alleviation.

There is the need to strengthen the RSSP information system so as to make the project more relevant, efficient and sustainable. This is to motivate the
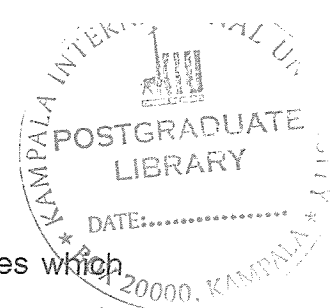
people involved to work for the project and attain job satisfaction. The RSSP is the right project for the people, as they seem inspired, motivated and involved. The benefits that accrue from the participatory process of monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP are the increased investment, savings, and motivation to help in poverty alleviation.

5.3   Recommendations

Introduction

RSSP of Ruhengeri was designed apparently with brilliant intentions that are focused towards achieving the desired objectives. However, in view of the conclusions reached, the researcher wishes to make some recommendations geared towards increased efficiency and effectiveness in monitoring and evaluation information processing and dissemination for the benefit of the people of Ruhengeri and Rwanda at large.

5.3.1 The roles of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

Accessibility to information should be improved by the RSSP. Information is relevant to the planning process so that informed and timely decisions can be made for the benefit of the organization. This can only be feasible if the monitoring and evaluation system is efficiently done and feed back is given to the right people. Other roles should not be neglected as monitoring and evaluation is believed to be the bench mark for organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

There is the need to motivate the staff to continue performing their roles as expected. The consultative process of decision making should be supplemented by more monetary and non monetary incentives to boost the monitoring and evaluation information system, enhance accountability, implementation of activities, self direction and skill development through training. Ruhengeri district should have a deliberate plan to effectively collect, process, store and retrieve monitoring and evaluation information as per the need without distortion. The information might be of high value in correcting errors that may increase the gap between the present situation and the ideal situation and also help decision makers to make correct decisions. This would
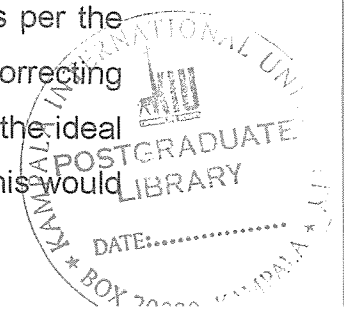
not only build confidence among the beneficiaries of decision making but also enhance implementation of the decisions that have evolved from a consultative process.

5.3.2 The accuracy of information gathered by the Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

The Ruhengeri district is monitoring and evaluation reporting system of RSSP should be strengthened by the technical staff, who by virtue of being knowledgeable and skilled have a formidable but significant task of building a data base that can be reckoned with by other stakeholders. More support is required in the area of implementation of the baseline indicator base. Skills are inadequate unless they are put into practice.

Since the methods of doing things and in particular information gathering influence the degree of accuracy of the information gathered or the results of the activity. Effort should be committed to collect, analyze and provide accurate information from more reliable sources. Correct information will enhance correct actions geared towards the attainment of the designated goals.

More monitoring and evaluation information is required to help the RSSP members come up with market driven, community owned, consumer based and cost effective and sustainable projects so as to increase productivity and ably alleviate poverty. The current endeavours are healthy, necessary and are encouraged. This requires concerted efforts so that the beneficiaries may learn from each other, share information about business opportunities and how they can benefit from their project ventures. The RSSP seems to be the epi-centre for entrepreneurship and development through guidance, encouragement and support that the monitoring and evaluation system provides.

5.3.3 The relevancy of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

In order to promote relevancy, efficiency and sustainability of the project, monitoring and evaluation information and feedback system, consultation, bottom up planning, teamwork and commitment should be enhanced by all

stake holders of the RSSP monitoring and evaluation information system. Government as the overseer of implementation processes of relevant projects should ensure that those who participate in such projects are consistently inspired/focused, motivated and involved. Lessons should accordingly, be drawn from the project ventures and improvement of the monitoring and evaluation information system promoted by all concerned.

5.4   Areas for further research

It is observed that these findings are not sacred truth. They are subject for review; supplement or the study can be replicated elsewhere. The researcher recommends the following areas for further research;

- The influence of monitoring and evaluation in enhancing performance improvement of projects.
- The efficiency of communication in the monitoring and evaluation system of project implementation.
- Advance information required and methods employed to gather it when dealing with new projects.

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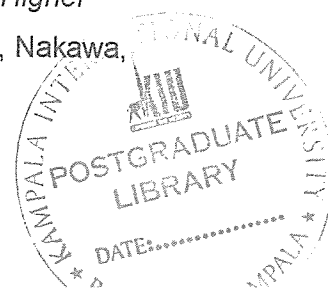
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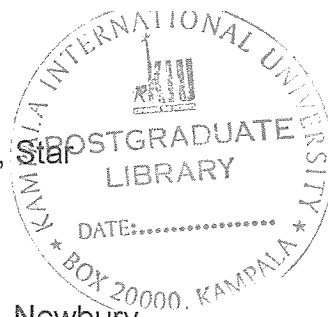
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

MONITORING AND EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEAD FARMERS, DISTRICT LEADERS, AND TECHNICAL STAFF.

Dear sir/madam,

You are kindly requested to fill this questionnaire by ticking the right alternative from those given. Your honest response will help the researcher to produce good results and your answers will be used only for the purpose of the study. Confidentiality will be ensured and your names are not required.(Tick as appropriate).

Section A: The Roles of Monitoring and Evaluation System of RSSP

1. Which of the following roles of M & E system relate to RSSP? (tick all that apply)

(i) Providing feed back to the beneficiaries and vice versa ☐

(ii) Making effective decisions using the data generated ☐

(iii) Guiding implementation of project activities ☐

(iv) Identifying errors and taking corrective measures ☐

(v) The basis for improving performance of RSSP ☐

(vi) Enhancing accountability ☐

(vii) Furthering communication ☐

(viii) Learning and empowerment ☐

2. Give reasons for not selecting some of the roles as being related to the M & E system of RSSP (Tick all that apply)

(i) Implementers are self directed and require minimal supervision. ☐

(ii) There is timely accountability even without M&E. ☐

(iii) There is lack of effective communication ☐

(iv) There is centralized decision making ☐

(v) RSSP staff are well trained ☐

(vi) There is effective and efficient implementation of RSSP activities even with inadequate M&E ☐
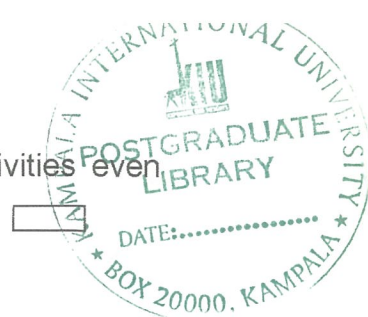
3. Baseline rural sector survey:

Available ☐ Available but substandard ☐ Not available ☐

4. Baseline indicator database 2001:

Well implemented ☐ Poorly implemented ☐

Not implemented ☐

5. Program monitoring guide:

Available ☐ Available but substandard ☐ Not available ☐

6. Impact evaluation guide:

Available ☐ Available but below standard ☐ Not available ☐

Section B: The accuracy of information gathered by monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP

7. Data is collected using the following method (s): (Choose all that apply)

(i) Interview and guides ☐

(ii) Monitoring guides ☐

(iii) Check lists ☐

(iv) Impact evaluation guide ☐

(v) Records perusal ☐

(vi) Any other? ☐

8. How timely are the M&E reports submitted to the relevant authorities? (Tick one)

Very timely ☐

Timely ☐

Untimely ☐

Very untimely ☐

9. How is the M&E information processed? (Tick all that apply)

Using a computer ☐

Using a type writer ☐

Manually ☐

I don't know ☐

10. How is information disseminated for decision making purposes? (Choose all that apply)

Radio/TV ☐

Writing reports ☐

Verbally ☐

By email ☐

Newspapers ☐

11. Quality of M and E

Very efficient ☐   Efficient ☐   Not efficient ☐

12. Project management and financial reporting framework

Very timely ☐ Timely   ☐ Not timely ☐

Section C: The relevancy of monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP

13. Co-ordination of activities of stake holders

Very effective ☐   Effective ☐   Not effective ☐

14. Involvement of the beneficiaries

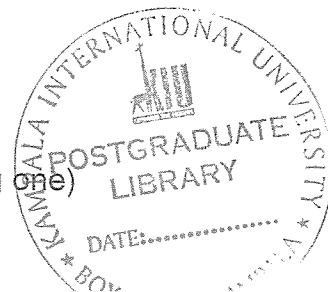Highly involved ☐   Involved ☐   Not involved ☐

15. Participation in decision making
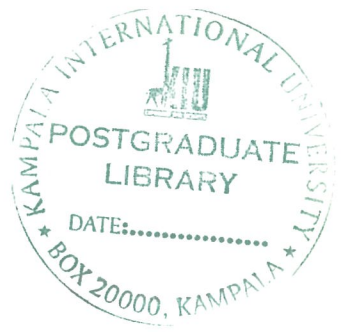
High participation ☐   Low participation ☐   No participation ☐

16. Output level

Very high ☐   High ☐   Low ☐

17. RSSP is the right project for the people. (Comment by choosing one)

61

Very strongly agree ☐

Strongly agree ☐

Disagree ☐

Very strongly disagreed ☐

18. What are some of the benefits derived from M&E information of RSSP.

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iiii) _____

(iv) _____

19. Is the M&E information system of RSSP sustainable?

Highly sustainable ☐

Sustainable ☐

Somehow sustainable ☐

Not sustainable ☐

APPENDIX II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

This meeting is intended to solicit ideas from you for academic purposes. It is not a test, you are requested to participate effectively and your responses will be given at most confidentiality and appreciation.

What are the roles of monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP?

Why do you think some of the roles are unnecessary?

Are the rural sector survey reports available?

Is the baseline indicator database of 2001 well implemented?

Is the programme monitoring guide of RSSP available?

Are the impact evaluation guides available?

What methods are used in data collection?

How timely are the monitoring and evaluation reports submitted to the relevant authorities?

How is the monitoring and evaluation information processed?

How is monitoring and evaluation information disseminated for decision making purposes?

Comment on the quality of the monitoring and evaluation information system of RSSP.

Are the project management and financial reporting framework timely?

Is the coordination of activities of stakeholders in RSSP very effective?

Are the beneficiaries involved in implementation of activities of RSSP?

Is participation of the various stakeholders in decision making high?

Is the output level of activities under monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP high?

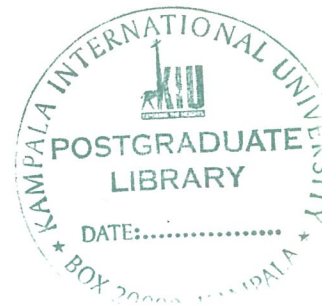Is the RSSP the right project for the right people?

What are the benefits of the information derived from monitoring and evaluation system of RSSP?

Is the project sustainable using monitoring and evaluation information?

Thank you very much!

APPENDIX III: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

P.O.BOX 20000
KAMPALA- UGANDA.
TEL:-041-266813

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SCHOOL OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES

31/May/2007

The:

Co-coordinator Rural

Sector Support Project,

P.O. Box 6961,

Kigali ,

Rwanda.

Dear Sir,

Noted & Approved.
S. N. Bashaija
26th June, 2007

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS BELLA .R. NTAGUGURA

The above named is our student in the school pursuing a Master of Arts Degree in

Project Planning and Management (MA PPM)

She wishes to carry out a research in your organisation on "The effectiveness of the

Monitoring and Evaluation system of the Rural Sector Support Project, Rwanda.

The research is a requirement for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Project Planning

and Management.

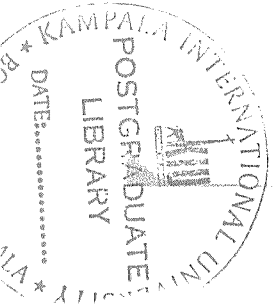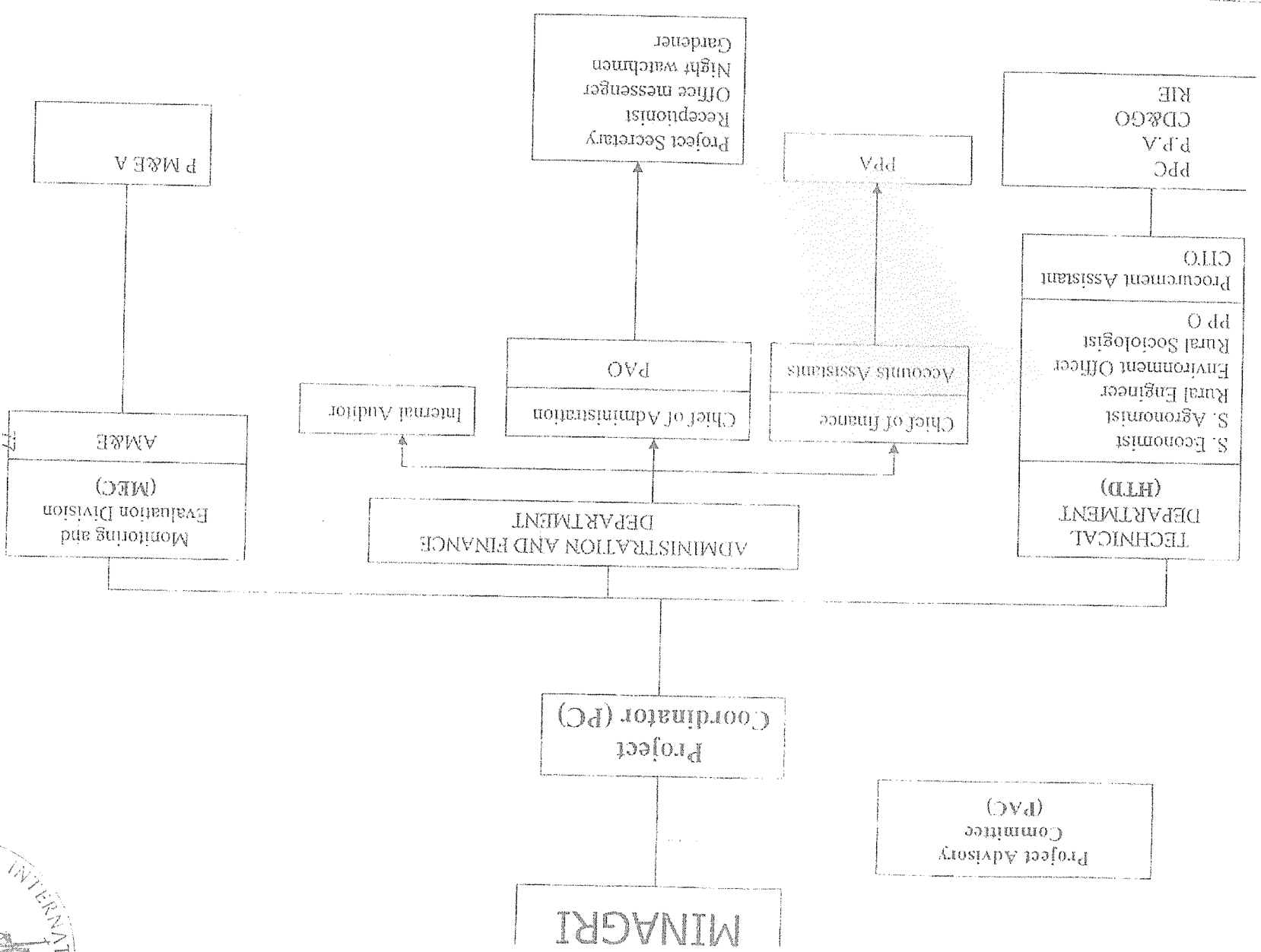Any assistance accorded to her regarding her research will be highly appreciated.
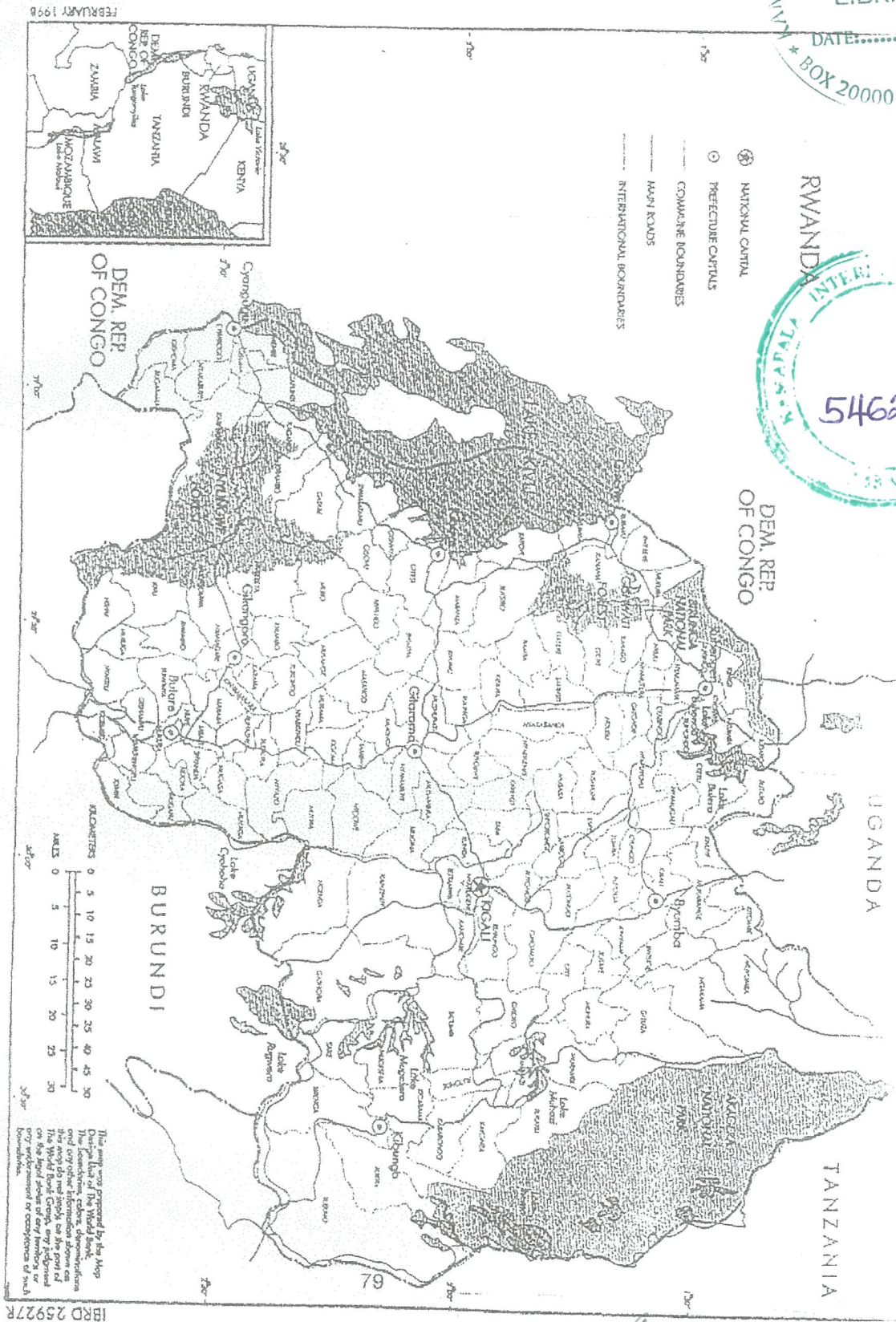
Yours faithfully,

for: Prof. Owolabi O. Samuel

DIRECTOR-SCHOOL OF POST GRADUATE STUDIES

APPENDIX VI: MAP OF RWANDA