

# Specific Problems of Female Entrepreneurs in Northern Province of Rwanda-Musanze District

Domina Hakuzimana

MBA Global business Sustainability Social Entrepreneurship Track, PhD Scholar in Entrepreneurship/JKUAT Kigali Campus

**Abstract-** To achieve Rwanda's dream to become a middle-income country by 2020, small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have a greater role to play. Rwanda is a land locked resource-limited and overpopulated country with around 10,500,000 people and a growth rate of 3.1% (NISR, 2012). As women constitute more than half of the population (52%), whatever country development plan should consider women involvement, otherwise it can be a kind of underutilization of resources. So, if women are not actively engaged in entrepreneurship, the job creation capacity of half the country's population will be lost.

Previous studies state that despite their big demographic representation in number women are few in entrepreneurship around the world, Rwanda included (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2012 Women's Report, Rwanda establishment's census, 2011). All stakeholders interested in sustainable development, Government, Private sector and civil society should invest in women empowerment in order to foster this group of citizens which constitutes more than a half of the country population, so as to support them while creating entrepreneurship awareness, providing to them with business skills, in order to make them self reliance, able contribute successfully to their own development, development of their families as well as national development.

The current study does not have a comparative concern, the global image of the issue is known as men in entrepreneurship are more than women and business discontinuance is likely to be high to women than to men (Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2012 Women's Report). The researcher investigated the problems behind the small number of women in business with Musanze district as case study.

**Index Terms-** Woman, entrepreneurship, challenges, business, empowerment, development

## I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the background of the study, the statement and exploration of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study (stakeholders and relevance) and overview of the structure of the paper.

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Almost in the whole world, whenever you talk of women people suspect that you are likely going to talk about women inequality, illiteracy, their poverty, their landlessness, their innumerable troubles in domestic violence, their voicelessness in decision making and resource ownership; and a whole list of challenges that women face in their day today lives. However, when it comes to African women in general and Rwandan

women in particular, the picture turns the angle to an extreme end as many women are helplessly idle and can not even think of any entrepreneurial activity either because of lack of knowledge and skills or start-up capital among other problems.

Few women in the world, Rwanda inclusive have abandoned their traditional offices "the kitchens" and invaded the board rooms and big offices, the numbers are growing but rather at a very slow pace. In Rwanda, women constitute 52% of the population but the majority of these are still in their "traditional office". When we look at women in businesses and entrepreneurship, the majority are traditional farm workers and not generally involved in businesses and entrepreneurial development.

A few women involved in entrepreneurship have demonstrated capabilities of doing business; but an overwhelming number of them are still out of the entrepreneurial bracket while only very few of them can gain jobs from public sector employment. For example Musanze district has about 52.5 % of its population composed of women; but out of this 52.5%, a big number of these women are unemployed due to lack of means and skills which is mainly due to lack of entrepreneurship culture and awareness of business environment (NISR,2012). This shows that any attempt to give entrepreneurship skills to this vast number of women would be enabling most families to really be in positions to uplift themselves out of poverty.

Women are on the disadvantaged side and this situation becomes worse when it comes to entrepreneurship and business development and ownership. Since 1994, the Rwandan government has done its best to empower women socially, politically and economically. Among the Rwandan government's main achievements in the area of women empowerment one can talk about 30% of women representation in all organs of decision making (Rwanda Constitution of 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2003 as amended to date). The set up of Ministry of Gender & Family Promotion, Gender Monitoring Office, Women's Guarantee Funds, RDB (Rwanda Development) Office of Women's Enterprise among others.

Despite Government efforts in empowering women, the journey is still long because the socio-economic discrimination of Rwandan women is deep-rooted in the traditional culture; and inherited from generation to generation. Even today, men are still called chiefs of families even when they are not providing anything to the family. This gives them the superiority feeling mindset that further worsens the already bad socio-economic conditions of women. Indeed in many families, mostly for those where the women did not have the chance to study, and therefore having a limited chance to gain money, the situation is still worse regarding women's socio-economic and entrepreneurial

development. The current study delved into looking at specific problems of women in entrepreneurship in Musanze and suggested possible and sustainable solutions.

## 1.2 Statement and Exploration of the Problem

Women are the majority of the population in the world, in Africa and in Rwanda women constitute 52% of the total population (NISR, 2012). They are the least educated in the world, in Africa and in Rwanda; at worst, they are the poorest in the world, in Africa and in Rwanda. In addition to the above predicament of women, they are least represented in business because of their poor and limited entrepreneurship skills as well as lack of entrepreneurship culture. As the majority population yet the least represented in every sector of the world, women are the least advantaged including in entrepreneurship and they cannot maximize the exploitation of chances offered to them in terms of seeking empowerment.

A big number of women in Rwanda are still out of the entrepreneurial bracket. As evidenced by establishments census report (NISR, 2011, P.27), statistics show that at the national level females are managers of about 26.3 percent of all establishments in Rwanda. Then prevalence of female managers is highest in Kigali (43.2 percent) and lowest in Northern Province (19.1 percent). In Rwanda, females own about 26.8 percent of the whole sole proprietorship establishments. The prevalence of female ownership of such establishments is highest in Kigali (44.5 percent) and lowest in Northern Province where we find Musanze District (19.6 percent about an average of 3.9 % per district). Looking at Rwanda's dream of becoming a middle income country by 2020, to be achieved, women capacity and efforts have to be efficiently exploited. When this study was being carried out Musanze district which is our case study, had about 368, 803 people and 191, 000 out of them are women; but out of those women only around 2,500 women were employed. All above are facts that motivated the researcher to undertake this study.

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

This research had one overall objective and two specific objectives as found below.

### 1.3.1 Main Research Objective

The study has one main research objective which is to investigate problems of women entrepreneurs in Rwanda Northern province, Musanze District.

### 1.3.2 Specific research Objectives

The specific research objectives were;

1. To investigate the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Musanze District;
2. To propose solutions on how to reduce the challenges of women entrepreneurs in order to make them economically and efficiently productive.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

The current study was very significant to be carried out because women form the biggest percentage of the population in the whole world including Rwanda (52%) but unfortunately they lag behind in every development effort including

entrepreneurship. A study of this nature that brought to the fore the challenges of women entrepreneurs in Rwanda with Musanze district as a case. It is significant to various stakeholders in Government, Local Government, Civil Society Organizations, and the general public as it brought to the open the different challenges that women entrepreneurs face in their quest to fight poverty and gain economic empowerment.

### 1.4.1 Central Government

Central Government may use the findings from this research in decision making, development planning and resource allocation.

### 1.4.2 Local Government

As Rwanda adopted the decentralisation policy, a range of decisions are taken on local level and local development planning is made on district level, so the findings from this study will be useful. Note that, this research to be possible the official authorization of the Mayor of Musanze district was of a big contribution underlining its relevance for the future district plans and decision making. From this research, women entrepreneurship gaps are known and it may bring to actions that may be undertaken in order to bridge these gaps.

### 1.4.3 Civil society organisations

In Rwandan context, NGOs commonly identified as CSO is an organization which is comprised of natural persons or of autonomous collective voluntary organizations whose aim is to improve economic, social and cultural development and to advocate for public interests of a certain group, natural persons, organizations or with the view of promoting common interest of their members (Rwandan, Law N<sup>o</sup> 04/2012 of 17/02/2012, Art. 2, Al. 2). The country counts around 165 registered NGOs, though there are others that are not registered, all those will use this research findings mostly for those advocating for women rights and empowerment as they have "Anti-corruption, Gender equity and Poverty eradication among other values" (Rwanda Focus, February 21<sup>st</sup> 2013).

### 1.4.4 Private Sector Federation (PSF)

As the study is dealing with entrepreneurs in their everyday life, the findings from this study will be welcomed and useful for Private Sector Federation. It will use them for planning purposes.

## 1.5 The structure of the Study

This research paper has five chapters: The first chapter is the general introduction, with a brief description of the background of the study followed by the statement and exploration of the problem, significance of the study where we find stakeholders and relevance, research objectives, brief overview of the structure of the paper and research limitations. The second chapter is the literature review. It insists of what other researchers have written about the area. It highlights the need for the research while reviewing existing related literature. This chapter ends by the formulation of hypotheses.

The third chapter is the methodology adopted in the research. It includes the research questions, research design, data collection methods and instruments, population and sampling, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure. The fourth

chapter is about presentation of findings, analysis and interpretation of the research findings in order to answer the research questions and test hypotheses. The fifth chapter is about conclusion and recommendations from the research.

### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

The limitations for this study were mostly time constraints and financial constraints. To overcome them the research tried her best working hard in order to achieve her objectives. The study had the limitation of reaching on all women in business in Musanze district. To overcome that research limit the research used to draw a sample of women in business and on which the study was carried out.

## **II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the already existing literature related on the topic and area of study which is about challenges of women entrepreneurs in Rwanda with Musanze district as a case study. It brings to light the relevance of problem statement and formulation of research hypotheses.

### **2.1 Definition and Origin of the Concept of Entrepreneurship**

An entrepreneur may be defined as an innovative individual that always tries to make ends meet by innovatively looking for cost effective ways of doing things. Cited by Minnitt (2007), William Baumol defines an entrepreneur as one of the most intriguing and at the same time one of the most elusive characters in the cast that constitutes the subject of economic analysis. This is so because at every one time, an entrepreneur will always be crafty in innovatively bringing new trends in any business. This situation turns even to a sharper angle when you want to talk about women in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is often identified with the creation of new business ventures or with self employment (Minnitt, 2007

According to Bygrave and Hofer, cited by Pacific (1983) the root of the word can be traced as far back as 800 years, to the French verb *entreprendre*, or "to do something." Three hundred years later, a noun form of the term appeared, and soon thereafter both verb and noun entered the English language. In 1730, Richard Cantillon used *entrepreneur* to mean a self-employed person with a tolerance for the risk he believed was inherent in providing for one's own economic well being. Toward the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (1830), Jean-Baptiste Say further expanded the definition of a successful entrepreneur to include the possession of managerial skills.

Today Entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. The wealth is created by individuals who assume the major risks in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment or provide value for some product or service. The product or service may or may not be new or unique, but value must somehow be infused by the entrepreneur by receiving and locating the necessary skills and resources (Hisrich 2005). According to Hisrich, entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychic, and social risks, and receiving the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction and independence.

Entrepreneurship is more than business creation; it is a dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. Entrepreneurship is about seeking opportunity, taking risks, and ability to turn ideas into reality.

Some of the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs are as a result of lack of entrepreneurship spirit. This is mostly due to the patriarchal system; that is greatly embedded in Rwandan culture which gives a privileged position to males over females. This system gives women a subordinate status, renders them docile and dependent; creates a large economic gap between men and women and thereby impacting negatively on their socio-economic and entrepreneurial development and empowerment. As the UN report on women (1999) puts it, human progress if not engendered, is endangered. It is further argued that this situation puts women in a vulnerable state of dependence and powerlessness; and often results in the undevelopment and underdevelopment of their personal capabilities including entrepreneurial capabilities ([http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADH911.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADH911.pdf)).

### **2.3 Situation of Women Entrepreneurship**

It is argued that real development must take care of the development needs of the majority of the people in a community. Therefore, since the majority of the people in Rwanda are women, any meaningful development agenda must have women at the forefront. Dhillon, (1993) argues that the prosperity of a people depends largely on the economic strength of its nation. Since women comprise of more than 50% of the world's population; therefore, to obstruct their participation in their participation in dealing with economic problems of their countries is worth giving up half of the countries potentialities. This view is shared by Coughlin & Thomas (2002) who say that entrepreneurship is one of the best tactics within the strategic realm empowering women and elevating them to the equal status they are entitled to.

This view of the inevitability of women in development is shared by Candida, et al., (2010) who contend that women owned and run businesses all over the world are among the fastest growing entrepreneurial populations that have to be reckoned with in any development process. They further argue that whereas women in more developed countries may start businesses out of motivation, their counterparts in less developed countries start businesses out of necessity mainly to supplement the limited family income (Candida et al., 2010). This necessity driving force among women that requires more fuel in terms of providing entrepreneurial skills to overcome the challenges they face in their entrepreneurial efforts.

A multitude of reasons have intertwined to maintain women in situation of dependence and socio-economic passivity that have continued to handicap their progress. Of recent, any development initiative especially among the poor is the acquisition of small start up capital but unfortunately, women cannot take bank loans on their own because of lack of collateral security as they are always depended on their husband for such security which many men don't always provide. Worth noting is the fact that Rwanda's Vision 2020 that intends to turn the country's dream of becoming a middle income country by 2020 rests and depends largely on the development and entrepreneurship efforts of women (<http://www.wessociety.com>).

Whereas there are special efforts by the Rwandan government to enhance women businesses in the country in form of affirmative action by the provision of funds in National bank of Rwanda for women projects without any collateral security, these funds are not helping many women because of lack of entrepreneurial skills. These funds are locally called “*ikigega cy’ingwate cy’abagore in Kinyaranda*” literally meaning *Women security funds*, are ideally meant to uplift the socio-economic and entrepreneurial development of women but unfortunately, this fund is used by a very few women as responsible for gender and family service in Musanze district declares that the recent data shows for example that between 2010-2011 only 55 women from Musanze district accessed those support funds.

In an effort to promote gender equality and women empowerment, the government of Rwanda provides support to genocide widows, children and elderly vulnerable groups with a view to eliminating gender discrimination, initiating development projects for women but still all these efforts haven’t impacted a lot on the economic hardships of women (National Program for Strengthening Good Governance for Poverty Reduction in Rwanda, 2002). As Rwanda has suffered many civil wars and genocide, many families have been left under the management of poor women which has increased poverty and fueled more conflicts. Goodhand, (2001) argues that chronic insecurity increases chronic poverty, but the impacts vary according to a range of factors including age and gender. And since the majority of Rwandans and those hit hardest by war and conflicts are women, they are undoubtedly facing several challenges in their efforts to undertake and do business.

Further efforts of the Rwandan government to empower women are seen by constitutional demands that guarantee a minimum of 30 percent of all parliamentary seats and other leadership positions to women. Always trying to empower women today, Rwanda is one of the countries with the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world (64%).

All these efforts are meant to empower women. More efforts in support of women entrepreneurs and empowerment have been conjoined by banks that have created special products for women. Despite all these efforts aimed at increasing the entrepreneurial capacity of women, [Charantimath](#) (2006) asserts that women entrepreneurs on the whole still remain a neglected issue. Therefore any effort in pursuit of empowering women with entrepreneurial skills whether in Musanze, Rwanda or anywhere else is a step in the right direction.

It is sad to note that the vast majority of the world's poor people are women, two-thirds of the world's illiterates are female, in addition, women bear almost all the responsibility for meeting basic needs of the family especially food, yet they are systematically denied the access to resources especially land, time and freedom to exercise their right to employment and entrepreneurship (<http://www.wikigender.org>). Against all these hurdles, women still spare some time to engage in mainly small scale businesses especially selling of agricultural products as like fruits and food in addition to small handicrafts to supplement family income to pay school fees for the children of buying other basic needs.

Despite all the above efforts to improve women’s entrepreneurial development, a USAID’s (2008) report titled Rwanda’s Agenda for Action, points out that there is both a

workforce skills deficit overall and an underutilization of the economic talents of women in Rwanda. This means therefore that a Rwandan women still have untapped into potential that with more entrepreneurial skills, their productivity can increase.

Looking at Rwanda’s dream of becoming a middle income country by 2020, to be achieved, women capacity and efforts have to be efficiently exploited.

All above are facts that motivate the researcher to run the current study. From above literature the following hypotheses have been formulated:

## 2.4 Research hypotheses

1. The problems of Rwandan female entrepreneurs are linked to the lack of entrepreneurship skills and gender discrimination stereotype.

2. Enhancement of women entrepreneurship capabilities through trainings and workshops is the way to improve their situation.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

The present research is not about men and women businesses comparative study. It is known that according to previous studies, recent statistics show that women are few in business all over the world and particularly in Rwanda, 26.8% against 73.2% of men (NISR, 2011). It is not the whole story of female entrepreneurship in Rwanda; it is a descriptive study that highlights the challenges of female entrepreneurs and which hinder their success and keeps them outside the entrepreneurship competition.

### 3.1. Research Questions

This study has two research questions:

1. What are the problems faced by Rwandan female entrepreneurs in Northern Province, Musanze district?
2. What can be done to overcome the challenges of women entrepreneurs in order to improve their situation?

### 3.2. Research Design

To carry out this research, the inductive approach was used and in such a way, collected data from the research field helped to answer research questions and test research hypotheses.

To correct data from the field, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. To be able to collect data from a range of respondents, the researcher used the questionnaire for quantitative data and interview technique was used to collect qualitative data. The existing documents were used in this study to review the literature in order to get secondary data and emphasize the relevance of the problem.

### 3.3 Study population and sample size

About study population, the researcher considered the 2,500 females entrepreneurs Musanze district. With purposive sampling, the researcher used her judgement to select the cases that could give her needed information in responding to the research questions. According Mark, Philip & Adrian (2012), the researcher who uses the purposive sampling has the judgement to select the best cases that are able to answer the research question

(s) and meet the researcher's objectives. It is also called judgemental sampling. Thus from 2500 women in business in Musanze district a purposive sample of 50 female entrepreneurs working in Musanze district was drawn.

### 3.4 Research Tools used

Research instruments used in this study were a questionnaire for quantitative data and interview for qualitative data.

#### 3.4.1 Questionnaire

The researcher used a questionnaire as an information gathering technique that gathers information from the respondents, information susceptible to bring to answer the research questions. It is a set of interrelated questions, which are printed in definite order at collecting information from a respondent which is related to problems of women entrepreneurs in Musanze district.

#### 3.4.2 Interview

Structured interview was used to get information from the Private Sector Federation female representative in Musanze district as well as from woman representative of Women National Council in Musanze district. The qualitative information received from them allowed to the researcher to confirm and clarify the quantitative data collected from the respondents while using the questionnaire.

### 3.5 Data Analysis Methods

The collected data were analysed using standard statistical package (SPSS) computer programme to analyse quantitative data and qualitative data analysis were to supplement responses of all respondents.

### 3.6 Sources of Data

The following sources of information were consulted;

#### 3.6.1 Primary Data

The primary data for this study were collected by way of a questionnaire from the 50 respondents who were selected from the female entrepreneurs of Musanze district and by means of interview to Private Sector Federation female representative and representative of women National council in the same district .

#### 3.6.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data were in form of review of related literature from scholarly and academic work form books, journals and databases, internet and government publications and guidelines.

## IV. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected from the field was grouped according to their relationships and presented under tables. The analysis was done using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The interpretation of research findings led to answer the research questions, test hypotheses and draw conclusion.

### 4.2 Data analysis and discussion of findings

In this section data collected from the field are presented and analysed in order to test hypothesis.

**TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>age group of the respondent</b>		
21-25	6	12.0
26-30	16	32.0
31-35	14	28.0
36-40	6	12.0
41-45	4	8.0
46-50	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Education Background</b>		
Primary	18	36.0
Secondary education	26	52.0
Technical and Vocational	2	4.0
tertiary education	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	4	8.0
Married	46	92.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>do you have children</b>		
Yes	46	92.0
No	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>if yes, how many children have less than 5 years</b>		
0	18	36.0
1	20	40.0
2	8	16.0
Not Applicable	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

**Source: Field Data**

From table 1, the biggest percentage of the respondents 32% were of the age group 26-30. From these respondents, 52% had secondary level of education, 92% were married against 8% who were single. Information from the 92% respondents who were married reveals that 92% had children against 8% who do not have children. From these 92% who have children 56% have children of less than 5 years (40% have 1 child and 16% have 2 children) while for 36%, all their children have more than 5 years.

According to the interview with the representative of Women National Council in Musanze district, children of less than 5 years are vulnerable; it becomes a big challenge in business because when a business woman has small children her mind is shared between business preoccupations and care to children. She is so concentrated to the wellbeing of the children and little to the business. According to Rwandan mentality, mostly women mentality, nothing can cost the child and their

bear in mind that whatever their do is for the bright future of their children. So, a child have the first place in Rwandan woman life and for those female entrepreneurs who have small children (represented by 56% in this study) more attention is paid to their children and little to the business and the last risks to fail.

**TABLE 2: Respondent’s attributes regarding business affairs**

Type of business	What do you do as business	Percentage
Manufacturing	8	16.0
Trade	40	80.0
Service	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>When did you start your own business</b>		
this year	4	8.0
one year ago	2	4.0
two years ago	12	24.0
Between two and five years ago	18	36.0
more than five years ago	14	28.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>How many employees do you have</b>		
0	34	68.0
1	10	20.0
4	2	4.0
12	2	4.0
15	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>From which source did you get funds to start your business</b>		
bank loan	8	16.0
personal savings	34	68.0
Friends	2	4.0
Leasing	4	8.0
Cooperative	2	4.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>What is the factor that motivated you more?</b>		
Unemployment	20	40.0
confidence in products	6	12.0
restlessness due to termination of my job	4	8.0
Need of being self employed	14	28.0
making money	2	4.0
Others	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0

**Source: Field Data**

Regarding the type of business done, majority of the business women are involved in trade (merchandise) and this stands at 80%, 16% of the business women are dealing with manufacturing while about 4% are providing service business. Majority of businesses were found between two and four years old 36.0% and only about 8% of the respondents have less than one year in operation. As regards the number of employees, 64%

are only themselves doing the work (0 employees), 20% have one employee and only 8% had 12 employees and above.

As regards the source of capital to start the business about 68% used their own personal savings to start the business, 16% used loans from banks, 8% used leasing and 4% from friends and cooperatives. Regarding motivating factors, a lot of female in business were motivated by unemployment problem 40% followed by the need of being self employed 28%. Confidence in product is represented by 12%, restlessness due to termination of my job is 8%. This can be observed from table 2 above.

**Table 3. State of the business owned.**

<b>Is your current business the first that you owned</b>		
Yes	28	56.0
No	22	44.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>If no, what happened to the previous businesses</b>		
failed and I went out	14	63.0
they are still running	2	9.0
Others	6	27
Total	22	
System/Not applicable	28	
Total	50	

**Source: Field Data**

Reference made to table 3 reveals that 56% of the respondents are operating business for the first time. About 44% of the respondents had had business before the current one which either failed (63%) or are still running (9%). So the discontinuance growth of female business in Musanze district remains high (63%).

**Table 4: Profits, Registration of the Business, Problems faced in Doing the Business**

<b>Does your business make profit?</b>		
Yes	38	76.0
No	12	24.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Is your present business registered?</b>		
Yes	34	68.0
No	16	32.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>When you were starting your businesses, did you meet any problems? (possible to chose more than one)</b>		
no problem	8	16.0
lack of confidence	9	18.0
financial problems	28	56.0
combining family responsibilities and business	20	40.0
Lack of business information	20	40.0
<b>What are the main problems you are facing (possible to chose more than one)</b>		
No problem	8	16.0
combining family and work life	17	34.0
liquidity and other financial	36	72.0

problems		
lack of training to improve business skills	42	84.0
Others	6	12.0

**Source: Field Data**

Table 4 concerns profits, business registration and problems faced. From 50 respondents surveyed, 76% confessed their business are making profits. This was against 24% who say they don't realize profits. Concerning formalization of business, 68% of the respondents had their business registered while others 32% had not registered their business. Challenges met in the start-up included; financial problems 56%, combining family responsibilities and business 40%, Lack of business information 40% and lack of confidence 18%. Regarding problems faced in running business, there are mainly lack of business skills 84%, liquidity and other financial problems 72% and combining family affairs with business work life 34%.

**Table 5: Current business situation about business accounting, marketing and ICT use**

<b>Do you have any business bank account?</b>		
Yes	40	80.0
No	10	20.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Do you keep records of your financial transactions?</b>		
Yes	26	52.0
No	24	48.0
Total	50	100.0

**Source: Field Data**

Reference made to table 5 indicates that banks and records keeping do matter in these respondents' business affairs as 80% of the respondents have bank accounts against only 20% who don't have bank accounts. Concerning records keeping, almost an equal number of respondents do 52% against 48% who don't keep business records. In the case of not recording business transactions, female entrepreneur who ignore bookkeeping can fail without knowing how because she does not follow the financial flows of her business.

**Table 6: Respondents' Views Concerning Taxes**

<b>Do you pay taxes?</b>		
Yes	46	92.0
No	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>How much are you informed about taxes payment and process?</b>		
Not much/ not enough informed	32	64.0
Enough information	18	36.0
Total	50	100.0

**Source: Field Data**

Table 6 presents respondents views about taxes and taxation. 92% of the respondents revealed paying taxes to the

government against 8% who do not pay them. When the respondents were asked whether they get the right information about taxes payment and process, 64% informed the researcher that the information got is not enough against 36% who have enough information about the taxation and its process.

**Table 7: Respondents' Views Regarding Business Marketing and Strategies**

<b>How do you include marketing in your business? Possible to chose more than one)</b>		
	Frequency	Percentage
Nothing	8	16.0
Advert on radio/television	4	8.0
Giving discounts	29	58.0
Good customer care	47	94.0
Giving sample to taste	2	4.0
<b>Do you use telephone in your business?</b>		
Yes	46	92.0
No	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Do you use internet in your business?</b>		
Yes	6	12.0
No	44	88.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>Do you have any idea about internet use?</b>		
Yes	17	34.0
No	32	64.0
Total	50	100.0

**Source: Field Data**

Regarding respondents' business strategies as observed from table 7, 94% use customer care to attract, and maintain clients, while 58% of the respondents attract customers by giving discounts on sales. 16% declare not doing anything, but it is lack of awareness about marketing concept. Only 8% use advert. 88% use telephones as a mode of communication, only 12 % of the respondents use internet though 34 % of the respondents have information on internet use.

**Table 8: Respondents' future plans and wishes**

<b>What is the future plan of your business?</b>		
	Frequency	percentage
Expansion	38	76.0
shift to another kind of business	8	16.0
Others	4	8.0
Total	50	100.0
<b>What is your view on what should be done to improve the situation of women entrepreneurs?</b>		
Reduce taxes	23	46
Trainings and Workshops in entrepreneurship	45	90
Financial assistance	42	84
Change of customers	4	8

behaviour		
-----------	--	--

**Source: Field Data**

Analysis from table 8 above, it can be observed that, 76% of the respondents have plan to expand their business in future while 16% have plans to shift to other locations. Among their wishes, they identify reduction in taxes 46 %, trainings and entrepreneurial workshops 90, financial assistance 84% and 8% want that customers change their behaviour.

**V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 Conclusion**

The current study was about specific problems of female entrepreneurs in Northern Province of Rwanda, Musanze district as a case study. It aimed to investigate the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Musanze District and propose solutions on how to reduce those challenges in order to make them economically and efficiently productive.

Looking at Rwanda’s dream of becoming a middle income country by 2020, to be achieved, women capacity and efforts have to be efficiently exploited.

As Research hypotheses, the researcher was assuming firstly that the problems of Rwandan female entrepreneurs are linked to the lack of entrepreneurship skills and gender discrimination stereotype. Secondly she was assuming that enhancement of women entrepreneurship capabilities through trainings and workshops can be the way to improve their situation.

To carry out this study the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative research approach, to collect data from the field the researcher used questionnaire for quantitative research and interview to get qualitative data. Secondary data were collected using documentary technique where the researcher reviewed the existing literature related to her topic. The sample of 50 people who are running businesses in Musanze district’s town was drawn from 2 500 female entrepreneurs in Musanze district using purposive sampling.

Research findings showed that major problems of female entrepreneurs in Northern province of Rwanda Musanze district are linked to the financial problem for starting and growing businesses, lack of business and marketing skills, combining family responsibilities and business life, insufficient business information, lack of ICT skills and all those impact negatively the success of women businesses. From the interview with the representatives of women, there are other problems like lack of collateral when a female entrepreneur wants to apply and get bank loan and the problem of culture stereotype which most of time makes Rwandan women underestimating themselves and lack self confidence.

Regarding above problems of female entrepreneurs, the majority of respondents 76% are willing to continue trying and expend their business but proposal as solution to improve their situation, 46% of respondents propose reduction of taxes for women in terms of encouragement and Government support, 90% propose trainings and workshops in entrepreneurship development and 84% financial assistance in terms of liquidity.

From the research, the following recommendations which should be taken under considerations by stakeholders in women empowerment matter, decision makers at all levels of administration as well as policy makers.

**5.2 Recommendations**

This study recommends following measures:

- Female entrepreneurship policy should be set up as one of women emancipation ways, development tools.
- Temporary tax exemption to encourage starting female entrepreneurs.
- Organizing female entrepreneurs business plan competition and give awards to the best in order to raise their entrepreneurship motivation and support the best businesses.
- Allowing a minimum amount of money without collateral for a woman who present a relevant business plan with the will of undertaking a new business but she must pay back the loan.
- Credits programs should be linked with entrepreneurship development training programs to allow efficient use of credits provided.
- Orientation of the Rwanda education systems to emphasize and value, entrepreneurship in order to cultivate an enterprise culture among citizens from basic school education

**REFERENCES**

- [1] Brush, C. G., Bruin, A. D., Gatewood, E. J. & Henry, C., (Eds), (2010). Women Entrepreneurs and the Global Environment for Growth. Cheltenham: Edward Edgar Publishing.
- [2] Charantimath, P. M. (2006). Entrepreneurship Development and Small Business Enterprise. Patparganj: Pearson Education India.
- [3] Coughlin, J. H., & Thomas, A. R., (2002). The Rise of Women Entrepreneurs: People, Processes and Global Trends. Westport: Greenwood Publishing.
- [4] Dhillon, P. K., Women Entrepreneurs: Problems & Prospects. (1993). Michigan: Blaze Publishers & Distributors.
- [5] Goodhand, J., (2001). Violent Conflict, Poverty and Chronic Poverty. Chronic Poverty Research Centre. ISBN Number: 1-904049-05-2
- [6] Republic of Rwanda, (4 June 2003), Constitution as amended to date, Kigali.
- [7] Hirwa, P., (2010), the impact of women entrepreneurs on economic development of Rwanda, National University of Rwanda.
- [8] Mark, S., Philip, L and Adrian, T.,(2012), Research methods for business students
- [9] Mein Pieter, V. D, (2000), developing female entrepreneurs in agro-based micro and small enterprises in Zimbabwe in times of adjustment, Maastricht School of Management,
- [10] Ministry of Education, (2008). Kigali: Rwanda.
- [11] Minnitt, M., (ed), (2007). Entrepreneurship: The Engine of Growth. Westport: Praeger Publishers.
- [12] Mohsin, U.S.,(2008), Prospects and problems of women entrepreneurs, BRAC university.
- [13] National Program for Strengthening Good Governance for Poverty Reduction in Rwanda. (2002). Kigali: Rwanda.
- [14] Rwanda: Investing in the Empowerment of Women in Business Report (2009). USAID.
- [15] The Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda (as amended), (2003). Kigali: Rwanda.
- [16] UN Report on Women, (1999).



[17] World Bank,(2008), Voice of women entrepreneurs in Rwanda

Electronic sources

- [1] <http://books.google.rw/books?id=rqiZivpf5CAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fr#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- [2] <http://wbi.worldbank.org/data/exploreconomies/Rwanda> (Viewed, June 25, 2015).
- [3] [http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/18383\\_01\\_Brotherton%28H&T%29\\_Ch\\_01.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/18383_01_Brotherton%28H&T%29_Ch_01.pdf)
- [4] [http://www.wikigender.org/index.php/Gender\\_Equality\\_in](http://www.wikigender.org/index.php/Gender_Equality_in) Rwanda (Viewed, June 21, 2015).
- [5] <http://focus.rw/wp/2013/02/rgb-on-course-to-harmonize-civil-society-organizations/>

[6] [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADH911.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADH911.pdf) (Viewed, May 2015).

[7] [http://www.undp.org.rw/Poverty\\_Reduction.html](http://www.undp.org.rw/Poverty_Reduction.html) (Viewed, May 2015).

[8] <http://www.wessociety.com> (Viewed, June, 2015).

[9] <http://www.mdgmonitor.org/story.cfm?goal=3> (Viewed, June 25, 2015).

AUTHORS

**First Author** – Domina HAKUZIMANA, MBA Global business Sustainability Social Entrepreneurship Track, PhD Scholar in Entrepreneurship/JKUAT Kigali Campus