

# The Impact of Faith Based Organizations on Social Economic Development in Rwanda. A Case of Caritas in Rulindo District (2019-2021).

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**ABSTRACT:** The main objective of this study was to highlight the impact of Faith Based Organizations on Social Economic Development in Rwanda of NGOs. A Case Study of CARITAS in Rulindo District within the period between 2019-2021. The impact of faith-based organizations (FBOs) on Rwanda's social and economic growth is the subject of a research. "A case study of CARITAS in Rulindo district during the period of 2020–2022," aims to investigate the specific interventions of CARITAS to the community in Rulindo district, examine the contributions of CARITAS to the community capacity building in Rulindo district and assess the effectiveness of CARITAS interventions in Rulindo district. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in the investigation. The primary means of gathering data had been standardized questionnaires that were self-administered. However, information gathered via the questionnaire was complemented, supplemented, and validated by the use of interviews, observations, and content analysis. The investigator took into account 378 recipients. After study, the results showed that 98.6% has raised their understanding towards community participation, 95.7% have changed the mindset towards environmental protection, 71.3% have developed the spirit of working the financial institutions, 71.3% have developed the spirit of working the financial institutions, 100% are aware of gender equality, The conflicts in families have been reduced from 54.3% to 5%. Based on the survey's findings, the study found that CARITAS Rwanda had a beneficial impact on the Rulindo district's community.

**Key concepts:** FBOs, Social economic development

## I. INTRODUCTION

Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) refers to non-profit organizations associated with or inspired by religion or religious beliefs. FBOs and religious groups have provided healthcare in developing countries for well over a century. Today they provide approximately 40 percent of healthcare services in sub-Saharan Africa (Irh, 2013). They often have a good understanding of the local context, speak out for the disenfranchised, deliver higher quality services, and mobilize energy and resources. (Banda, M. et al., 2006). Sometimes, FBOs can be the only development-focused organizations in a remote community, or they have been the longest. Their close links the communities and influence over them provide them with an ideal opportunity to promote the social and behavior change communication (SBCC) and address other cultural factors contributing to high child mortality and mortality. (Wright, 2009). Religious values and practices are often deeply entwined in the fabric of daily lives. FBOs tend to grow from and build on faith communities' belief that they have a moral imperative to help those in need and improve the human condition. (Parsons & Fulmer, 2007).

FBOs may focus on issues of morality more than secular organizations, such as rules of family life and the spiritual basis of disease. FBOs' ability to ground their work in religion can enhance their influence with communities, as it enables them to call on people's moral duty. (Wilson, 2003). Every day FBOs work to the World and their communities by caring for those in need. They play an enormous role in providing health information and health care all over the World. FBO hospitals and clinics are often most respected and trusted health care providers in communities of all sizes. (Fischer, 2003). In Rwanda FBOs have been operating for many years and their intervention is significantly in different

sectors like Health Sector, Education Sector, Social Protection, Family strengthening, Guidance and Counselling and others. (Maurice,2015).

Despite the global recognition of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) as key players in social and community development, there exists a notable dearth of comprehensive empirical studies exploring the nuanced and multifaceted impact of FBOs on social-economic development. While some research acknowledges the positive contributions of FBOs in areas such as healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation (Beyerlein et al., 2018; Johnson & Grim, 2013), a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which FBOs influence socio-economic outcomes remains limited.

Regardless the pervasive presence and active engagement of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in various socio-economic initiatives globally, a gap exists in understanding the nuanced mechanisms through which FBOs contribute to and influence socio-economic development

(Davie,2007). This study seeks to investigate the multifaceted roles of FBOs in fostering community development, economic empowerment, and social cohesion, while addressing the challenges and potentials inherent in their involvement.

## II. METHODS AND MATERIALS

### 2.1 Description of study area

CARITAS Rwanda was established in 1960 by Catholic Bishops of Rwanda. It was officially recognized as non-profit organization by the ministerial order no 499/08, and became a non-governmental organization according to the law no 06/2012 Of 17/02/2012 governing the management and governance of religion-based institutions in Rwanda. It is one of Faith based organization that has significantly contributed to different sectors namely health, education, social inclusion as well as unity and reconciliation initiatives. (Maurice,2015)

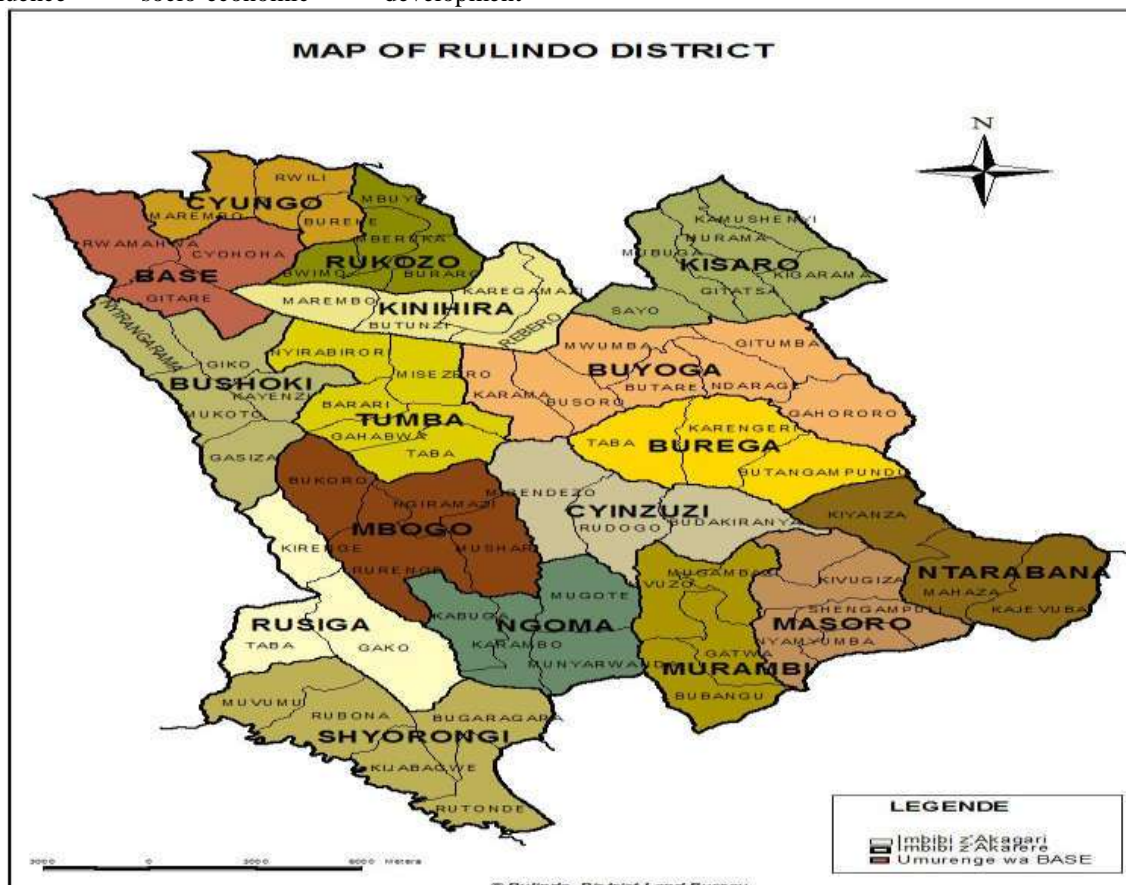


Figure 1: Map indicating Rulindo District with its sectors

Rulindo District is one of the five Districts that make up the Northern Province, others being; Gakenke, Burera, Gicumbi and Musanze. The

district is strategically located as the link to Rwanda's most touristic destinations of the national park of Virunga in Musanze,

RuhondoBeach in Burera and the Lake Kivu in Rubavu district as well as close to the country's capitalcity, Kigali. The district has 17 administrative Sectors, 71 Cells and 494 Villages (Imidugudu). The surface area is estimated at 567 km2. As per the 2012, Rwanda 4th Population and Housing Census, Rulindo district has a population of **287,681** with a population density of 507 (inhabitants) km2 and an average Annual Growth Rate (2002-2012).

**2.2 Data collection and analysis**

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative approach to get the information about the study. Qualitative data are mostly non-numerical and usually descriptive or nominal in nature. This means that the data that researcher

collected are in the form of words and sentences. Often (not always), such data captures feelings, emotions, or subjective perceptions of something. Qualitative approaches aim to address the “how” and “why” of a program and the unstructured methods used during data collection to fully explore the topic. This method is used only for the analysis of the feelings; views of respondents drawn from the interviews. In order to make the research report simple and understandable, researcher applied the framework of qualitative methods of data analysis and presentation though asking questions about the CARITAS Programs and their impact to the wellbeing of the beneficiaries. The data were analyzed by using Microsoft Excel and were presented into charts and tables.

**III. RESULTS**

**3.1. Assessment of social economic contribution of CARITAS Rwanda activities/programs on the capacity building community development in Rulindo district.**

- The indicators of community capacity building by CARITAS in Rulindo district

Statement	Before		After	
	Frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage
Participation in public activities (meeting, election...)	125	33.4	369	98.6
Environmental protection awareness	94	25	358	95.7
Working with financial institutions	78	20.8	267	71.3
Agricultural modernization	98	26.2	349	93.3

Source: Field data, April 2024

As indicated by the table above, the mindset of people has significantly changed. The selected indicators show the contribution of CARITAS Rwanda especially in Rulindo district.

This has been done through different training sessions conducted where CARITAS Rwanda tried to reach especially most vulnerable people and small-scale farmers.

**3.2. Assessment of effectiveness of CARITAS interventions in Rulindo District**

-The indicators of gender interventions of CARITAS in Rulindo district

Statement	Before		After	
	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
Understanding about Gender equality	112	29.9	374	100
Having conflicts in Family	203	54.3	19	5

Source: Field data, April 2024

The table above indicates the contribution of CARITAS to the gender equality in Rulindo district. The statistics from the respondents showed that only 29.9 % had knowledge about gender

equality and 54.3% families lived in conflicts but after the interventions of CARITAS, 100% are aware of gender equality and the remaining families who live in conflicts is 5%.

**The indicators of Education interventions of CARITAS in Rulindo district**

Statement	Before		After	
	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
School drop out	102	26.9	11	2.9

Source: Field data, April 2024

School dropout is an issue that is encountered all over the country and is one factor that could lead to long term declaration of any country's development. The interventions of Caritas to address the issue is significantly. Caritas

supported different vulnerable household to pay the money required by public school known as their contribution to support school feeding program but through mobilization done in different parish people are aware to send their children to school.

**The indicators of Health interventions of CARITAS in Rulindo district**

Statement	Before		After	
	Frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage
Able to pay family health insurance	207	55.4	367	98.1
Able to prepare balanced diet	145	38.4	374	99
Attendance of ECDs	213	56.3	375	99.2

Source: Field data, April 2024

As indicated Caritas has significantly contributed a lot towards the health sector. The selected indicators are main field of interventions of Caritas. About paying health insurance, Caritas mobilizes people but support the vulnerable people who are not able to pay health insurance for their families. Through the program called Gikuriro

where people are mobilized about the importance of ECDs and the care of children in general, there are regular monthly cooking demonstration. This has contributed a lot towards mal-nutrition cases reduction as parents are aware about balanced diet preparation to their children.

**Types of business done before and after being beneficiaries of CARITAS**

	Before		After	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployment	241	63.8	0	0
Trading business (small business)	0	0	35	9.3
Transportation business	5	1.3	15	4
Manufacturing business	0	0	10	2.6
Agriculture and Livestock business	132	34.9	318	84.1
Total	378	100	378	100

Source: Field data, April 2024

Rulindo district lie other rural districts, the citizen tended to rely on the support from government namely VUP programs, Caritas as faith-based organization whose leaders are opinion leaders, Caritas had jointly worked with the district in mobilizing people to do not rely on government support only. Caritas tried to reveal to the people how to be linked with the available opportunities. This had significantly reduced the level of unemployment within the district as confirmed by the responders who are beneficiaries.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study aims at assessing, assess the impact of Faith based organizations (FBOs) to social economic development in Rwanda taking CARITAS Rwanda in Rulindo district. The summary of data

After the study, the following are major findings:98.6 has raised their understanding towards community participation, 95.7% have changed the mindset towards environmental protection., 71.3% have developed the spirit of working the financial institutions, 100% are aware of gender equality, The conflicts in families have been reduced from 54.3% to 5%. Thus, Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that there is positive effect of CARITAS Rwanda to the community of Rulindo district in different sector namely Agriculture, education, health, gender and family promotion and others.This confirmed that precipitation and temperature variability significantly impact tea production.Policy maker can base on the findings of this study to implement climate resilient agriculture.

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