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# Business Development Fund Services and Performance of Women Farming Projects in Rwanda: A Case of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, Rutsiro District

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## Abstract

This study sought to assess the contribution of business development fund services and performance of women farming projects with a case of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. Specifically, the study was guided by the following specific objective: To determine the effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, to assess the effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, to evaluate the effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. Descriptive research design was applied because it helped the researcher to analyze the contribution of Business Development Fund's services on the performance of women project; the target population was 57 employees of Fromagerie Izihirwe Cooperative. By using census, the sample size was 57 who were involved in project performance to provide the needed information. A questionnaire, containing close-ended questions was used as primary data collection tool and documentary review applied for collecting secondary data. The collected data analyzed by using SPSS version 21 for the mean, standard deviation, correlation and regression analysis. The presentation of findings was done by using tables, the pilot study was performed to test validity and reliability of instruments used in data collection. The findings showed that there is strong positive correlation between financial resources and performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project at .871. On the other training program is correlated to performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project at .853 while networking is correlated with performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project at .824. The results showed Business Development Fund Services influence performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project multiple regression of  $R^2=83.5\%$ . In conclusion, Business Development Fund Services play great role to the performance of women farming project through various support offered to the project such as accessibility of financial resources, provision of training and creation of networking. The study recommended that Fromagerie Izihirwe project to increase the level of revenues as the way of reducing poverty.

**Keywords:** *Business Development Fund, Performance, Accessibility, Training, Networking*

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### **1.1 Background of the Study**

At worldwide, the governments establish various financial programme services to support youth and women to access the financial supports leading them to get the ability of startup small and medium projects. Government of Brazil provides the fund to support economic empowerment initiatives through Economic Empowerment Fund, Youth Development Fund and Women Development Fund (WDF) so as to provide capital for citizens (Biggs, 2018). The government of Zimbabwe, through the ministry of Woman Affairs, set up a Women Development Fund (WDF) which goes in line with the millennium development goal number three which is to promote gender equalities in all level of education and empower women. This fund was set up to support women who were already entrepreneurs and those who wanted to start income generating projects. The objective of the fund was to empower and capacitate disadvantaged women by providing collateral free loans. The provision of such credit schemes by the government of Zimbabwe is in line with the global practice (Tshuma & Selome, 2014).

Carter, Wilson and Shaw (2019) indicted that 70% of women at the world are poor due to unequal access to economic opportunities in both developed and developing countries, they recommended that the countries need to establish the business development fund's services as the way of facilitating women to launch project as well as alleviating the poverty. In South Africa, women are encouraged to start the small and medium project due to the government initiative of establishing business development fund's services responsible to provide financial and other supports making project to be better performance. The study done by Hellen (2021) in Malawi, showed that women projects are more likely to stuck due to inadequate financial and training. Investing in women and girls, in their education, health and access to assets and jobs has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and project performance in developing countries.

In Tanzania, the Women Development Fund (WDF) was established by the government in 1992, approved by the National Assembly in 1993, and administered through the Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs and Children (MCDWAC) recently called Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children (Kihombo, Makombe & Temba, 2017), the women development fund established for purposed of empower women economically. Tanzania has experienced tremendous growth due to the increased number of firms engaging in microfinance services including banks and other profit-oriented firms (Triodos, 2019). For the majority of Tanzanians whose incomes are very low, access to microfinance services have offered the possibility of running scarce household and enterprise resources more efficiently, protection against risks, provision for the future, and taking advantage of investment opportunities for economic earnings.

In short Micro finance institutions (MFI) serve the financial needs of the poor Tanzanian population. However, still 21% of the 2 population in Tanzania has no access to financial services, a quantity that has slightly developed over the last few years (Finscope, 2019).

Goldrat (2018) revealed that a project is considered to be performed if project completed within budget and time and performs to the way project specification is designed. The project performance means to meet project objectives and satisfied beneficiaries. Further Kezner (2014) stated that a project is viewed to be performing if it has achieved the project objectives, within cost

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and time at the defined performance extent while utilizing the planned resources effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, Pinto and Slevin (2017) revealed project performance as achieving deadlines within the budget and making the customer happy within programmed time, quality and cost and safety.

According to Hermes and Lensink (2017), business development fund's service has become a vital tool for motivating women to start up project through provision of financial services such as savings, credit, insurance and remittance services. Government of Rwanda establishes the Business development fund to provide various services to small income population especially youth and women. In 2011, the BDF was established as a branch of the Development Bank of Rwanda to support small and medium-sized enterprises through loan collateral, general fund management, capacity building, sacco leasing, and corporate leasing of business start-ups and business advisory services.

The government merged into the BDF various funds that had been earmarked for small and medium enterprises that had been distributed to various ministries and agencies. After the BRD was handed over to the private sector, the functioning and management of the BDF was revised in order to continue to assist small and medium enterprises in development. The BDF is one of the key agencies in the implementation of the National Employment Program, and its activities are in line with that.

Fromagerie Izihirwe is women cooperative located at Rutsiro District with ambition of eradicating poverty through launching of small and medium business or projects where the cooperative started the project of Fromagerie, Fromagerie Izihirwe cooperative gets various supports from Business development fund to perform their services effectively and efficiency. Fromagerie Izihirwe women cooperative is concentrated on the implement the products and other activities related to the farming, art crafts and agriculture. Projects have given them ability that enabled them to comfortably educate their children and meet other financial obligations.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Numerous women farming project are more likely to fail due to various factors such as inadequate finance, poor skills to run project as well as low networking among stakeholders. For instance, improvements in business development fund's services play vital roles in the implementation of women's projects due to numerous supports received by women to run the projects. However, the study done by Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2018) revealed that many women projects indicate poor performance due to lack of financial advisory about the use of financial resource during project implementation. Kavuke (2018) conducted study about analysis of the impact of women development fund on increasing of projects. The findings discovered that women development fund contributed on households' welfare because it was significant on income, ownership of assets, and nutrition as well as launching more projects to maximize their standard lives.

The government of Rwanda improve ability of women to start up and expand their projects through various supports provided by business development fund such as project advisory, training and financial management. Despite of these supports, report of NISR (2021) revealed that 31% women projects showed poor performance during 2019-2020 because of poor project management skills

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and inadequate financial resources to run the project activities and tasks. Inadequate financial resources and poor skills of managing project decline performance of Fromagerie at 15% during 2020-2021 where the project suffered by insufficient working capital (Project Report, 2022). Basing on the various researches conducted, none of them carried out to indicate how business development fund services contribute to the performance of women farming projects in point view of accessibility of financial resource, training, networking even if Government of Rwanda provide various supports to encourage youth and women to create and implement projects. This inspire research to fill this gap through doing this research.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

- i. To determine the effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project.
- ii. To assess the effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project.

### **2.1 Empirical literature review**

This section describes some studies carried out about accessibility of financial resources, training and networking and performance of women project as of the study objectives.

#### **2.1.1 Accessibility of financial resources and performance of women farming projects**

The study done by Helen (2015) about the factors that affect performance of enterprises to get the credit in Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used to select five women cooperatives where the population was 1500 participants with sample size of 396, the questionnaires and interview guide was adopted to collect the needed data. The findings affirmed that 28% of women project suffered by inadequate financial resources to boost their activities. The study concluded that women entrepreneurs lack adequate physical capital such as credit and savings for business which force them into quest for financial assistance, in recommendation, government through its agencies should provide adequate supports to the women to build the sustainability of women enterprises

Mgalula (2020) analyzed impact of business development fund on the availability of credit for the youth and women in Rwanda, a case of Muhanga district specifically, impact of microfinance institutions on the women financial accessibility, the sample comprises individuals, business and cooperatives. The results showed that majority of respondents (76%) strongly agreed and 22% agreed that business development fund facilities business women to get financial credit required to run the business or project at easily. In conclusion, the study revealed that business development fund plays significance contribution in improvement of women income and employments. Research recommended the beneficiaries to use loans ineffective manner to stimulate performance of initiated project.

Macharia and Wanjiru (2013), in their study of NGOs and Women small scale entrepreneurs in the garment manufacturing sector in Nyeri and Nairobi found that factors that inhibit credit to women include: lack of start-up capital; lack of awareness of existing credit schemes; high interest rates; lengthy and vigorous procedures for loan applications; and lack of collateral security for finance. They also cite lack of access to credit as a major constraint inhibiting growth of SME sector and more so for women entrepreneurs. Further, groups' problems limiting SMEs acquisition

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of financial services as: lack of tangible security coupled with an inappropriate legal and regulatory framework that does not recognize innovative ways for lending to SMEs and the limited access to formal finance due to poor and insufficient capacity to deliver financial services to SMEs. The findings showed that 81% of total respondents responded that lack of tangible security is the challenge to get credit while 73% revealed that inadequate skills to run business is limitation for women entrepreneurs. The study concluded that lack or inadequate credit and poor skills are still the limitations hinder performance of entrepreneurs in developing countries particular sub-Saharan countries. The study suggested that various contributions of stakeholders are required to improve as well as facilitating women entrepreneurs.

Kuzilwa (2018). Assessed the contribution of microfinance institutions on the women poverty reduction in Rwanda. The results showed that 68% of responded agreed that credit assistance to entrepreneurs especially women are often seen in improved income, output, employment and welfare of entrepreneurs. He added that credit assistance has been found to have positive impact on business performance in Rwanda the importance of credit access especially to women in Rwanda has led to the establishment of Women Enterprise Fund to address the credit gap and support business development for women. The study concluded that microfinance institutions has great influence on the poverty reductions through various loans and other supports provided to the low-income people to start their own financial activities. However, the study recommended that government needed to establish different measures and support to help youth and women to obtain the credits as the way of increase income level for low- and medium-income people as well as reducing poverty.

Gregory *et al.* (2019) examined the effect of microfinance on the financial accessibility of small and medium income for women. They set to find out how microfinance institution motivates women to start and expand their business using structured questionnaires as a data collection tool administered to 80 respondents working on a women project. The research results upheld the direct relationship between microfinance institutions and accessibility of financial for women project. Further, research indicated that there is strong positive correlation between microfinance and financial accessibility at  $r=0.93$  (93%). In conclusion, research concluded that the number of women and youth invested in business increased through easy accessibility of credits. He added that standard life improved people who worked with financial institutions. The study advised microfinance institutions to establish more financial services and other needed service to increase the number of people requesting credits.

A study conducted by Harelimana (2017) in Muhoza Sector, Rwanda found that the sources of finance for the SMEs were mainly classified as internal (cash in hand and retained earnings) and external (finance in form of equity and finance in form debt). The results show that almost a half of the firms (38.8%) operate their enterprises using both external and internal sources of finance and only 25.5% operates with external sources while the remaining 35.5% operates within internal sources. The results of that study further indicated that most of SMEs in Muhoza used internal finance. A 100% of the respondents in that study agreed that they use external sources to improve their operation from the understudied period. The study concluded that external finance is very important in financing SMEs operations. Further, he added that external finance is most commonly

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source of finance used by business enterprises to raise capital. The study recommended that well utilization of external finance should be given priority to be able to repay the loans.

### **2.1.2 Training and performance of women farming projects**

Schneider (2017) carried out a study in Germany on “Promoting the Entrepreneurial Success of Women Entrepreneurs through Education and Training” the aim of the study was to support and accept training programs for women enterprises within their early stages. The programs incorporated in the study were based on characteristics of an entrepreneur, challenges of enterprise success and business coordination. The findings revealed that majority of respondents at 78% of total respondents affirmed that entrepreneurial success is determined by socio cultural and economic factors but also 72% revealed that entrepreneurial training contributes highly to the performance of women entrepreneur. The study concluded that training and education is very important to the performance of women enterprise. In recommendation, the study advised the women to create strong network as the source of sharing skills and experience required to success in business environment changes.

Musa (2015) determined the importance of training on the performance of women project in South Africa, a case of women farming project. The objective of the study was to examined extent training influences performance of women project, descriptive and case study research design were adopted, the sample of 259 respondents were given the questionnaires while interview guide was conducted for management. The findings showed that training correlated with performance of women project at  $r=0.96$ . Further, research indicated that training has been highlighted as a key necessity to development and growth of project leading to the sustainability of project. It has also been recognized as an important tool for changing the attitude and transfer of skills to people with entrepreneurial traits. The study concluded that financial management, business advices, business planning and control and scanning business environment contribute successfully to the performance of women projects. However, research advised the government to make follow up for women and youth entrepreneurial to reduce the business collapse.

Sastoque et al. (2016) saw the impact of training on the performance of women art and craft project in Rwanda, a case of study of Nyarugenge district. The objective of the study was to find out the importance of training on the sustainability of women project in Nyarugenge district. The research adopted both quantitative and qualitative research design to collect the sufficient data, the sample size of 216 was obtained from 494 population. The findings showed that training program contributes to the successful of project activities at mean of 3.9 with the standard deviation 0.6. The study concluded that training program improves entrepreneurial talent that is capable of harnessing project resources human, material, physical and informational resources- efficiently and effectively toward meeting the project objectives and goals. The study recommended that organizational needed to take care their training practices provided to the employees to sustain the skills and ability require to maintain the success of project.

Karlan and Valdivia (2015) find that microfinance clients subjected to the training programmes are more likely to maintain a clean repayment record compared to untrained clients. They argue that this results from the improved business outcome, which on average is 16 percent higher for trained clients in terms of sales. Findings showed that 43% strongly agreed and 49% agreed that

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training programs are designed to enhance skills and attitude that enable entrepreneurs to start a new business or expand an existing one. Further, 38% strongly agreed and 47% agreed that proper management is crucial factor to enable borrower to repay the credit. The findings showed that 75% revealed that training programs have effect on performance of small and medium enterprises. The study concluded that training facilitates businesswomen to acquire necessary skills to run the business. The study recommended that training programs should be designed based on types of project since the implementors needed distinction skills to make project successful.

### **2.1.3 Networking and performance of women farming projects**

Tunahani and Dizkirici (2018) examined the contribution of networking on the performance women projects in South Africa. The study objective was to determine the effect of network on the project awareness, to establish the effect of network on the sharing business information and to determine the effect of networking on the creation of opportunity. The research adopted by descriptive and a case study research design. The population was 672 while sample of 321 was selected to provide the needed information using questionnaires formulated in form of a likert scale. The purposive and stratified random sampling was applied to get the participants while data validity and reliability of data collection instruments were tested using alpha Cronbach where  $\alpha=0.82$ . The findings showed that 32 strongly agreed and 48% agreed, 6.5% were neutral and 10% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed the statement that networking promotes creation of reliable network. The study concluded that women projects are influenced by networking due to the various advantages such as promoting project awareness and stimulating the accumulation of opportunity. The study recommended that effective networking is needed between project stakeholders to ensure the project will be completed successfully.

Yesseleva (2020) did research contribution of collaboration on the performance of project in government institutions in Tanzania. The study had the following specific objectives, to determine contribution of project team on the performance of project, to establish the effect of collaboration on the dissemination of project information and reporting process and to identify the effect of collaboration on the project governance. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches as research design. The population of the study was 983 obtained from two projects of government institutions while sample size was 437 selected using judgement sampling techniques. The data collection was emailed questionnaires to get primary data and documentation as the approach of getting secondary data. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistical and inferential statistics. The findings showed that sharing information and reporting process become fastest once effective project stakeholders is applied at high mean of 4.7 and low standard deviation of 0.12. On the other hand, majority of respondents revealed that communication process contribute to the performance of project at 46% strongly agreed and 49% chose agreed. Furthermore, research indicated that there is highly positive correlation between collaboration and performance of projects at Pearson coefficient correlation of 0.94 (94%). The study concluded that collaboration enhances performance of projects due to its contribution in communication, reporting process and easy detection of deviation and allocating resources in appropriate manner. The study recommended that project managers must build suitable collaboration as the way of approaching all project stakeholders contribute to the performance of projects.

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De Tienne et al. (2007), observes that women entrepreneurs faced a shortage of peer support networks compared with men even though various women entrepreneurs and industry associations have been formed which generally serve as a platform for women entrepreneurs to establish networks and exchange information and experiences as well as to conduct training programmes, seminars and workshops on motivation, leadership and entrepreneur development and to provide other means of support. This is due to the fact that women may not join these associations as they might be overloaded with business and family responsibilities. This limits the women entrepreneurs' ability to seek informal advice and financing as well as the information networks needed for survival and growth. This might pose a challenge to women entrepreneurs in establishing networks which are helpful to the survival of their businesses.

According to Lin et al (2017), women have in general a lower social position than men, which affects the kind of networks they can access or are part of. Lin argues that, there is evidence to prove that women are less involved in networks than men are, and their type of network is different. The strong and personal networks that women traditionally engage in are well suited to purposes linked to the family related tasks that may prove to be a hindrance in the marketplace. He further asserts that women entrepreneur networks have been found to be a major source of knowledge about women's entrepreneurship and they are increasingly recognized as valuable tools in its development and promotion. Thus, because women differ to men in the kind of networks they use and in the social capital available to them through the network, they have therefore less access to critical resources, support and information needed to successfully start and manage a new firm compared to men. This is because the social network provides different useful resources for both the aspiring and practicing entrepreneur in the form of instrumental and financial assistance; such as experience, know-how, encouragement, and financing and idea generation. Women Enterprise Fund provides networking for women SMEs to enhance their performance.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

The research adopted on the various theories supporting the study. Those theories are reviewed in the following section.

### **2.2.1 Entrepreneurial Feminist Theory**

The theory was proposed by Charlotte Perkins Gilman in 1996. It was formalized as a feminist and emphasized how differential socialization of women owned business leads to the development of social economic. This Feminist theory clarifies aspects of inequality towards women and is established on a venerable power structure which helps in uncovering the way women reason, roles they play in the society and negotiating skills.

Orser and Elliot (2015) devised entrepreneurial feminist theory describing it out as one theory that improves women ventures, promotes equity and performance through wealth creation, social change, mutual respect and teamwork. According to Byrne and Fayoller (2010), differences in women owned enterprise is explained with opportunities availed and can remain disadvantaged due to lack of experience, training facilities, financing and networking.

Bougerra (2015) explains Feminist theory through women dividing time on social activities like networking, family responsibilities and running owned enterprises. The criticism of the theory is

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that women success is pegged on levels of education, cultural views, family obligations and lack of knowledge of existing opportunities which all create unhealthy environment for women enterprises. Entrepreneurial feminist theory points out aspects of gender inequality, cruelty and prejudice towards women which may not act as a guide on ways to empower women growth.

### **2.2.2 Theory of Change (ToC)**

A theory of change is a model that clarifies how a project manager will obtain an expect results or impact desired to provide on the project beneficiaries (Burt, 2012). Jean,Diana & Avan,“ describes A theory of change as strategic planning used by project managers to make decision required to speed up a project or programme developed and progressed. It explains what evaluate, and when and how, so that project and programme managers can refer to that feedback to adjust what they do and how they do it to attain the best results. A theory of change methodology will also assist to identify the way people, organisations and situations change as a result of an organisation“ services or activities, helping to establish models of good practice (Jean, Diana & Avan, 2011).

Theory of change supports project managers in designing and planning framework in early stage of project. The theory of change process improves understanding of project stakes and stakeholders, this helps in thinking through utilization of resources, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, risk mitigation, lessons and increase the consequences awareness. Theory of change assists project managers in planning through tracking progress against plans, milestones and what we expect to happen and how will be maintained. Theory of change is useful in measuring the outcomes. Further, theory of change plays great role in tracking project deviations clarifies why deviation happen and organization critical activities require to attain project performance.

### **2.2.3 Empowerment Theory**

This theory is applicable in this study as it explains why empowerment of women include supporting women financially through easy access to cheap and affordable loans and supporting women education and mentorship programmes aids economic growth and also loses women from outdated cultures. Though empowerment theory empirical studies emphasize on the relationship between the gender perspective of women and business success the link on the difference between environmental, cultural and socio factors that make women react differently is scanty.

This theory was started by Zimmerman (2012). The hypothesis contends that strengthening is the method preparing representatives with important aptitudes and information for execution of different assignments more competently. Accomplishing organizational objectives in any setting is thought to be a work of representative strengthening (Viljoen, 2014). Nonstop improvement of worker aptitudes and giving the essential bolster not as it were progresses in general efficiency of the organization, but too improved worker inspiration to perform and surpass organizational objectives.

Spanos and Lioukas (2011) opine that worker strengthening is the degree to which directors of an undertaking can advance representative gifts in arrange to realize the leading comes about. Designating duties, preparing specialists, work turn, advancements, work enhancement and money related bolster are a few of the variables that upgrade worker strengthening.

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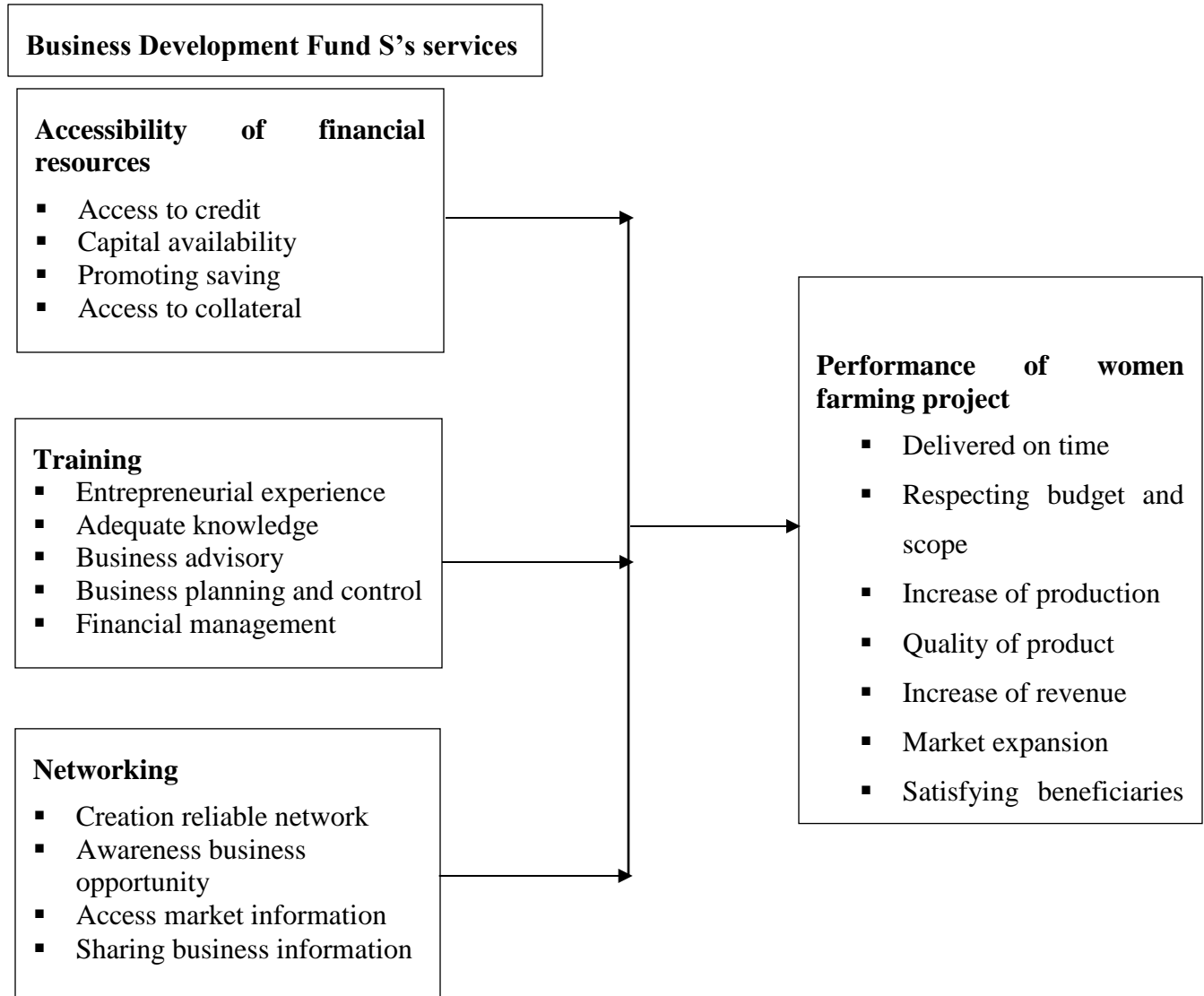
Strengthening of representatives is seen to be a coordinate work of organizational competitiveness from setting to setting (Gopal, 2012). This hypothesis is pertinent in this consider on the introduce that monetary teach are likely to improve their improvement by receiving human assets administration hones plans such as enrollment, progression, emolument and retirement plans to upgrade their improvement.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

This study makes use of a conceptual framework to lay out the main concepts and variables to be examined, and the connections that exist between them. To put it another way, a conceptual framework is a method for organizing ideas to accomplish the goals of a study.

**Independent Variables**

**Dependent variables**



Source: Researcher (2023)

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Independent variable of this study is Business Development Fund's services which constitutes with sub variables such as accessibility of financial resources, training and networking while dependent variable is performance of women farming projects with sub variables including increase of production, quality of product, increase of revenue, increase of market share and satisfying

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beneficiaries. Ambition of Business Development Fund’s Services is to facilitate the small income population to get financial resources and other facilities required to start up business or projects generating income for them. BDF Services assist the businessmen, cooperatives, youth and women to get financial resources, training about the way of running the business or project not only also building the network for the partners. The project implementer team increase the production, quality of product, revenues and expansion of market share when they have adequate financial resources, sufficient training and defined network. Furthermore, government support, meeting customer needs and effective utilization of technology influences highly implementation of project leading to the successful of project.

### 3.0 Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The descriptive research design facilitated the researcher to identify, analyse and interpret the contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, using frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics by the use of multiple linear regression analysis. In this study the target population was 57 employees of Fromagerie Izihirwe women cooperative. In this study, the sample size is equal to the population (57) respondents since the number of populations is less than 100 respondents as suggested by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) who indicated that researcher considers population as sample size once, the number of populations is below 100 participants. The sample size was as presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Population and Sample size**

Position	Participants	Sample size
Management	6	6
Procurement	3	3
Finance	4	4
Production	27	27
M&E	5	5
BDF Staff	12	12
Total	57	57

**Source: Project manager (2023)**

The research adopted the questionnaire for collecting primary data and documentation review to collect secondary data. The researcher used questionnaire and documentary review to collect the needed information. The written questions were served to the participants as the way of gathering the required information as well as accomplishing on the objective of research. The structured questions were formulated in form of a Likert scale.

To confirm the validity and reliability of the questionnaires before they are given to the participants, the researcher conducted a pilot study before. For also before the, a small sample of 10 people was selected at random. Cronbach alpha technique was used by the scholar to assess dependability. Increased dependability is indicated by a higher Cronbach's alpha value, which ranges from 0 to 1. All items tested indicated alpha Cronbach of greater than 0.7 which confirms, data collection instruments are valid and reliable

The researcher used SPSS Software to analyze the gathered data where version 21 was used to calculate the results of collected data. Collected data was presented using frequency tables for social characteristic demographics while Central tendency was used to analyse the data related to the specific objectives. Pearson's coefficient of correlation indicated that correlation and regression analysis was applied to indicate effect of independent on dependent.

Regression analysis was performed to test effect of independent variable on the dependent variable, regression formula helped the researcher to obtain the effect of business development fund services as independent variable and performance of women farming Project as dependent variable.

$$\hat{Y} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Y means performance of women farming Project as independent variable

a is the regression constant. This shows the value of y when  $X_3 = X_2 = X_1$ .

$\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\beta_3$  refer to changes in Y with respect to a unit fall or increase in  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$  and  $X_3$  respectively.

$X_1$  presents accessibility of financial resource,  $X_2$  represents Training,  $X_3$  symbolizes networking.

$\varepsilon$  refers to an error term since some unspecified variables might also affect the performance of women farming Project.

#### **4.0 Findings and Discussions**

This section discusses the data analysis as well as the interpretation of the findings. The general objective of the study was to determine the contribution of business development fund's services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project.

#### **4.1 Descriptive Statistics**

This section focuses on the analysing, interpreting and discussing research findings in line of research objectives, the analysed research findings using percentages, mean, standard deviation and multiple regression analysis.

##### **4.1.1 Effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

This section reveals the effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, responses were analysed using Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagreed to strongly Agreed trough percentages, mean and standard deviations were also provided.

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**Table 2: The effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev</b>
BDFS facilitates Fromagerie project member to get credit easily	29.8	50.9	14.0	5.3	3.05	.81
BDFS improves availability of capital	26.3	54.4	15.8	3.5	3.03	.75
Promoting savings increase due to BDF services	22.8	52.6	21.1	3.5	2.94	.76
BDFS facilitates fromagerie project to get collateral	24.6	49.1	24.6	1.8	2.96	.75
Access to BDFS empower women to enhance level of investment	21.1	47.4	22.8	8.8	2.80	.87
BDFS provides financial opportunity to implement project	17.5	59.6	15.8	7.0	2.87	.78

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

Table 2 displays the effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. The results indicated that BDFS facilitates Fromagerie project member to get credit easily, the following responses were observed, majority of respondents agreed at 50.9% and 29.8% strongly agreed. Although majority of respondents agreed, few of them refused where 14.0% and 5.3% disagreed and strongly disagreed the statement. Further, respondents agreed at the mean of 3.05 and standard deviation of .81. In addition to research interested in knowing whether BDFS improves availability of capital, the results showed that 54.4% chose agreed and 26.3 strongly agreed the statement. However, 15.8% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed the statement. Also, respondents confirmed that BDFS improves availability of capital at strong mean of 3.03 and slightly different of standard deviation of 0.75.

When researcher asked respondents whether promoting savings increase due to BDF services, the following are results provided by respondents, 22.8% strongly agreed and 52.6% agreed. On the other hand, 21.1% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed. The respondents confirmed responses at mean of 2.94 and standard deviation of 0.76. The research was interested in knowing whether BDFS facilitates Fromagerie project to get collateral at 24.6% strongly agreed and 49.1% agreed the statement. However, 24.6% disagreed and 1.8% strongly disagreed the statement. Respondents confirmed the results through the mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 0.75. The next statement asked for respondents is whether access to BDFS empowers women to enhance level of investment, the findings showed that 21.1% strongly agreed and 47.4% agreed the statement. Contrary, 22.8% disagreed and 8.8% strongly disagreed the statement, through the responses, results showed that respondents agreed at mean of 2.80 and standard deviation of 0.87.

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The research interested in knowing whether BDFS provides financial opportunity to implement project, the majority of respondents agreed at 59.6% and 17.5% strongly agreed whereas 15.8% disagreed and 7.0% strongly disagreed the statement.

The results are in line of research of Robinson (2014) who indicated that business development fund’s services empower women by facilitating them easy access to credit, loan and skills acquisition, participation in income generating activities, participation in decision making and control over assets and resource. The financial resources are key for performance of project, the Business Development Fund Services provide various assistance to the women as the way of facilitating women to start and implement projects to get revenues. Further, Women are empowered by having access to business development fund services since it increases their degree of project investment and raises their standard of living.

#### **4.1.2 The effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

This section emphasizes on effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, the researcher asked this question to assess the extent to which training improves performance of fromagerie Izihirwe project.

**Table 3: The effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev</b>
BDFS improve entrepreneurial experience	31.6	49.1	15.8	3.5	3.08	.78
Adequate knowledge is obtained by Fromagerie members through BDF services	28.1	45.6	17.5	8.8	2.92	.90
Business advisory provided by BDFS enhance performance of women farming project	29.8	43.9	21.1	5.3	2.98	.85
BDFS provide skills for business planning and control the performance of Fromagerie project.	31.6	47.4	19.3	1.8	3.08	.76
Training practices provided to Fromagerie project enhance skills and ability of implementing project leading to the success of project	35.1	42.1	15.8	7.0	3.05	.89

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

The Table 3 displays effect of training on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. The findings showed that 31.6% strongly agreed and 49.1% agreed that BDFS improve entrepreneurial experience. The responses had mean of 3.08 and standard deviation of 0.78. However, 15.8% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed the statement.



Researcher interested in knowing whether adequate knowledge is obtained by Fromagerie members through BDF services, the following responses were obtained, 28.1% strongly agreed and 45.6% agreed the statement. The results were confirmed at mean of 2.92 and standard deviation of 0.90. On the other hand, 17.5% disagreed and 8.8% strongly disagreed the statement. The study was interested in knowing whether business advisory provided by BDFS enhance performance of women farming project, the following results were observed 29.8 strongly agreed and 43.9% agreed, the responses were confirmed by mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.85. However, 21.1% disagreed and 5.3% strongly disagreed the statement.

The findings indicated that BDFS provide skills for business planning and control the performance of Fromagerie project. The respondents revealed that 31.6% strongly agreed and 47.4% agreed the statement. The responses had the mean of 3.08 and standard deviation of 0.76. Oppositely, 19.3% disagreed and 1.8% strongly disagreed the statement. Finally, respondents indicated that training practices provided to Fromagerie project enhance skills and ability of implementing project leading to the success of project, the responses showed that 35.1% strongly agreed and 42.1% agreed the statement with the mean of 3.05 and standard deviation of 0.89. Contrary, 15.8% disagreed and 7.0 strongly disagreed the statement.

The study concurred with the study of Musa (2015) who concluded that training plays great role in financial management, business advices, business planning and control and scanning business environment lead to the successfully performance of women projects. One of purpose of BDFS to assist women project is provision training where it improves the skills and knowledge require to run profitable projects, BDFS provides critical advisory as well ability to monitor and control the performance of project, once project implementers needed to have sufficient skills and knowledge to track any deviation, due to low skills and knowledge for women farming project it is necessary to get adequate training helping them to monitor and evaluate performance of project, experience and managing project is achieve through training obtained by project members.

#### **4.1.3 The effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

This subsection shows the information related to the effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. It focuses on the various ways networking contributes to the performance of project. The findings were analysed using percentage, mean and standard deviation.

**Table 4: The effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	St. Dev
BDFS improves creation reliable network making project performance	28.1	49.1	15.8	7.0	2.98	.85
BDFS enhances awareness of project opportunity	29.8	54.4	10.5	5.3	3.08	.78
BDFS facilitates access of market information	22.8	47.4	19.3	10.5	2.82	.90
BDFS facilitates sharing of project information	24.6	50.9	21.1	3.5	2.96	.77
BDFS motivates effectiveness of networking to optimize performance of project	26.3	52.6	14.0	7.0	2.98	.83

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 4 shows the effect of networking on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. The study established that BDFS improves creation reliable network making project performance, the findings showed that 28.1% strongly agreed and 49.1% agreed the statement. The respondents confirmed the results at mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.85. Although few respondents have been disagreed, 15.8% chose disagree and 7.0% chose strongly disagreed. Further, BDFS enhances awareness of project opportunity at agreement of 29.8% strongly agreed and 54.4% agreed the statement with mean of 3.08 and standard deviation of 0.78. However, 10.5% disagreed and 5.3% strongly disagreed the statement.

The researcher interested in knowing whether BDFS facilitates access of market information at 22.8% strongly agreed and 47.4% agreed the statement. The responses were confirmed at mean of 2.82 and standard deviation of 0.90. However, 19.3% disagreed and 10.5% strongly disagreed the statement. On other hand, 24.6% strongly agreed and 50.9% agreed that BDFS facilitates sharing of project information, the responses had mean of 2.96 and standard deviation of 0.77. Oppositely, 21.1% disagreed and 3.5% chose strongly disagreed the statement. Finally, researcher asked respondents whether BDFS motivates effectiveness of networking to optimize performance of project, the findings showed that 26.3% and 52.6% strongly agreed and agreed respectively with mean of 2.98 and standard deviation of 0.83. However, 14.0% disagreed and 7.0% strongly disagreed the statement.

The findings concurred with Gulati and Higgins (2019) who stated that networking can aid businesses in enhancing their internal capabilities, which could ultimately improve their performance. Networks are a powerful means through which project can accomplish their objectives and get around their restrictions by collaborating with others, through networking project members get information on markets, novel products, technological advancements, risk, and product uncertainty which hinder performance of project which alert project managers to take

the necessary strategies. Furthermore, through networking, project can access information and resources quickly and affordably.

#### **4.1.4 The contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

The research assessed the contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project using various indicators as shown in below table. Responses were summarized in Table 5 as follows.

**Table 5: The contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev</b>
Delivered on time	22.8	63.2	12.3	1.8	3.07	.65
Delivered on planned budget	26.3	54.4	14.0	5.3	3.01	.79
Meeting quality and quantity	24.6	49.1	22.8	3.5	2.94	.78
Increase of revenues	19.3	43.9	22.8	14.0	2.68	.94
Increase of productivity	21.1	45.6	24.6	8.8	2.78	.88

**Source: Primary data (2023)**

Table 5 illustrates the contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. The researcher was interested in knowing whether indicators showing performance of project. The findings indicated that project performance is characterized by delivered on time at 22.8% strongly agreed and 63.2% agreed the statement with the mean of 3.07 and standard deviation of 0.65. However, 12.3% disagreed and 1.8% strongly disagreed the statement. Further, project delivered on planned budget at 26.3% strongly agreed and 54.4% agreed the statement with mean of 3.01 and standard deviation of 0.79. Despite of 14.0% disagreed and 5.3% strongly disagreed the statement. The findings showed that 24.6% strongly agreed and 49.1% agreed that project meets with quality and quantity with mean of 2.94 and 0.78. On the other hand, 22.8% disagreed and 3.5% strongly disagreed the statement. Concerning the increase of revenues, majority of respondents agreed at 43.9% and 19.3% strongly agreed the statement. Responses were confirmed at mean of 2.68 and standard deviation of 0.94. Although, majority responded positively, few of them refused where 22.8% disagreed and 14.0% strongly disagreed the statement.

Finally, research indicated that increase of productivity explained performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project. The responses showed that 21.1% strongly agreed and 45.6% agreed the statement. Basing on the measurement tendency, the responses had mean of 2.78 and standard deviation of 0.88. However, 24.6% disagreed and 8.8% strongly disagreed the statement.

The findings were in line of research done by Bonner and Gundlach (2015) who indicated that project performances are characterized by meeting project objectives within triple constraints such as budget, scope and schedule.

Basing on the findings, Fromagerie Izihirwe project are characterized by various indicators of showing project performance such as completion on time, meeting budget and objectives and increase of productivity. Further, project performance is achieved due to well cost managed, schedule is considered and respected, scope is maintained, managers concentrate on the effective and efficiency utilization of budget to avoid overrun of budget, project tends to suffer poor performance when project manager fails to manage effectively triple constraints.

#### 4.2 Correlational Analysis of business development fund’s services on the performance of

##### Fromagerie Izihirwe Project

Researcher applied correlational analysis to measure the relationship between independent variable using components of independent variable and dependent variable. Independent variables were constituted by accessibility of financial resources while dependent variable is performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project. The results are shown in the below table.

**Table 6: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

		Financial Resources	Training	Networking	Performance of Project
Financial Resources	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	57			
Training	Pearson Correlation	.890**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	57	57		
Networking	Pearson Correlation	.860**	.837**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	57	57	57	
Performance of Project	Pearson Correlation	.871**	.853**	.824**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	57	57	57	57

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary data, 2023

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The Table 6 indicates how independent variables correlated with dependent variable, the results showed that there is high positive relationship between Business Development Fund Service and performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project because of the positive value for correlation coefficient. Accessibility of financial resources influence performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe project at high positive correlation of 0.871 (87.1%). Thus, affordability of financial resources is very important to stimulate performance of project. Further, the finding indicated that training influence performance of project at high positive correlation of. 853 (85.3%). Training helps project members to acquire sufficient skills and Knowledge required to run all project activities leading to the effective performance of project.

Further, the findings indicate that there is strong correlation between networking and Fromagerie Izihirwe Project performance where researcher observed that Pearson Coefficient Correlation of .824(82.4%). All results showed that there is statistically significance due to p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.01 as suggested by SPSS program. The findings agreed with Hermes and Lensink (2017), who said that business development fund’s service has become a vital tool for motivating women to start up project through provision of financial services such as savings, credit, insurance and other facilities such as provision of training and building collaboration for women projects leading to the effective performance of project.

### 4.3 Regression analysis

This section illustrates the relationship between independent variable (business development fund’s services) and dependent variable which is performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. Analysis was done using regression linear to find out the contribution of business development fund’s services on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. The components of independent variable are accessibility of financial resources, training and networking. In this study model summary, variances and coefficients of variables were determined as shown in the following tables.

**Table 7: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.914 <sup>a</sup>	.835	.937	.92601

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

a. Predictors: (Constant), Accessibility of financial resources, training and networking

Table 7 shows that regression analysis revealed (R = .914) which is a favorable connection while the R square of 0.835 indicated that the model's predictors, accessibility of financial resources, training and networking computes an 83.5% correlation with the dependent variable as Fromagerie Izihirwe Project performance. Further, the research concluded that combination of all components of independent variable raise performance of project.

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**Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	638.798	3	239.599	279.417	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	125.448	54	.857		
Total	764.246	57			

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

- a. Predictors: (Constant), accessibility of financial resources, training and networking
- b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance

Table 8 shows that the model indicates that 83.5% of the differences in women farming project performance (638.798 out of 764.246), while other variables not captured by the model where it can explain 16.5% percent (125.448 out of 764.246). F value of the model is 279.417, where significantly different from zero. P-value of 0.000 is below predetermined level which indicates statistical significance of independent variables to the dependent variable. In recommendation, the model is good to indicate the performance of women farming project.

**Table 9: Regression coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.290	.507		.572	.000
Financial Resources	.553	.129	.680	4.281	.000
Training	.437	.134	.372	4.524	.000
Networking	.243	.130	.280	4.136	.000

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

Dependent Variable: Fromagerie Izihirwe project performance

Table 9 shows the responses of the regression coefficients. Fromagerie Izihirwe project performance was established through determination of unstandardized coefficients (B). In reference to the T-statistics, availability of financial resources, provision of training and creation of network has direct influence to the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. Where the results indicated that Business Development Fund Services influence women farming project through accessibility of financial resource, provision of training and establishing network, the

results showed that accessibility of financial resource (=0.553), training (= 0.437), networking (=0.243).

In addition to, a unit change in accessibility of financial resource from the help of Business Development Fund Services would lead to the performance of women project at 0.553 times, the greatest predatory of the study, any factor change in provision training offered by Business Development Fund Services would contribute to the performance of farming project at 0.437 times, and a section change in networking created by Business Development Fund Services leads to women farming project performance at 0.243 times. All p-values in the research were less than 0.05, it explains that variables are statistically confirming independent variables influence women farming project performance as dependent variables significantly. The study concurred results of Ling and Lim (2018) who indicated that Business Development Fund Services maintains performance of project through provision of training, linking project members with other similar projects around the country and outside and helping small and medium enterprise to get financial resources.

#### 4.4 Results of Hypotheses Testing

This section indicates the linear regression model summary. Hence, the table indicates ( $R^2$ ), the essential effects so as to confirm whether hypotheses are acceptable or reject according to the results of hypotheses test.

**Table 10: Results of Hypotheses Testing**

Hypothesis developed	Beta ( $\beta$ )	P-values	Decision on Ho	$R^2$
Financial Resources	.680	.000	Rejected	
Training	.372	.000	Rejected	
Networking	.280	.000	Rejected	
				.835

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

Table 10, the first hypothesis revealed that there is no significance effect of accessibility of financial resources on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project, the second hypothesis relates that training has no effect on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project and third hypothesis indicates that networking does not have effect on the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project. All hypotheses are rejected because p-value were less than 0.005 which means that all variables have significantly on the women farming project performance. The findings showed that Business Development Fund Services has big effect on the performance of women farming project in consideration of accessibility of financial resources, training and networking due to the budget, skills and knowledge optimize implementation and performance of project.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

Based on the findings from this study, it is clear indication that Business Development Fund Services contributes highly to the performance of women farming project. More particularly, Fromagerie Izihirwe project benefit from Business Development Fund Services. Business Development Fund Services provide various supports to the Fromagerie Izihirwe project such as accessibility of financial resources, training and networking which enhance performance of project. The study concluded that project performance is influenced by access to credit and collateral leading to the availability of adequate capital making project to be successfully.

Furthermore, the study concluded that training provided by Business Development Fund Services provide training to the women farming project which improve entrepreneurial experience, adequate knowledge, the way project is planned and controlled leading to the effective performance of project due project limitations and deviations are tracked before occurred. Also, the study concluded that networking play great role to the performance of women farming project through creation reliable network, sharing project information, awareness business opportunity leading to the optimizing production and meeting project objective. As the overall conclusion, Business Development Fund Services play great role to the performance of women farming project through various support offered to the project. Skills, knowledge and financial resources facilitate women farming project to attain on its objectives as planned during project start up.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

The recommendations were formulated basing on the research findings and conclusions as follows: Business Development Fund Services contributes to the performance of Fromagerie Izihirwe Project through various perspectives. However, networking has low scored in relation to other variables. Therefore, research recommended Business Development Fund Services to improve the level Women Izihirwe Cooperative collaborate with other similar cooperative work the same products due to networking is very important in globalization business.

The findings showed that majority of women Izihirwe project members had low education less than Secondary education. Therefore, there is need to encourage bachelors and above to participate in women farming project since education provide adequate skills and knowledge support project members to run project in effective manners. The Fromagerie Izihirwe project was designed as the way of increasing revenues. However, the results showed that response have low scored, hence research suggested Fromagerie Izihirwe project to increase the level of revenues as the way of reducing poverty.



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