DEVELOPMENT ON THE MARGINS: RWANDA ALTERNATIVE GRASSROOTS ECONOMIC STRATEGIES

BY

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requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

Land scarcity in Rwanda has long been and continues to be a topic of concern for citizens and government officials alike. In a country where agricultural laborers account for an estimated 85% of the total work force (Rwanda National Agriculture Survey, 2008, p. 1), agrarians are increasingly sharing smaller and smaller plots of land as farm size reduction takes place. Not only are farm plots becoming smaller and smaller, but they are also becoming less effective in their production and use. Increasingly, the most vulnerable citizens are no longer able to gain access to adequate land resources to sustain livings through agricultural production.

Thus, the primary purpose of this research and dissertation was to test the notion that vocational and micro-business training and implementation strategies might offer successful alternative livelihood opportunities, beyond agrarian options, for marginalized people in the western province of the Rubavu district of Rwanda. The justification for, and approach to developing grassroots alternative economic strategies like vocational and micro-business training were derived out of the theoretical constructs and history set forth in regional development studies and feminist political ecology literature.

To test the notion that alternative economic strategies developed at grassroots levels might offer livelihood opportunities, beyond agrarian options for marginalized people by introducing and promoting off-farm income earning opportunities through vocational training and subsequent launching of micro-businesses, information was collected from a number of persons and sources. Study participants included vocational and micro-business training program participants,

trainers, social workers, and a government official in the region. Information was collected via surveys, interviews and first-person observations.

From the results I found that vocational and micro-business training followed by micro-business launches often offered sufficient economic viability to replace agrarian forms of livelihood. Participation in vocational and micro-business training also increases the social, civic, and political capital and navigation skills of program participants.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 - Introduction **1**

Introduction 1

Background 4

Methods 9

Hypotheses 12

Conclusions 15

Chapter 2 – Literature Review **17**

Relevant Scholarly Work Related to Development Studies 17

Development Studies: Regional History and Theory 19

Relevant Scholarly Work Related to Feminist Political Ecology 32

Feminist Political Ecology, History and Theory 34

Chapter 3 – Micro-Business Bridge **47**

Alternative Micro-Business Opportunities 47

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology **68**

Methodology 68

Engagement of a Local Rwandan Research Colleague 70

Survey of Participants via Questionnaire 71

Observations of Participants 76

Interviews 77

Method of Data Analysis 79

Chapter 5 – Study Findings **80**

Demographic Findings 80

Research Question 1 89

Research Question 2 98

Research Question 3 103

Research Question 4 108

Research Question 5 114

Chapter 6 – Conclusions **118**

Conclusions Related to Demographics 118

Conclusions Related to the Research Questions 119

Auxiliary Conclusions 125
Limitations of the Study 144
Future Implications of the Study 146
Recommendations for Future Research 149
Role of this Research in Advancing Development Studies in Rwanda 151
Role of this Research in Advancing Feminist Political Ecology in Rwanda 154
Final Thoughts 157
Bibliography 160
Appendix 170

Figures and Tables

Figures

1. Figure 1.1: Gisenyi Province (pre-2006)/ West Province (post- 2006)……………………….1
2. Figure 1.2: Rubavu District-Northern Region of West Province (post- 2006)………………..2
3. Figure 1.3: Rubavu District ……………………………………………………………………..2
4. Figure 1.4: Boys whose home was destroyed…………………………………………………14
5. Figure 2.1: Poor Soil/Rocky–Multiple Farming Plots…………………………………………..24
6. Figure 2.2: Corporate Tea Field in Northwestern Rwanda……………………………………..25
7. Figure 2.3: New Urban Housing–Gisenyi Outlying Area, Rubavu District …………………..31
8. Figure 2.4: Government Ceremony - Females Required Male Accompaniment…………..37
9. Figure 3.1: Banana Leaf Card Manufacturing…………………………………………………..63
10. Figure 3.2: Garments and Crafts Produced by Vocational Trainees…………………………..64
11. Figure 3.3: Community Cooperative……………………………………………………………..66

Tables

1. Table 1.1: Estimated Tutsi Survivors of Genocide by Prefecture and Week, 1994…………..7
2. Table 2.1: Rwanda - Women in Decision Making Positions……………………………………..40
3. Table 4.1: Survey Questions……………………………………………………………………75
4. Table 5.1: Gender………………………………………………………………………………..80
5. Table 5.2: Gender – Training Type……………………………………………………………..82
6. Table 5.3: Fisher's exact test – Micro-business/Gender……………………………………82
7. Table 5.4: Age……………………………………………………………………………………..84
8. Table 5:5: Educational Attainment……………………………………………………………..85
9. Table 5.6: Gender – Education…………………………………………………………………..85
10. Table 5.7: Fisher's exact test – Education/Gender…………………………………………..86
11. Table 5.8: Education - Type MB…………………………………………………………………..86
12. Table 5.9: Fisher's exact test – Micro-business/Education……………………………………86
13. Table 5.10: Place of Residence at Birth and Place of Residence Currently…………………..88
14. Table 5.11: Owns Land……………………………………………………………………………89
15. Table 5.12: Owns Sustainable Land Plots………………………………………………………..89
16. Table 5.13: Employment History Prior to the Program…………………………………………90
17. Table 5.14: Survey Responses: Employment History…………………………………………..91
18. Table 5.15: Survey Responses: Land Ownership………………………………………………..92
19. Table 5.16: Strengths in Program………………………………………………………………..92
20. Table 5.17: Survey Responses: Training Strengths…………………………………………….93
21. Table 5.18: Weaknesses in Program……………………………………………………………..93
22. Table 5.19: Survey Responses: Training Weaknesses…………………………………………..94
23. Table 5.20: Change in Economic Status…………………………………………………………..95
24. Table 5.21: Survey Responses: Employment and Economic Gains……………………………95

25. Table 5.22: Survey Responses: Pre-Training Economic Situation……………………………...96
26. Table 5.23: Challenges to Micro-Business Sustainability………………………………………..97
27. Table 5.24: Survey Responses: Challenges to Micro-Business…………………………………..97
28. Table 5.25: Type of Micro-Business…………………………………………………………………...99
29. Table 5.26: Training same as Current Employment……………………………..……………100
30. Table 5.27: Survey Response: Extension Endeavors………………………………………….…101
31. Table 5.28: Time in Vocation……………………………………………………………………….....102
32. Table 5.29: Survey Response: Training Value and Impact……………………………………102
33. Table 5.30: Training Impact on Social Navigations……………………………………………....104
34. Table 5.31: Survey Responses: Training Impact on Social Connections…………………...104
35. Table 5.32: Survey Responses: Training Impact on Self-Advocacy……………………..……105
36. Table 5.33: Survey Responses: Training - Social Capital/Self-Advocacy …………….……105
37. Table 5.34: Survey Responses: Relationship Impacts – Loneliness…………………………107
38. Table 5.35: Survey Responses: Skills Development and Implementation………………...108
39. Table 5.36: Survey Responses: Value/Impact - Civic/Political Relationships……………..110
40. Table 5.37: Types of New Conversations……………………………………………………………..110
41. Table 5.38: Survey Responses: New Types of Conversations………………………………...111
42. Table 5.39: Survey Responses: Benefits of New Conversations……………………………….112
43. Table 5.40: Civically/Politically Involved Post Training…………………………………………113
44. Table 5.41: Civic/Political Advancement……………………………………………………………113
45. Table 5.42: Survey Responses: Civic/Political Advancement…………………………………..114
46. Table 5.43: Information Sharing with Others……………………………………………………....115
47. Table 5.44: Survey Responses: Information Sharing with Others……………………………...116
48. Table 5.45: Survey Responses: Considerations - Successful Training Model………………117
49. Table 6.1: Auxiliary Conclusion #1 Responses………………………………………………………126
50. Table 6.2: Auxiliary Conclusion #2 Responses………………………………………………………127
51. Table 6.3: Auxiliary Conclusion #3 Responses………………………………………………………131
52. Table 6.4: Auxiliary Conclusion #4 Responses………………………………………………………134
53. Table 6.5: Auxiliary Conclusion #5 Responses………………………………………………………136

Chapter 1 – Introduction

I. Introduction

The primary purpose of this dissertation is to test the notion that micro-business training and implementation strategies can and do offer successful alternative livelihood opportunities, beyond agrarian options, for marginalized people in the western province of the Rubavu district of Rwanda. The populace of the region is comprised of many women and youth who, due to population pressures and life situations, have not been able to gain access to adequate land resources to sustain living wages through agricultural production. An intention of this work is to further existing development studies and feminist political ecology theories by studying micro-industry as an alternative to agrarian options for individuals who are unable to secure land.

Figure 1.1: Gisenyi Province (pre-2006) / West Province (post- 2006)
(CIA World Factbook, 2010, Retrieved January 27, 2012)

Figure 1.2: Rubavu District - Northern region of West Province (post- 2006)
(USAID, 2010, Retrieved January 27, 2012)

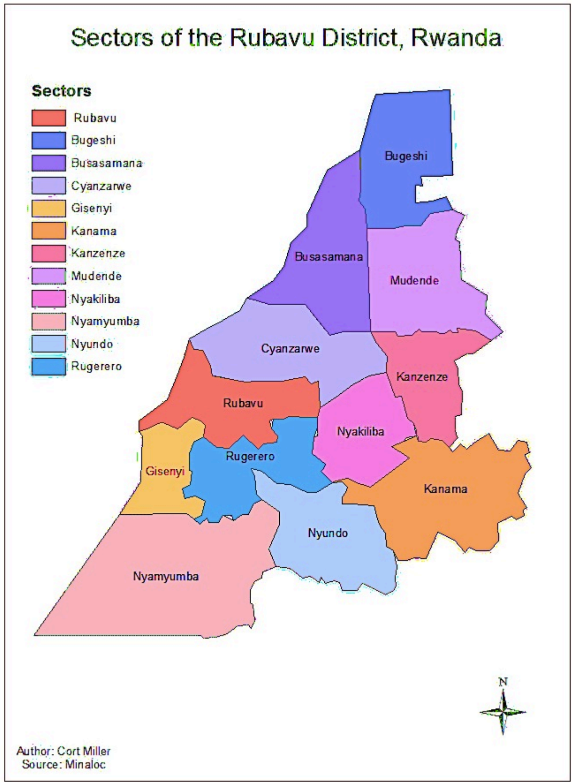

Figure 1.3: Rubavu District
(Miller, 2012)

Prior to 2006, the area of focus for my research was known as the Gisenyi Province as indicated in Figure 1.1. After 2006 this area became known as the Rubavu District and was assimilated along with six other districts to form the West Province. (Figure 1.2) The Rubavu District is then further divided into twelve sectors (Figure 1.3), all of which have their own sector-based governing body.

This study focuses on the qualitative aspects of life and the multifaceted relationships marginalized individuals face as they navigate the culture, economy and political systems of the region. Demographic data and responses to survey questions have been gathered, analyzed and presented. This data has been augmented with information transcribed from interviews. Demographic statistics, descriptive statistics related to the research questions and Fisher's exact test results are presented. However, given the complex nature of inter- and intrapersonal human relationships, a qualitative approach to data analysis and reporting is chiefly employed.

The research sets are comprised of primary and secondary materials that incorporate both theoretical and practical data gleaned from multiple sources. Data collection tools include a demographic and question response survey, interviews and first-person observations captured primarily by anecdotal notes. Data has been collected by me and Caritas Mukarurangwa, an integrated member of the Gisenyi community working in the area of micro-business development.

The expectation of this study is to enhance theoretical and conceptual constructs of micro-economic development in the Rubavu district of Rwanda and to support or find null the viability of alternative economic strategies developed at

grassroots levels. In effort to analyze and assess this research effectively, the following research based questions are posed.

Research Questions

- Does micro-business offer sufficient economic viability to replace traditional agrarian options long-term for marginalized women and youth?
- Does cottage industry serve as a temporary solution to allow the marginalized time and training to gain further employment or enter another type of vocation?
- Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's social capital within a society? If so, what assets are realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What social navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?
- Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's civic and political capital within a society? If so, what political assets are leveraged, realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What political navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?
- Is it possible for those trained in micro-business principles and vocations to train others in the same projects or in replicated models of training?

II. Background

These questions arose out of debates among scholars and practitioners regarding the efficacy of micro-business in elevating the economic, social, and political state of marginalized people in Africa and around the globe. Rwanda is a country ideally positioned for this study at this time since the international community presently regards it as a developmentalist state. For instance, Rwanda currently receives high marks from the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment system for measuring a country's performance with regard

to development aid, landing in the top category with only five other African countries (Moss 2011, p. 146).

While Rwanda has officially taken steps toward greater equality for women and youth through legal and political representation and educational opportunities, the effects of micro-business interventions toward empowering these subsets of society remain only partially measured. It has been speculated that social capital, defined here as "connections among individuals--social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them," (Putnam, 2000, p. 19) and political capital, defined here as ability to influence power structures and protect individual and collective rights (CPRC, 2010, para. 12),[1] are critical in the development process. With this exploration, I examined how these issues relate to existing development studies and feminist political ecology theories, particularly in the Rwandan context.

Centrally located in the eastern part of Africa, Rwanda is one of the smallest countries on the continent. Its area is calculated at 26,338 total square kilometers with 24,948 square kilometers of land surface. Of the existing land surface, approximately 52% is deemed usable for agricultural purposes (Relief "Rwanda: Land Scarcity," 2000, para. 10). In comparison, Rwanda is dwarfed almost 90 times over by its neighbor, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), with a colossal land area of 2,345,410 square kilometers (Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2011, para, 1). In spite of its limited land surface usable for agricultural purposes, agricultural

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[1] The paragraph number has been cited when the electronic source lacks page numbers as per the APA style guide.

production still engages an estimated 85% of the total labor force of Rwanda (RoR National Agriculture Survey, 2008, p. 1).

In addition to limited land space, Rwanda also feels the pressures of a continually growing populace. The population of Rwanda increased from 1.5 million people in 1934 (Wyss, 2006, p. 8) to more than 10 million people in 2009 (National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, 2010, p. 1). Consequently, population growth alone has contributed significantly to the land scarcity issues that beleaguer the country. In 2011, population density in Rwanda was calculated at 394 persons per square kilometer. It is estimated that by the year 2025, the country's population will have increased to 12.8 million (World Bank, World Development Report, 2011, p. 345) with an ever-growing count of persons per square kilometer. As more and more inhabitants seek to rent or buy agricultural land from landowners in an attempt to make a living, the size of farms will continue to decrease, creating hardships on individuals and families attempting to forge a living from agricultural production (Clay et al., 1997, p. 17).

Land ownership distress has been further exacerbated in Rwanda by the country's violent civil history. Rwanda is still emerging from the atrocities of the genocide of 1994 in which a projected 800,000 people were killed (UNICEF, 2004, para. 3), and thousands of women and children widowed and orphaned. It has been estimated that 3 out of 4 Tutsi in Rwanda, almost 500,000 people, lost their lives between April 7th and July 21st of 1994 (Mara, 2005, p. 35).

Table 1.1: Estimated Tutsi survivors of genocide by prefecture and week, 1994

Date	7-Apr	28-Apr	5-May	2-Jun	30-Jun	7-Jul	21-Jul
Butare	140,960	76,118	68,506	44,947	29,490	26,541	26,541
Byumba	11,886	11,886	11,886	11,886	11,886	11,886	11,886
Cyangugu	60,880	27,396	24,656	16,177	11,203	10,643	9,605
Gikongo	63,971	28,787	25,908	16,998	11,772	11,184	10,093
Gisenyi	23,903	17,425	15,683	10,289	6,751	6,076	4,921
Gitarama	86,246	77,621	69,859	45,835	37,126	37,126	37,126
Kibungo	48,846	21,980	21,980	21,980	21,980	21,980	21,980
Kibuye	78,348	35,256	31,731	20,819	14,418	13,697	12,362
Kigali	130,878	58,895	53,006	34,777	22,817	20,535	20,535
Ruhengeri	4,076	2,971	2,674	1,754	1,151	1,036	932
Total	649,994	358,335	325,889	225,462	168,594	160,704	155,981
	100%	55.1%	50.1%	34.7%	25.9%	24.7%	24.0%

(Kuperman, 2001, p. 122)

The devastation and death of the genocide left numerous individuals (women and youth particularly) scrambling to reclaim land that once rightfully belonged to their families as refugee populations continued to repatriate to their motherland. Today land scarcity is only intensifying. The forceful jostling for agricultural space has created an impasse that is proving difficult to overcome.

Even individuals who have been able to secure land holdings are not without great challenge. As cultivated landholdings continue to be restructured through government initiatives, hardships on persons attempting to sustain livelihoods from their plots are increasing. For example, the average-sized family farm in Rwanda is now one-half (.5) hectares, a size considered unsuitable for economically self-sustaining agriculture (US State Department, 2009, para. Economy). In fact, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations indicates that a farming unit should contain at least .9 hectares to be economically viable (RoR Land Policy, 2004, p. 16). Rwanda's transformational edict, the Vision 2020 document, outwardly admits that with "distribution of arable land standing at one hectare for every 9 Rwandans," its people "can no longer subsist on (the) land and ways and means

need to be devised to move the economy into the secondary and tertiary sectors" (RoR Vision 2020, 2000, p. 6).

Rwanda's Vision 2020 initiative recognizes that it will no longer be possible for citizens to sustain their livelihoods through agricultural occupations, and, further, its very strategies ensure that this will be the case. The vision is to transform the country from an agrarian society "into a middle income nation in which Rwandans are healthier, educated and generally more prosperous." The initiative recognizes that Rwanda's people are its principal asset and asserts that the government intends to achieve social cohesion and equity (RoR Vision 2020, 2000, p. 2, 5). While this may be accepted as a positive direction toward which to aspire, the plan's execution strategy lacks clear specificity as to how Rwanda will gain access to the resources necessary to ensure that the populace can achieve successful outcomes. There is clear government recognition that monetary resources are greatly limited (RoR Vision 2020, 2000, p. 8-9).

The Vision 2020 strategy noticeably focuses on the greatest good for the most people and, by design, empowers those who currently have access to higher levels of education and opportunity. Yet, the marginalized population continues to have limited chance for educational and occupational advancement. Without clear prospects for marginalized people to engage in alternative livelihood strategies, the socio-economic divide widens, as the "middle-income" population is propelled forward through Vision 2020 initiatives.

Hence for many Rwandans living on the fringes, it is increasingly difficult to earn a living through traditional agrarian means, and few alternative options exist.

This is particularly true for women and youth who have formidable obstacles to overcome in even gaining access to land. Alternative livelihood strategies such as micro-industry have emerged as potential replacements to agriculture. Local community improvement groups have already taken up the notion of micro-industry as a viable and innovative means to help marginalized people without land obtain economic stability. As well, extending educational opportunities whereby individuals can learn sound business practices at the same time as they are learning vocational skills associated with their industries offers new hope for self-sustainability.

III. Methods

The intention of this dissertation is to examine the efficacy of micro-industry as a means of replacing agrarian forms of livelihood in the Rubavu district of Rwanda. In so doing, I contribute to and draw from pertinent scholarly research in the fields of micro-industry, development studies and feminist political ecology.

In the data collection process I have conducted interviews and surveys with individuals currently receiving vocational training as well as with those who have already been trained and are now operating micro-businesses. I have also conducted interviews and discussions with trainers and social workers closely associated with the community in an effort to glean information about the successes and challenges of introducing alternative livelihood strategies. I have gathered data relevant to this study from a local government official. I use primarily qualitative analysis to determine the outcomes of this study, although descriptive statistics are

used to define the demography of the participants. Fisher's exact test is used to test for significant interactions between demographic categories. Data collection tools include surveys, interviews and first-person observations and discussions captured by anecdotal field notes.

Beyond collecting demographic data including age, geographic origin, gender, educational attainment level, employment history, land ownership history, and economic information, I also sought to ascertain the respondents' perspectives on the value of the vocational training. I structured the protocol to learn the participants' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the training, whether the participants gained social, civic, and political capital and whether they learned to participate in self-advocacy processes. Perhaps most importantly, these tools allowed me to obtain information about whether the training and newly introduced vocational opportunities helped individuals gain economic stability. I sought to learn what the participants and trainers viewed as possible barriers in the process of educating additional clients and helping future trainees learn to launch and operate micro-businesses. As well, I sought information from those further along or finished with the program in order to identify elements that might be beneficial to future participants. Finally, I was able to determine whether the recipients of training were prepared and felt confident in using the information and skills they gained to train others at the grassroots level. The data and information gained through qualitative approaches was essential in helping to answer the research questions as well as in determining potential for replicating the program in similar contexts.

There were multiple yet feasible challenges posed by engaging in collaborative research with my Rwandan colleague, Caritas Mukarurangwa. Some of these included our gender difference and cultural and socio-economic differences. As representatives of different ethnicities, we both brought our respective upbringings to the research situation. Although these challenges could be perceived as barriers, we believe they served only to strengthen the research. One of the most severe indictments against western researchers and development geographers is failure to recognize, value, and utilize the input of the geographically present voices. The intended focus of this study was clearly upon Rwandan women and youth of the Rubavu district region. Thus having a female collaborator with a lifetime of history and context in the region was invaluable. This allowed me to have access to information and confidences that would have taken years to build or discover over time. I had worked previously with Caritas Mukarurangwa and her husband, Simon Pierre Rwaramba, in the areas of child development and HIV/AIDS intervention. Hence our historic association led us to experience a sense of trustworthiness and mutual confidence that went in both directions.

Our multi-ethnic collaboration offered opportunities through "combined forces to cover one another's blind spots" (Myers, 2010, p. 377) in perception and understanding as research data was scrutinized and measured. "[We] do not see the world entirely as it is, but always through the distortions of cultural values and expectations" (Sharp, 2009, p. 9). Thus, we found collaborating in this manner offered opportunity for greater understanding and perspective. Many successful multi-ethnic collaborations, MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000), Benson and

Nagar (2006), Myers and Muhajir (1997) and Nchito and Myers (2004), set a precedent for the partnership (Myers, 2010, p. 377).

IV. Hypotheses

For the purpose of this research, I hypothesized that micro-business opportunity would offer sufficient viability to replace, or at least augment, traditional agrarian options for rural women and youth in the Rubavu district. The theory complimented ideas formally expressed by the Rwandan government's development proposals. "For Rwanda's development the emergence of a viable private sector that can take over as the principal growth engine of the economy is absolutely key." These proposals go on to identify that "a local-based business class remains a crucial component of development." There is a sense of support toward alternative vocational training strategies, as it is further recognized that "The development of Rwanda's private sector will not limit itself to the formal sector. The informal sector will also be developed in areas such as retail trade, repair workshops and garages, handicrafts and metal works" (RoR Vision 2020, 2000, pp. 14 -15).

This study extends initial proposals offered by development studies and feminist political ecological studies in the context of the region. However, I am mindful that success in the Rubavu district is due in part to the strong social networks evident in the region. In order to ensure successful replication on a national level, grassroots efforts must have the legitimate and pragmatic support of

the national government, which will require adjustments in the current actions of the authoritarian elite.

For example, as part of the Vision 2020 scheme the Rwandan government has become fastidious about bringing homes and community buildings up to standard. They want private citizens to take initiative to rebuild sub-standard homes out of more durable and better-looking materials. Thus, as of late the government has been destroying substandard housing in an effort to remove structures they consider to be poor representations of the vision. Nonetheless, their methodology is often problematic as they come in and destroy private dwellings, leaving the inhabitants without means to rebuild.

During my time in Rwanda I had the opportunity to meet two young teenagers who had come to the Ndengera Foundation seeking options because the government had the day before destroyed their home and told them to rebuild a nicer looking structure. Unfortunately the youth and their ill mother had no money to rebuild nor did they have materials to do so. Neither had they any means of procuring materials for a building project. The mother sent the two boys to Ndengera to see if some help might be found for their dilemma.

Unfortunately the proclivity of the government to move full speed ahead with top-down models of development such as the Vision 2020 initiative often leaves the marginalized without many options. Heartbreakingly, in the case of this family they found themselves completely homeless within a day with no plan for future improvements. What was intended to prompt them forward actually set them back.

The missing piece in examples such as this seems to be utter overlooking of contingency plans for the poorest of the poor. Attention must be given to the immediate future of these individuals. Destroying structures and leaving vulnerable people with no place to go is not the panacea for promoting community development.

Figure 1.4: Boys whose home was destroyed
(Miller, 2011)

I hypothesized that cottage industry will not often produce sufficient economic gains to allow marginalized people to gain sizeable land resources. With the government's intention to develop and support corporate farming endeavors through land reorganization and consolidation "so as to create adequate space for modern and viable farming" (RoR Vision 2020, 2000, p. 15), I find it unlikely that cottage industries will lead to land reclamation or acquisition.

I hypothesized that micro-business and vocational training will indeed increase the social capital of the marginalized within the society. Training opportunities that bring isolated peoples into networks with others will strengthen social ties with a benefit to the community. I also hypothesized that micro-business and vocational training experiences will help individuals learn to leverage civic and political capital. Through training and community engagement, individuals will learn how to better access community resources, participate in advocacy for themselves and others and leverage the power of communal solidarity.

To prove or disprove the hypotheses in the following chapters, I collected demographic surveys and structured interview protocols, and I conducted first-person interviews and discussions with individuals in the midst of receiving training. Their input, along with that of individuals already operating successful micro-businesses, was used in determining a measure for the success of the interventions.

IX. Conclusions

Rwandan official government policy, development studies theory and feminist political ecology theory concur that the increasing population pressures in Rwanda, limited land resources, underlying ethnic tensions, lack of alternative service and industry opportunities, and limited educational/vocational training for non-agrarian skills leave Rwanda in a precarious position to maintain societal stability. While none of the theories and/or policies dismisses micro-business as an alternative to agrarian livelihood, limited scholarship is available to support its

viability and document its successes in Rwanda, and particularly in the Rubavu district.

It is thus the intention of this dissertation to evaluate the successes and challenges of micro-business training offered to and implemented by marginalized communities located in the Rubavu district of Rwanda. A collateral objective of this research is to legitimize and offer scholarly support to micro-vocational training and implementation programs already in place and present them as viable alternatives to agrarian lifestyles. My examination offers insight into successful off-farm employment opportunities in the Rubavu district of Northwestern Rwanda as well as highlighting concerns and roadblocks that inhibit non-agrarian work strategies in these communities, in the hope that these strategies can be replicated and supported in other regions.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

With this dissertation, I seek to contribute to two broad realms or sub-groups of human geography, namely development studies and feminist political ecology. In successive sections below in this chapter, I discuss key ideas within these broad realms that I found most useful in developing the dissertation.

I. Relevant Scholarly Work Related To Development Studies

My research focuses upon two significant sub-fields within development geography, sustainable development and post-development theory. Contributions of multiple scholars, ideologies and previous investigations in these veins provided the foundation for my research methodology, analysis and interpretations of data. My work compliments and augments these prior strands of research.

Investigations of population pressures and settlement patterns in the development of rural Africa and examinations of the behavior of inhabitants in adjusting to changing environmental conditions in sub-Saharan Africa were paramount to my study. Additionally, queries into urban migration patterns in relationship to literacy and education were helpful as were considerations of the microeconomic possibilities available to those devoid of basic education (as cited in Silberfein, 1998, p. 188).

I considered a wealth of information regarding household livelihood strategies, options for small-scale economic development and approaches for connecting producers to markets. As well, I drew context from investigations of

agronomists regarding land pressure, intensive land use practices and food security issues in Rwanda (Clay, 1996, p. 13).

Furthermore, research focused on resistance practices of marginalized societies contributed to my work. I considered the ways marginalized people impacted social change in spite of their diminished individual positions (Scott, 1985, p. xvii). I often found that international and national development planning and interventions that took authoritarian approaches and neglected the voice of the marginalized struggled while grassroots initiatives that respected and encouraged the contributions of marginalized societies seemed to thrive in Rwanda. Thus like Scott, I found practical knowledge to be as valuable as formal knowledge to economic development planning in the region.

My study also contributes to development studies literature in Africa that seeks to problematize the meaning of development and modernity on the continent. Numerous scholars have pondered the creation of alternative modernities, but my work fits well with studies that question the scope of such claims and ground them in qualitative studies of the voices or perspectives of the marginalized. For example, anthropologist James Ferguson has written three major books, which do just that. *Global Shadows* (2006), which explores the numerous methods in which Africans strive to enter themselves into international fiscal advancement prospects, community structures and dialogues of societal social behaviors.

Secondly, *The Anti-Politics Machine* (1990) investigates water development in Lesotho and suggests how the development machinery (state and international

donors) operates to alienate the poor from the development process, de-politicizing development when everything about it is political (hence the anti-politics machine). Lastly, Ferguson's third work *Expectations of Modernity* (1999), lends an interesting comparison to my study methodologically with its investigation into the effects and atmosphere of pecuniary deterioration in Africa. More specifically this is seen within the Zambian Copperbelt region where geographically present actors seek to create their own forms of advancement in the face of disillusionment.

II. Development Studies: Regional History & Theory

Within the Rwandan context, development studies draw upon a complex maze of definitions and represent a host of wide-ranging implementations. Many contested definitions of development studies exist, and there is certainly no pure theory of implementation being executed. Current development approaches include tenants of many different theories. For example classical Marxism, where we find the state systematizing resource dissemination and practice, is common. Yet at the same time, numerous examples of a neo-liberal development approach are evident. In neo-liberal implementation, it is common to find authorities providing structure for NGOs and multinational companies to attempt to expand economic growth for the masses. Perhaps due to the population pressures in Rwanda, it is also common to see sustainable development theory in action. These models attempt to implement environmental protection policies and practice. There is also evidence of gender focused development theories in action as the nation continues to move toward lessening gender bias and promoting equality among men and women.

Finally, there is evidence of a post-development implementation approach that considers the effects of development initiatives on local culture and environments as it attempts to enhance grassroots participation and geographically present engagement (Willis, 2005, p. 201). As geographer Katie Willis (2005) reminds us, it is important to recognize that the shifts in prevailing paradigms of development mask the reality that what stage models take as "prior" development strategies remain a part of the picture alongside the dominant mode at any particular moment in a country's development.

For the purpose of this research, I am focusing primarily upon aspects of development studies that consider economic and human development issues and issues of scale that pertain to Rwanda. Land dynamics, development policy and population pressure in Rwanda affect and are affected by individuals, communities, government, NGOs and international influences (Willis, 2005, pp. 3, 5, 8,12, 24-25). My research considers these influences as I examine the viability and replication potential for alternative off-farm livelihood strategies for people living on the margins of society.

A sub-discipline to which my development studies research relates is population geography. The salient issues of development are intricately tied to population and are not easily separated. In the case of Rwanda, this certainly holds true because of the region's history of genocide. Unfortunately, the government overstepped its ethical boundaries in advocating population control (Peters, Larkin, 1993, p. 27) via social incitement. The result was systematic and institutional

elimination of the population under the guise of remedying population pressure and land availability conflicts.

Land ownership in most cultures is a source of pride as well as a valuable monetary asset. Socio-culturally, land ownership also serves to sustain a family's history and heritage. This holds true in Rwanda, yet the reality remains that many do not inherit enough land to meet the needs of their families (Clay et al., 1997, p. 17). I will examine this observation in greater detail in chapter 5. Although now there are laws in place to protect Rwandan women and youth, historically in land inheritance processes, these segments of the population were often disenfranchised.

Rwanda defines "youth" as the population between the ages of 14 and 35. This accounts for 36% of the country's inhabitants (Shema, 2004, p. 4). Individuals under 15 make up 43% of the population as per 2010 estimates, with the median age of the country holding at 18 (WHO, 2006, WHOSIS, Rwanda). Youth, and more particularly women of the populace, are continually found navigating socio-economic conundrums and land inheritance injustices in ways that men are less likely to encounter (Rose, 2004, p. 236).

To complicate the situation, many marginalized youth do not have access to traditional education. This is compounded when youth are part of the population, which relies on agriculture for their livelihood. Of individuals living in the Rubavu district 15 years of age and above, 33% are illiterate (RoR National Agricultural, 2010, p. 93). Slightly more than 25% of the agricultural population in the Rubavu district has never had access to the educational system (RoR National Agricultural, 2010, p. 91). This segment of the population is no small number. Of the estimated

344,000 individuals living in the Rubavu district (RoR Challenge, 2011, p. 3), more than 200,000 rely on agriculture as a means of survival (RoR National Agricultural, 2010, p. 90). Although this district is one of the largest by percentage that has not had access to education, this is not a problem isolated to the Rubavu district only. Almost 1.5 million Rwandan citizens, a little over 21% of the population, have never been to school (RoR National Agricultural, 2010, pp. 90, 91).

As it is becoming increasingly more difficult for Rwandan citizens to sustain agrarian livelihoods, rural to urban migration is on the increase throughout the country. As Jennifer Olson points out, "the composition of the urban immigrant stream has undergone a change due to the decline of agricultural options. Although earlier urban immigrants had relatively high levels of schooling, the educational level has declined as individuals with little or no education, those who previously sought land in rural areas, now migrate to the cities" (as cited in Silberfein, 1998, p. 188). Lack of education obviously limits their entrance into higher-level employment and often leaves them dependent on an already overwhelmed landscape to provide for their existence.

In "Is Anarchy Coming?: A Response to the Optimists" (Homer-Dixon, 1994, pp. 2-3), political scientist Thomas Homer-Dixon notes the devastating impact population pressure is having on Rwanda and how the ever burgeoning issue of land scarcity is leading to degradation of many of Rwanda's natural resources. Prior to the 1980s, urban growth was minimal in Rwanda; however, as the population has increasingly dealt with land scarcity, more and more people have relocated to urban centers to find accessibility to other forms of wealth creation beyond agriculture

(Ford, 1998, pp. 185-88). “Between 2001 and 2006, Rwanda’s poverty rate decreased from 60.2% to 56.9%. Yet, at the end of that period there were 600,000 more people living in poverty in Rwanda. This is because Rwanda’s population growth is outpacing the rate of poverty reduction, and economic growth has not been sufficiently pro-poor” (UNDP, Turning Vision, p. 3). The estimated population density of at least 394 persons per square kilometer compares quite unfavorably with neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo at 28, Tanzania at 48 and Uganda at 161 persons per square kilometer (World Bank, World Development Report, 2011, p. 344-45). There are particular Rwandan provinces with even higher population densities. For example, the focus of this study, the Rubavu district (Gisenyi/Rubavu sector), has more than 547 inhabitants per square kilometer (Rwanda National Census, 2003, 34). Thus sectors like Rubavu increasingly feel the pressures of population growth as more and more individuals move from rural to urban settings in hopes of finding sustainable livelihood options that are now unavailable in their places of rural origin. Rural agricultural areas with extreme population pressures are especially known for leaving marginalized populations without options for sustainable livelihoods (Musahara, 2006, p. 8, 9).

Agricultural laborers account for an estimated 85% of the total work force of Rwanda (RoR National Agriculture Survey, 2008, p. 1), and these workers are increasingly sharing smaller and smaller plots as farm size reduction takes place on a massive scale. Not only are farm plots becoming smaller and smaller, but they are also becoming less effective in their production and use. Rwandan agrarians have experienced a decrease in productivity in more than 48% of their land holdings due

to soil overuse and degradation (Clay, 1996, p. 13). Small farm plots littered with rocks and poor soil are evident across the countryside. Nonetheless, subsistence farmers are doing their best to cultivate these plots and harvest enough to sustain livelihoods.

Figure 2.1: Poor & Rocky Soil – Multiple Small Farm Plots
(Miller, 2011)

The kinds of demands placed on the land by population pressure and intensified production practices are representative of a phenomenon known as "agricultural involution" where the output of labor intensifies and the output of the areas intensify but the output per individual does not increase, so ultimately the system of farming isn't sustainable and begins to collapse (Geertz, 1963, p. 80).

With the rapid increase in population, issues of unequal and unfair distribution of land have also intensified. Those in positions of privilege have greater opportunities to gain larger and more productive land appropriations. Only

citizens of economic means or those associated with corporate farming are able to gain access to limited land resources. Additionally women of all ages in Rwanda have historically struggled with gender discrimination in gaining land access and ownership (Bigagaza et al., 2002, p. 67). While national laws have been implemented to curtail such discrimination, in practice gender imbalance issues remain.

Even individuals who came from historically land owning families are now facing landlessness as a result of inheritance practices. Many of these already diminutive plots are being subdivided into tiny and ultimately unproductive plots to ensure that all children from a family get something in the inheritance process. Thus, an increasing number of youth from landholding families are effectively becoming landless.

Figure 2.2: Corporate Tea Field in Northwestern Rwanda
(Miller, 2011)

Scholars and policy makers have recognized that there are real challenges to determining equitability or even viability of land options in Rwanda. This reality, coupled with the anticipated population increase, makes it reasonable to determine that the situation will only worsen in the future. In this environment of scarcity, populations relying on agriculture as their sole means of sustainability will inevitably face crisis. Thus, other alternatives will be necessary and even imperative.

Anticipating a problem of this nature nearly 15 years ago, in 1996 the post-genocide government of Rwanda launched an initiative to develop a national land policy to address population pressure, land dispossession and ambiguous landholdings. The Ministry of Lands, Environment, Forestry, Water and Mines (MINITERE) was instrumental in forging The Rwandan National Land Policy of 2004 with an overarching objective "to establish a land tenure system that guaranteed tenure security for all Rwandans and give guidance to necessary land reforms with a view for good management and rational use of national land resources" (RoR National Land Policy, 2004, p. 22). As a result of the Land Policy, the maximum and minimum numbers of hectares one individual could own was identified. These initiatives were part of a broader advance of neoliberal land reform in Africa (Myers, 2008, p. 267). Thus, my study inevitably draws connections to this sub-field's literature within the development studies context.

The government of Rwanda set the maximum number of hectares any one person could own at 50. The government further established a minimum plot size. To be issued a deed, an individual's plot could be no less than one hectare (RoR Poverty Reduction, 2002, p. 41). While this ruling solved the issue of sub-dividing, it

also created a dilemma for parents with multiple children since they could no longer divide land assets equally among them (Jones, 2001, para. 9b). Female children seemed to be the ones who came up short when this dilemma occurred (RoR National Land Policy, 2004, p. 20). As well, those individuals who came from households rightfully owning less than 1 hectare found they could not obtain lawful titles to their homesteads.

At the end of the day, the Rwandan government fully expects to find a large number of landless individuals. Indeed even official policies and land laws recognize that it is impossible to make land provisions for all citizens. Thus, the government's land development strategy intends for resource-poor farmers to step out of the agricultural industry and let "professional farmers" with access to better land, inputs and technologies take over. As the photo in Figure 2.2 illustrates, the government is reserving the largest chunks and most fertile land for corporate farming in hopes that increased yields and cash crops "will create a demand for non-agricultural goods and services" (RoR Poverty Reduction, 2002, p. 43) and hence generate income possibilities for landless populations. They are in hopes that this in turn will encourage urban development and off-farm employment. It is the position of the government that "rural settlements are concerned principally, though not exclusively, with food production in contrast with urban settlements where the creation and/or distribution of goods and services will become dominant" (Silberfein, 1998, p. 3). This is not unlike what Marx suggests in *Das Kapital* for enclosure laws in Britain. A Marxist interpretation applied to the Rwandan context would suggest that the government wants to purposefully force landlessness to

create an urban industrial proletariat. In fact, the Rwandan government hopes and anticipates that "a 5.3% rate of growth in corporate agriculture would generate a non-farm rural growth of 6.7%. In addition, it would generate urban growth in the formal and informal sectors of 7% and 9.2% respectively" (RoR Poverty Reduction, 2002, p. 30). This brand of "urban growth" is evident throughout the Rubavu and Gisenyi sectors of the Rubavu district.

While Silberfein (1998, p.10) recognizes that a need for goods and services "continues to attract individuals to central locations," she also suggests that settlement and resettlement programs in Africa are cyclical by nature and should be considered cautiously. She reminds us that at one point in the process land reallocation practices may encourage or even enforce rural to urban migration, but at a later point in the process, urban to rural reintegration is likely to occur in the same area. Thus, "it is important to look at settlements as spatial manifestations of changing adjustments to the environment and socioeconomic variables and important to consider the role of elders on land allocation" (Silberfein, 1998, pp. 7-8).

When individuals are encouraged to migrate to urban areas, they may find themselves unable to gain access to employment. When this is the case, they often return to their rural places of origin. Additionally, many individuals will migrate to urban areas for better employment opportunities and then return to their rural places of origin once they have reached their "target incomes." This circular migration pattern continues even during government resettlement schemes (Silberfein, 1998, p. 315). Throughout the African context there are numerous

examples where government enforced/encouraged urban/rural resettlement programs have dissolved or been diluted as “government functionaries have been forced to react to ecological damage, economic difficulties, and the realities on the ground.” Top-down development models have often met with successful communal resistance. It has not been by mass protest that the proletariat has found success in resisting top-down change, but rather it is the “slow, inexorable change that reshapes the settlement systems” (Silberfein, 1998, p. 68). Successes are unobtrusively gleaned through everyday forms of peasant resistance, which can be characterized as “the prosaic but constant struggle between peasantry and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them. Most forms of this struggle stop well short of outright collective defiance” (Scott, 1985, p. xvi). The mobilization of the proletariat does not often come from military might, but rather the most successful weapons used by a comparatively defenseless populace come in the form of “foot dragging, assimilation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on” (Scott, 1985, p. xvi).

These highly effective, yet ingeniously low-profile techniques have toppled top-down development schemes worldwide. While the marginalized may be disbursed throughout a landscape, lack the necessary skills or abilities to organize as a combined force, and lack access to military training or weaponry, “Their individual acts of foot dragging and evasion, reinforced by a venerable popular culture of resistance and multiplied many thousand-fold, may in the end, make an utter shambles of the policies dreamed up by their would-be superiors in the capital” (Scott, 1985, p. xvii).

The questions of whether a proletarian resistance movement will successfully challenge and divert current development stratagems in Rwanda and whether Silberfein's theory of cyclical change will see Rwanda reverting from urban to rural resettlement have yet to be resolved. Presently, Rwanda is on a path leading toward increased urbanization. The government's corporate farming and off-farm employment intentions are spearheading this charge and most assuredly represent a top-down model of societal change. While the Rwandan Vision 2020 initiative does not directly demand resettlement, it does create a strong imperative for the rural poor to migrate from rural settlements toward urban settings. However, if individuals moving to urban environments are not able to secure off farm-employment as planned, it is obvious that the government will fall short in meeting the needs of its people.

Although urban growth is happening, it is also important to note that Rwanda's optimistic projection for the future does not address specific alternative vocational strategies for the marginalized populace, and it comes from a government that has had a very poor history of successfully creating "off-farm employment" (Pottier, 2006, p. 524). Additionally, the government's development approach takes a very limited view of "grassroots" concerns.

Figure 2.3: New Urban Housing – Gisenyi Outlying Area, Rubavu District
(Miller, 2011)

This concern, that the peasantry has little voice or active consideration in the government's development plan, is not new. Neither is this problem geographically isolated to Rwanda. It is a global issue. Throughout humanity's historical record, far too often the peasantries have appeared "not so much as historical actors but more or less as anonymous contributors to statistics on conscription, taxes, labor migration, landholdings, and crop production" (Scott, 1985, p. 29). Unfortunately this is congruent with the fact that the majority of development measures worldwide are quantitative by nature. It is seemingly easier to deal with a vast national situation in numerical ways, especially when trying to address issues involving millions of individuals over a significant expanse of time, as is the case with the Vision 2020 initiatives in Rwanda. However this tendency to think of marginalized people as mere numbers can have devastating effects on a significant portion of the population.

While it may be necessary to take a quantitative approach, it is dangerous to ignore the qualitative aspects of the situation. "By focusing solely on quantitative measurements, the subjective qualitative dimensions of development are excluded. This means excluding the feelings, experiences and opinions of individuals and groups. This approach tends to reinforce outsiders ideas about 'development', rather than what local people think 'development' is, or should be" (Willis, 2005, p. 13).

As an example, the Rwandan government enacted land laws with little input from the proletariat. Considerations embraced by the international development world in the 2000's suggest that large-scale national and international interventions must be mindful of and demand local participation, knowledge and investment. Yet this has not necessarily been the course of action taken under the authoritarian rule of Rwanda. Thus, without question, development studies theory points this research in the direction of investigating grassroots alternative economic strategies informed by geographically present participants and exploring their viability with marginalized populations.

III. Relevant Scholarly Work Related To Feminist Political Ecology

As I began my review of relevant feminist political ecology scholarship, I focused on the gender imbalances women face in Rwanda and around the globe. In investigating women's rights and responsibilities related to land use and livelihood generation, I found that historical practices in Africa often ran counter to tenets of social justice. Adding insight to my study, in her edited book *Feminist Political*

Ecology (1996) Rocheleau highlighted the value of listening to marginalized women and allowing their local knowledge to shape sustainable development efforts as ways to give perspective to gender imbalances

Feminist political ecology scholarship was also germane to my research in its recognition of the power struggles between genders over space and place. Informative to my study, Massey's *Space, Place and Gender* (1994) recognized the many ways gender amplified or diminished social relationship in spaces and illuminated the ways women are caused to feel out of place in certain locations, particularly in economic spaces. Her work further illustrated the ways social relationships between the genders are challenged by the thought of sharing economic spaces. Massey asserted that place does not have a static or single identity, but rather she suggested that "place identity" is ever evolving as players move in and out of spaces (Massey, 1994, pp. 6-7). It is further recognized that as a result of this fluidity in spaces, gender issues are likely to arise when economic interventions are introduced in a region (Massey, 1994, p. 193). Nonetheless, conflicts may be context specific and situations are bound to evolve as time, space and gender variables change.

Another vein of feminist political ecology scholarship which shaped my study explored gender and its connection to genocide. As Patricia Daley studied the genocides in Burundi and Rwanda, she has offered extensive insights from a feminist lens, particularly on the Lake region of Rwanda, of which Gisenyi is a part. Her investigations into gender-based land tenure issues, genocidal violence, forced migration and politics in *Gender and Genocide in Burundi: The Search for Spaces of*

Peace in the Great Lakes Region (2008) led her to develop a manifesto for addressing gender-based conflicts. My research seeks to extend her ideological theme of liberation and develop practical steps to operationalize her inspiration as it applies to empowering marginalized women in the Rwandan context.

In a similar category of feminist political ecology scholarship, Esther Duflo explored the potential of a society to impact economy and community systems by educating and empowering women and preparing them for leadership roles. Her work focused my attention on the importance of social and political capital in personal and community and economic development. Her research findings indicating that corruption is less present in many female led African communities spurred my thinking about the ways corruption plays into civic life. My study extends Duflo's work by investigating pragmatic ways to educate women, help them gain economic viability and empower them for leadership in their social circles and in the community. My study also seeks to explore the opportunity and efficacy of doing this in the same emancipatory space (Daley, 2008, 235) where male counterparts are also learning.

IV. Feminist Political Ecology, History, & Theory

Feminist political ecology deals with the complex context in which gender interacts with class, race, culture and national identity (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 5) to create experiences and shape environments. It offers "perspective on structures and processes of social change. Through its recognition of threats to equity and diversity and its promotion of social and environmental justice, it helps to strengthen the

balance between men's and women's rights and responsibilities in local communities" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 306). One cannot find simple solutions for such multifarious interwoven issues. Yet through the feminist political ecology lens, the links between gender, livelihood strategies, environmental issues, and the effects of poverty can be illuminated and examined in ways that can be beneficial for both women and men (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 306). To be sure, complex gender interactions are evident in the Rwandan context as resource scarcity, unemployment, poverty, landlessness, violence, and authoritarian rule create challenging imbalances for women. However, with the national government taking formal steps to promote women's political inclusivity, Rwanda has the opportunity to stand tall as a model among African nations.

Toward this end, alternative livelihood strategies have potential to elevate the status of women on economic, social, political and cultural fronts while still holding hands with official governmental policy. However, as Daley reminds us, finding "spaces of hope requires actual engagement with emancipatory politics at all levels" (Daley, 2008, p. 235) including at the grassroots. We need to "move away from the conceptualization of humanitarian action as essentialized good and differentiate between that which empowers and that which perpetuates marginalization" (Daley, 2008, p. 238).

Africa must open its eyes to culturally-based gender oppression and societal pressures that marginalize women. Unequal economic opportunities have disenfranchised women and sustained their subordinate position in society (Massey, 1994, p. 193) for many years. However, it is not limited access to money or

capital alone that subjugates women. Another paralyzing factor that women throughout Rwanda encounter is lack of mobility. As one examines the complex relationships of movement and communication patterns across space, it is obvious that women's opportunities are hampered by lack of mobility. As well, their initiatives are sometimes stymied by threats or realities of physical violence. Women often report "being ogled at or made to feel simply, 'out of place'" (Massey, 1994, p. 148). A host of other restrictions on women may come in less overt forms.

The Rwandan government has made efforts to protect the rights of women through measures such as parliamentary inclusion and by launching nationwide campaigns intended to curtail violence against women and to offer protection for women. The government has increased policing and implementation of punishment against offenders. Thus in some measure, women's visions of their rights, roles, and responsibilities are changing. "Increasingly, women are 'finding voice' and are being aided in doing so by their participation in social and political groups and organizations" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 18). Yet culturally-based gender bias continues to restrict them. "Ideologies, particularly those formulated within a patriarchal mode, create gendered access to information, knowledge, resources and technologies for improving livelihoods. A patriarchal model which situates women in the private sphere, conditions both men's and women's responsibilities and determines the social value assigned to each" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 297). As an example, I was asked to attend a government ceremony with a female citizen in Gisenyi city because the woman was informed that she could not attend the

government ceremony without male accompaniment. I had nothing to offer to the ceremony beyond the fact that I was male.

Figure 2.4: Government Ceremony - Females Required Male Accompaniment
(Miller, 2011)

"Access to public spaces, and particularly to public spaces that are political presents a significant challenge for women" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 302). Access to spaces and places such as these "reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood. The limitation of women's mobility, in terms of both identity and space, has been [and continues to be] in some cultural contexts a crucial means of subordination" (Massey, 1994, p. 179). Additionally, within the Rwandan context, women essentially agree to enter into a position of subjugation to their husbands at the point of marriage. Beyond the obvious issues of gender inequity, this sometimes creates emotional and physical concerns for females entering into

abusive marriage relationships, either knowingly or unknowingly. It is in private spaces, such as the home, that much of the abuse against women has historically been overlooked by the society (S. Rwaramba, personal communication, June, 2011). This is no small concern, as "more than one-third of Rwandan women (35%) report having experienced acts of spousal violence - physical, sexual, or emotional" (UNDP, Turning Vision, pp. 3, 22).

In many cases offending men have been taught that they are not responsible for their actions, and women have been shamed into submission (Pattman, 2001, pp. 236, 7) in the name of maintaining apposite norms. As post-conflict reconciliation efforts across the country now recognize the atrocities suffered by women, the world is becoming increasingly aware of the changes that must transpire. This realization comes none too soon for "until ingrained patriarchal attitudes toward women change, there will be little progress toward an equitable and sustainable society" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 136).

Feminist political ecologists recognize the need to empower Rwandan women economically, socially, politically, and culturally. Women's organizations and feminist NGOs have "played a tremendous part in electing women to national political office in Africa" (Bauer and Britton, 2006, p. 15). By working through and with political parties, women's movements have affected substantive change throughout the continent. Since the 1994 genocide, Rwanda has been a global leader in advancing women's parliamentary representation. Quotas have been established to ensure women's participation in Parliament. Between 2002 and 2003 women's parliamentary participation jumped from 17 seats to 39 seats (UNDP, Turning

Vision, 2007, p. 38) and as of 2008, women held 56 percent of the parliamentary seats in Rwanda (UNIFEM, 2008, para. 1).

However, despite the gains women have made in Rwandan parliamentary representation, concerns still exist. Women members of parliament (MPs) who gain political viability within the governments are also at risk of becoming co-opted by the government. When this occurs, their ties to civil society and to the vulnerable populations who most need their representation may be threatened. They may become "unable or unwilling to maintain strong links to civil society groups" which challenges their very strength and facility to address historically patriarchal oppression with a unified voice (Bauer and Britton, 2006, p. 28).

Although this is a real concern in some instances, other opportunities for collaboration between women MPs and grassroots women's organizations are present and thriving in Rwanda. Women parliamentarians have served as spokespersons for women's groups and for the expansion of women's rights. In these ways representation is indeed occurring (Longman, 2006, p. 145). Women have successfully prodded revisions to the inheritance land laws and ushered in legislation that banned discrimination against women (Longman, 2006, p. 149) in some sectors. Yet an incredible disparity of power still exists for most women. This is evidenced in the fact that Rwanda still "ranks 119 out of 177 countries on the Gender Development Index" (UNDP, 2007, p. 33).

Table 2.1: Rwanda - Women in Decision Making Position

Levels Year	2000			2001			2002			2003		
	M	F	%F	M	F	%F	M	F	%F	M	F	%F
Ministers / State Secretaries	18	3	14.3	21	4	16.0	21	4	16.0	19	9	32.1
General Secretaries	16	5	23.8	16	5	23.8	16	5	23.8	16	2	11.1
Members of Parliament	54	14	26.0	58	16	27.6	57	17	29.8	41	39	48.8
Senators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	6	30.0
Mayors of Provinces	12	0	0.0	12	0	0.0	11	1	9.1	11	1	9.1
Mayors of Districts	151	2	1.3	151	2	1.3	151	4	2.6	106	2	1.9

(UNDP, Turning Vision, 2007, p. 38)

While there may be legal statutes prohibiting gender discrimination in regard to access to resources and opportunities, cultural practices often negate equal treatment in reality. Often the sexes are held to and defined by very different standards. Men are "associated with de jure (legal by court precedent or statutory law) and women with de facto (by practice/custom) resource rights, which has major implications for the relative strength and security of the genders" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 12).

"Increasing intolerance for independent expression and political dissent" (Longman, 2006, p. 146) also threatens women's progress on gender issues. Although the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) has demonstrated a considerable commitment to the expansion of female representation throughout all levels of government, the authoritarian state of Rwanda has also confounded women's gender issues (Longman, 2006, p. 149). Yet undeterred, women's organizations and other NGOs throughout Rwanda continue to push for "emphasis on democratization

and public-sector reform as well as on the need to improve health, literacy, and access to capital, particularly for women" (Ford, 1998, p. 195).

For her article, "The Political Economy of Violence against Women during Armed Conflict in Uganda," Meredith Turshen interviewed post-conflict Ugandan women and then illuminated the milieu whereby women are still suffering gender-biased reparations. She recognized that men who earn war compensation all too often drink it away, leaving little or no benefit for the women or youth for whom they are responsible (Turshen, 2000, p. 821). Turshen goes on to suggest that war compensation would better serve the needs of society if it included "free education, adult literacy classes, and appropriate vocational training" (Turshen, 2000, p. 822) to help women and men learn to make a living through means other than agriculture. Increased access to education and livelihood skills would afford women and youth newfound confidence. "Increasingly, women who have completed upper primary or lower secondary schools are willing to assume leadership positions in women's groups. In some communities women are emerging as active participants in the formation of organizational and political structures" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 142). Perhaps it is through newfound confidence that "they are willing and able to take on management responsibilities, planning activities, or liaison work with government or private agencies" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 142).

Duflo and Topalova further extol the benefits of educating and empowering women for leadership in society. Their research suggests that in areas where women have had the opportunity to be a part of community leadership and development, the systems are less corrupt, and women and men alike are more

likely to engage in public good and they are less likely to engage in the practice of receiving "kickbacks while in leadership" (Duflo and Topalova, 2004, pp. 1, 12, 15).

Duflo and Topalova's findings are harmonious with the discoveries of the British Council's "Effective Leaders? View from Central and East Africa." As a part of a 2002 research effort, a survey was given by the British Council to 800 people in eight countries of Eastern Africa to determine society's perceptions of women's effectiveness as community leaders. Interestingly, more than 70% of the general public thought the performance of women leaders was equal to, or better than, the performance exhibited by male leadership. More than half of the respondents thought women leaders were "less corrupt and cared more about basic needs of the community than men" (as cited in Duflo and Topalova, 2004, p. 3).

In spite of research outcomes such as these, a strong cultural bias that men are more capable of performing tasks that have traditionally been male positions remains (Duflo and Topalova, 2004, p. 2). To be certain much effort is needed to erase these unsubstantiated biases. Even in situations where women have been elevated to positions of leadership in the community and have served their societies effectively, they are often far "poorer than their male counterparts. Additionally, they are less experienced, less educated, and less likely to be literate" (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004, p. 1434).

Rocheleau's research further suggests that individuals, many of them women, who come from "poor households often face increased environmental risks, uncertainty and insecurity, while their entitlements are either precarious or

nonexistent" (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 16). Clearly women are at a greater disadvantage when facing antagonists with elevated socioeconomic means.

Although Rwanda continues to work toward achieving gender-based equity through the governmental agenda, it is apparent that difficult issues still confound successes. Bias, societal stigma and population pressure continue to leave the scale of equality disturbingly unbalanced. For women, population pressure is a key variable. In Susan Martin's study she states that, "excessive population growth has led to (as Geertz termed it) 'agricultural involution,' followed by environmental scarcity, and finally, ecological collapse… Agricultural productivity is canceled by population growth, thus negating the resource generation and other changes that are assumed necessary for sustainable development" (as cited in Silberfein, 1998, p. 195). Although Martin's study occurred 7 years prior to the 1994 genocide and the demography has seen change, the general situation is strikingly similar to the current conditions in Rwanda. Her conclusions about food shortage are exponentially real for the poor and especially for women because when population pressures cause food shortage, it is often women and youth who go without. As well, women and youth often do not have the education or vocational training to attempt non-agrarian work nor do they typically have the economic, social or political capital to gain access to alternative forms of livelihood.

Prior to 1994, Rwanda faced problems "compounded by growing resource scarcity, rising unemployment among landless youth and women, and land degradation" (Ford, 1998, p. 174). This continues in present day Rwanda as well. Unless "spaces of hope" that Daley hopes to see created through alternative

livelihood strategies become a reality, the violence and despair of the past are likely to be repeated. Without viable livelihood options, it is likely that the proletariat will abandon their passive position and resort to more desperate measures out of frustration and hopelessness, as was seen in 1959 and 1994. As Scott explains, "when such stratagems are abandoned in favor of more quixotic action, it is usually a sign of great desperation." Alarmingly, Rwanda's history has generated many points of great desperation in its tumultuous past (Scott, 1985, p. xvi).

The marginalized population, largely comprised of women and youth, continues to be a concern for Rwanda. The society must find a way to help marginalized citizens achieve community integration and obtain educational opportunities. Rwanda is at a deficit, when contrasted with adjacent countries, since it "has limited land and natural and mineral resources on which to base its development strategy. Rwanda must invest in its people and build the country's human capital to be able to decrease poverty in the long run. Investing in education will not only help build economic knowledge, but will also help strengthen the social capital and create conditions for long-term peace and democracy" (UNDP, 2007, p. 3, 22). It is painfully evident that without real options for self-sustainability this population will likely rebel with cataclysmic results. Hence, women and youth particularly need immediate access to traditional as well as vocational education (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

Martin Habimana, the Executive Secretary of the Rubavu Sector in the Rubavu District, identified helping women and youth gain skills necessary for non-agrarian employment as a key development goal for the district. According to

Habimana, an adjunct objective in the district is helping marginalized people become respectable citizens, and to this end additional access to civic education is also needed (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011). He admits that this is not an easy task to undertake since cultural biases and complex gender issues often cause the women and youth to slip through the cracks. However, feminist political analysis suggests that "local, national and transnational levels of engagement" (Salo, 2005, para. 16) are necessary to bring about lasting progress on economic, social and political fronts. Therefore, Habimana's recognition of the problem at the local level is crucial. As national and transnational development schemes are put into practice, geographically present Rwandan "agency must be a critical part of any new paradigm. This would require a sustained critique of those forces that claim to speak on behalf of the people and the grassroots" (Daley, 2008, p. 238). Tangible alternative economic strategies need to be assessed and brought forward (Ford, 1998, p. 198) while considering and using the voices and skills of the grassroots people. The sense is that a failure to do so will leave marginalized Rwandan women and youth with minimal educational or vocational opportunities and limited choices for economic sustainability. "The exclusion of women from social and economic progress is a net loss to the Rwandan economy, to the society and to half its population" (UNDP, 2007, p. 85). Any quality development scheme considered must demand gender equity as a mandatory foundational pillar. "To be broad-based, pro-poor and sustainable, Rwanda's development must include the women, who are the custodians and depositories of Rwanda's natural and human

capital: they till most of its land, care for its children and supervise the education of the country's next generation" (UNDP, 2007, pp. 3, 22).

Thus feminist political ecology theory compliments and overlaps development studies theory as scholars and researchers in both fields agree that viable alternative strategies for livelihood must be explored, and particularly for women and youth. As well, strategists from both fields trumpet the merits of providing educational opportunities and vocational training along with economic programs and interventions if long-term sustainability is to be achieved. Women and youth must gain the skills to engage in economic development, social reform, political transformation, and self-advocacy. Daley's proposition toward emancipatory politics calls out and inspires society to rise above antiquated ideologies and abandon views that perpetuate violence and impoverishment as well as devalue human life or promote militarized masculinities (Daley, 2008, p. 237). However, to get there will require a series of practical steps, such as introducing and promoting off-farm income opportunities for woman and youth. My research attempts to test the merits of such practical steps.

Chapter 3 will consider several examples of alternative vocational training models and programs attempting to meet the needs of marginalized citizens across the African continent. As well, it will offer insights into viable options within the Rwandan context.

Chapter 3 – Micro-Business Bridge

I. Alternative Micro-Business Opportunities

The Rwandan government recently recognized the enormous problems surrounding land pressure and reform and identified these issues as "the greatest factors hindering sustainable peace" in the nation (Musahara and Huggins, 2005, p. 275). Without alternative livelihood options for Rwanda's most vulnerable people, it is widely understood that immanent potential for violence exists. This certainly holds true in the northwestern region of Rwanda where this study is focused. Martin Habimana, the Executive Secretary of the Rubavu sector in the Rubavu district, affirmed the immediate need to seek out alternative livelihood strategies. With the Rubavu sector officially recognized as the most economically depressed sector in the district, Habimana notes that alternative income generating schemes will be key in helping to secure civil and economic stability for the sector and for the larger Rwandan population. Without alternative measures the Executive Secretary fears that "the Rwandan people will once again return to violence out of fear and desperation and act in a mode of self-survival" (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

Thus the government and its appointed officials do recognize that it is crucial in the years ahead to develop off-farm occupation opportunities. However, to date there is minimal research about "alternative livelihood strategies" and their function (Pottier, 2006, p. 527) in the Great Lakes region. Additionally, the Rwandan government lacks adequate funding to provide off-farm vocational training programs, especially for the most marginalized citizens who often lack access to

even traditional education. Official government policy encourages citizens to make their own enterprises and move toward self-reliance. Nevertheless, very limited funding to support proper training programs exists in an environment where training is critical in preparing marginalized citizens for successful entry into non-farming endeavors.

Although the government encourages community based vocational training and wants citizens involved in such programs, it is currently able to offer little in the way of financial support to non-governmental centers or programs. However, that is not to say that the Rwandan government does not attempt to support non-governmental centers in other ways. For example in the Rubavu sector, the government provided land to a non-profit on which to build a community based training center. The government provided military personnel to assist with building projects and community works, alongside providing security for the properties at night. These contributions are significant in signaling support to non-governmental agencies; however, when it comes to providing actual money to build and maintain facilities and/or operate programs, the government argues that it simply does not have the resources (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

In spite of limited funding, alternative vocational training strategies are seen as paramount to the country's future. Scholars and policy makers alike who are concerned with this region have recognized that grassroots efforts to extend livelihood opportunities beyond agricultural options must be advanced in order to divert a revisiting of hostility born from desperation and offer Rwanda's landless generation hope for the future (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011;

Pottier, 2006, p. 527). Efforts that incorporate local knowledge, skills, and resources appear to be having positive effects on the futures of people living on the margins throughout the continent of Africa. Thus, there is a need to look closely at other programs which have met with various levels of success and encountered challenges in meeting the needs of citizens. Much can be gleaned from the positive contributions as well as the challenges and failures of other programs.

In 2000, a study of a non-formal vocational training initiated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was examined in Tanzania. During that time the UNHCR along with the World Food Program, UNICEF and other international NGOs provided protection and assistance to a large population of Burundian refugees living in camps in western Tanzania. Camp-based vocational training programs in the Kigoma and Kagera regions provided instruction to approximately 2,500 people in tailoring, carpentry, handicrafts, bicycle repair, hairdressing, soap making and other micro-vocational industries. The training was devised with two objectives in mind: "to enable target groups to earn a living through the transfer of 'meaningful skills' and to occupy out of school youth, who otherwise had very little to do." The "target groups were…defined as youth, women, or various categories of vulnerables" (Lyby, 2002, pp. 200, 225, 227, and 228).

The trainers were comprised of Burundians who had previously been trained and had perfected their skills in their own country. Although NGOs supported the training programs, they were cautious to ensure that the projects were devised and supported by the communities themselves. The vocational training programs varied to include from 3 to 12 months of instruction. The

majority of instruction was practical in nature due to lack of access to classrooms and materials for more theoretical instruction. Materials were often limited to hand tools and training resources personally owned by the trainers. Trainers themselves were not compensated for their efforts. As might be expected, this created troubling challenges in being able to secure highly qualified trainers that were able to stay long-term with the programs. Another concern was that fact that trainers were only able to "impart skills equal in level to what they themselves had mastered, (therefore), conditions were not the best for high-quality production" (Lyby, 2002, pp. 228-229).

After completing the basic training courses, many individuals were able to access additional assistance from NGOs to develop their own micro-businesses. While this additional assistance seemed like a positive enhancement for the training program, the unforeseen and unfortunate consequence was that some of the individuals were engaged in the training solely for the purpose of gaining access to the follow-up assistance provided by the NGOs. These had little genuine interest in or motivation for the actual skill acquisition process. This factor, together with the training's goal of simply providing youth with "something to do," often resulted in production of "trained" individuals who did not necessarily have long-term intentions of engaging their training in income producing ways. While formal educational initiatives within the refugee camps were under the oversight of the Burundian Minister of Education, the informal vocational training programs were not. Therefore they often lacked adequate coordination. It was widely thought by program leadership that if better coordination had been available for these

vocational training programs, it might have been feasible to improve the process of candidate selection for the training. Thus the training results could have been enhanced if trainees exhibiting actual aptitudes for the vocations and genuine interest in the vocations were more effectively partnered with trainers. It would also have been beneficial to separate those candidates actually seeking a vocation from those drawn to the program simply to have something to do (Lyby, 2002, pp. 231-233).

Beyond the concerns of trainer qualifications and appropriate trainee selection, out-of-camp employment for those trained also became a worry. In this context there were geographic limitations placed upon individuals living in the camps which did not allow them to move "beyond 4 km from the camps." This in turn "limited the extent to which ex-trainees could find employment." The restricted access to materials and local markets imposed upon the refugees by the Tanzanian authorities also put the camp trainees at a disadvantage compared to their Tanzanian competitors (Lyby, 2002, pp. 233-235).

The original intention of the vocational training was to offer skill development that would be useful to the refugees upon repatriation into Burundi. However, as the UNHCR continues to encourage and assist in the repatriation of Burundian refugees from the northwestern regions of Tanzania even today, it is apparent that the original intent of the training could not be implemented, nor were the benefits realized in an expedient manner (UNHCR, United Republic of Tanzania, 2011).

Although this refugee camp-based vocational training model had many shortcomings, it is also important to note that former "trainees appreciated the training they received. Many were found to be busy with various kinds of production, which indicated that they found the work to be worth their while" (Lyby, 2002, p. 235). Others found benefit in the social capital they developed from the training in that it offered them an opportunity to be part of a group of like-skilled and like-minded individuals. The overall consensus drawn by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) survey of the refugee camp-based training programs was that it "achieved good results at low cost" (Lyby, 2002, p. 236). However the IRC also noted that "vocational training had not been given the highest priority among a range of activities competing for the time of the NGO implementors" (Lyby, 2002, p. 219). Erik Lyby, a Denmark based socio-economic planning and evaluation specialist under the UNHCR, concluded that "a common and more consistent approach in planning, coordination, selection of trainees, monitoring and evaluation would have led to the achievement of a higher degree of impact in the form of employment, economic activity and sustainability" (Lyby, 2002, p. 236).

While the implementing NGOs did incorporate Burundian trainers in the camp-based vocational training programs, cultural sensitivity, participant ownership, and participant consultation to determine priorities were not primary concerns for the implementers. Minimizing these considerations adversely affected the successes of the program.

In contrast to the refugee camp program, a development strategy that realized greater success by incorporating participant ownership and demonstrating cultural sensitivity is found in Burkina Faso. The Naam Movement, originally known as the "Kombi Naam" (groups of young people), was started in 1967 in Burkina Faso by a local farmer named Bernard Lédéa Ouédraogo (Pare, 1998, p. 116) and spread to surrounding countries. The movement focused on "developing moral qualities such as solidarity, cooperation, friendship, and loyalty in the young, and at the same time accomplishing socially useful tasks for the village" (Pradervand, 1989, p. 20). The organization also provides moral, civic, and technical training to village youth." Although this was a holistic community based development model larger in scale than any one single vocational training program, it allowed and planned for vocational training as needed and desired by the local community. Without question, one of the key variables in the success of this development model was the skills-based vocational training component.

In Naam groups "all [participants] are equal, regardless of gender, class, caste, and wealth." The Naam development model mandates that "poor people and their institutions be treated as assets and partners in the search for sustainable solutions to development challenges" (Eneh, 2010, p. 104). It is an approach that gives "control over planning decisions and investment resources to community groups and local governments" (Eneh, 2010, p. 104). In this structure, the marginalized of society have a voice and self-governing opportunities that top-down development models often do not afford. The bottom-up approach provides a way whereby "poor men and women can effectively organize in order to identify

community priorities and address local problems, by working in partnership with local governments and other supportive institutions" (Eneh, 2010, p. 104).

Older members of the community are able to lend guidance to, participate in and benefit from trainings and other group activities. Senior members of the cohort are often asked "to be counselors, harnessing the African tradition of respect for the wisdom of the Elders…. The members of the group work together, and share the fruits of the labor…. The group practices a qualitative democracy where people are chosen not for their position in the social hierarchy but for their moral qualities" (Eneh, 2010, p. 110, 111).

At the center of the Naam ideology is the philosophy of "'development without destroying,' to make the village responsible for its own development… starting from the peasant: what he (she) is, what he(she) knows, what he(she) knows how to do, how he(she) lives, and what he(she) wants" (Harrison, 1987, p. 280). Although the overarching philosophies remain the same, every Naam group's development focus is carefully sculpted around the needs of the local community and based on the determination of the people within that community (Eneh, 2010, p. 111).

The Naam technique is to help the community develop from the inside out, which of course "starts with the people, incorporating indigenous values, traditions and technical knowledge, utilizing local resources and endowments with simple technologies, encouraging people's participation, and aims at self-reliance" (Eneh, 2010, p. 112). Among the many community-based development projects that have been completed by Naam groups are water wells and catchments, vegetable gardens

and community grain banks and mills. Naam groups have also been instrumental in training individuals in vocational skills appropriate and viable to local communities, as well as assisting in village business startups (Harrison, 1987, p. 283).

Along with local provisions, the Naam Movement is supported externally by the Six "S" Association, an international organization developed to raise international funding and provide training for the Naam groups specifically. "The Six 'S' stands for *Se Servir de la Saison Seche en Savane et au Sahel* or six times the letter 'S'– which in English translates as 'Using the dry season in the Savanna and Sahel.' The concept of this association is to utilize the dry season, when peasants have no jobs, to promote village development" (Eneh, 2010, pp. 114, 115).

The practical implementation strategies of the Six "S" take on culturally and community appropriate flexible characteristics not unlike the Naam groups that they support. They take the form of "motivating, communicating, supervising grassroots groups, implementing training programs and offering 'flexible funding'" opportunities. The "flexible funding" opportunities are implemented through a three stage process (Eneh, 2010, p. 116). The first stage is to determine the ability of the local communities to self-establish. As it is needed, the Six "S" "helps the groups create a network, find grass-roots communicators, master elementary concepts of management and lay the groundwork for literacy training" (Pradervand, 1989, p. 104). In doing so, guidance is given as to how to develop a solid foundation for local communities to have greater success for self-sufficiency.

Once Naam communities can validate "their ability to save, to manage, and to carry on a dialogue in expressing and defending their viewpoints, needs, and

priorities" (Pradervand, 1989, p. 104), the Six "S" begin to offer "flexible funding" loans that can be used as the recipients choose (Eneh, 2010, p. 116). These processes are not necessarily hasty in implementation. "The first two stages… can easily take 8 to 10 years" (Pradervand, 1989, p. 104) to mature.

By the third stage, the Naam community group has become almost completely self-reliant. "They now become autonomous: they are able to negotiate loans with local banks, and the financial role of the partner is over" (Pradervand, 1989, p. 104).

Although this form of development has met with great success, it is not without fault. First, there have been some problems with loan repayment. This problem may be due to lack of sufficient investigation into the ability of a community to save and manage monetary resource before being given a loan. It has also been suggested that increased financial complications suffered countrywide might have produced unforeseen factors that contributed to non-payment (Eneh, 2010, p. 119).

Secondly, the philosophy of saving and managing one's own resources has not always been disseminated to every member of a community group. There were those within a group who made little effort to manage their money due to a perception of ease in acquiring resources from the Six "S" Association. This type of problem can often be attributed to lack of adequate training in the philosophies of money management (Eneh, 2010, p. 119).

Finally, there was concern that women may not have been adequately represented in the process of governance for the association and its community

groups. However, it should also be recognized that before the development projects were implemented in this area, women were unable to articulate their opinions openly in any public forum. The freedom of speech for women does now exist. Although this might summed up as a minimal advancement, culturally it was a sizeable barrier to overcome (Eneh, 2010, p. 119). In spite of the aforementioned concerns, Naam groups supported by the Six "S" Association continue to find success throughout Burkina Faso. These locally-rooted development institutions are central reasons why Burkina Faso, like Rwanda, lands in the top tier of six African countries for the World Bank's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment of development performance – despite its having, like Rwanda, an authoritarian government (Moss 2011, p. 146).

A third example worthy of examination is a small-scale vocational training strategy implemented in Swaziland, a country where an estimated 69 percent of the population live below the poverty line (UNEP, 2011, para. 1) and where 28 percent suffer from the effects of unemployment (Trading Economics, 2011, para. 1). The Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (BZM), (The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development) and the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), (German Agency for Technical Cooperation), engaged in a small scale training project focused on economically marginalized Swazi craftspeople from January 2000 through December 2002.

The program targeted adults who were already engaging their trades to some extent but wanted to advance their competence and skill development. The original intent of the initiative was to link the trainees with "mainstream Swazi

business and craftspeople" who would take on roles of mentors to the individuals in training. In addition to the craftspeople, other Swazi persons were trained as bookkeepers to provide accounting services for the participants. The participants of the training program were also introduced to computers and given internet training as a means of broadening their approach to marketing. Notably, much effort was made to ensure that women were fairly represented among the training participants. One intention of this program was to increase employment opportunities for craft producers in the informal sector. Additional goals were "to increase the business efficacy of a group of Swazi craft producers, through the training and consultancy 'package'" afforded to them. Another hope was to help them "grow their businesses, improve their incomes and their potential to survive as entrepreneurs and contribute to their ability to employ others" (Grunwald, et al., 2005, pp. 83, 84).

The group of craftspeople from the informal sector was chosen for training based upon the observations of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation. These small-scale businesspersons from the informal sector were identified as "having a high level of entrepreneurial ambition, but not necessarily of entrepreneurial know-how or business skills." Thus training sessions were offered to help them further develop their business skills and seek greater marketability of their products and services. Training participants were asked to nominally "pay" for their training (approximately US $1). In so doing, these individuals demonstrated their commitment to and ownership of the training process (Grunwald, et al., 2005, pp. 85-88).

This model of vocational training experienced both successes and difficulties. The original intention, to link the trainees with mainstream craftspeople, met with limited success. Although some of the mainstream craftspeople found value in participating, many ultimately lost interested in helping, as they were not compensated for their involvement with the trainees. Thus, efforts to create the originally intended linkages were eventually abandoned. This left the German Agency for Technical Cooperation trainer, who was a Swazi national, and her staff to oversee the training workshops and individual mentor advisory conferences. They were also aided by a craft market consultancy group out of South Africa. The revised training plan proved to be more fruitful.

Eventually the GTZ and South African consultancy group transitioned out of the picture in order to allow the trainees to exercise self-reliance. The trainees decided to form their own self-support association, the Swaziland Professional Handcrafts Association (Grunwald, et al., 2005, pp. 86-90) which proved to be successful.

The training of "external" bookkeepers also met with challenges. The innovative objective was to create a group of individuals who, "in addition to supplying services to the project by monitoring the craftspeople participant books for which they would be paid, the bookkeepers, once trained, could offer their skills to others for a fee as well" (Grunwald, et al., 2005, p. 87). However, in spite of training and consultation guidance throughout the process, efforts did not satisfactorily produce participants with the entrepreneurship needed to develop

and sustain their own bookkeeping businesses. Additionally, the model of external bookkeeping created an undesirable dependency for the craftspeople.

Ultimately, the bookkeeping part of the project was also abandoned. In its place, individual craftspeople "were given basic bookkeeping input and most of them kept basic income and expenditure records for the duration of the project and were willing to have these 'audited' by a consultant who worked closely with the project." After the transition to self-sufficiency, the craftspeople continued to keep their own financial records and offer each other accountability through their self-governing association (Grunwald, et al., 2005, p. 87).

Through the use of a local Internet Café, many of the trainees were taught basic computer and internet skills, primarily for e-mail use. "The intention was to empower them to use the 'global village concept', by making contact with potential suppliers, customers and middlemen." Moreover, "the participants and trainers collaborated in the production of a basic manual that could be used for skills transfer." Upon completion of the training, participants were "able to produce basic documents…as well as communicate by e-mail." Introduced as it made sense in context to do so, the computer was used as a communication and marketing device. The basic computer training helped build "confidence and esteem, as well as reduced marginalization" of the trainees (Grunwald, et al., 2005, pp. 88, 93).

The success of this vocational training program was due, in large part, to the flexibility of its implementation. Throughout the process, original plans were readjusted as needed to realign with the needs of the participants and the community involved in the training. The participants were given voice in the

decision-making processes which allowed the training to be as relevant as possible to their needs. The training philosophy of "90% your effort and 10% our input" established a firm basis for future self-sufficiency. The investment of both sides in building trust and operating on a basis of mutual respect played a powerful role in overcoming shortcomings and strengthening achievements (Grunwald, et al., 2005, pp. 91, 92).

A final grassroots vocational training program, also built on the basis of trust and mutual respect, arises from the northwestern border town of Gisenyi, located on the Rwanda and Congo border near the banks of Lake Kivu. Trust and mutual respect became essentially important in this region which was troubled by earlier genocidal activity. Although a large percentage of Tutsi fled the Rubavu district (Gisenyi province) prior to April of 1994 (Kuperman, 2001, p. 18), the remaining populace suffered many of the worst atrocities. It is estimated that only 4,921 (21%) of the Tutsi in that region survived the 4 months of genocide (Kuperman, 2001, p. 122). The region has remained an area of civil unrest from 1994 until the present, as the conflict in the eastern Congo breaches its boundaries and refugees still traverse the border seeking a place of safety.

Simone Pierre and Caritas (Mukarurangwa) Rwaramba took up the challenge of making an impact on this community in the midst of difficult economic, political and social conditions. As lifelong citizens of this area, the couple did not escape the horrors of the 1994 genocide. Although they were able to flee and find refuge in the Congo for almost two years, others in their family perished during this horrific period. In 1998, out of honor and reverence to the God whom they believe protected

them, they founded an organization in the local community and began working to find options to alleviate the economic distress of the most vulnerable, primarily woman and youth (S. Rwaramba, personal communication, March, 2008).

Their grassroots efforts started simply as they looked around them and noticed others in desperate need. They began by gathering orphans and street youth who had no land or homes and taught them simple vocational strategies such as how to make banana leaf cards and repair bicycles so they could earn incomes and provide for their food needs. At the same time, and with the help of the government and community, they opened a technical secondary school for landless orphans of the genocide. In 2003, the Rwarambas were able to formally establish the Ndengera (Rescue Me) Foundation. The foundation works with more than 800 individuals, primarily women and orphaned street youth in the Gisenyi area. From these humble beginnings, their organization is now considered throughout the region of Gisenyi as a haven of hope for vulnerable and landless youth and women (S. Rwaramba, personal communication, March, 2008).

The local government granted the Ndengera (Rescue Me) Foundation land, and members of the community built a multipurpose campus that serves as a vocational training center and health clinic for marginalized woman and youth. Clients are provided with opportunities for educational advancement and vocational training to help them provide for their daily food and care needs. They are introduced to a host of cottage industry options and in some cases provided with micro-loans to help them begin.

Banana-leaf card manufacturing was introduced to many of the early clients as an income generating enterprise. The project blossomed and gave vision to many other small-scale endeavours. Many landless individuals were taught sewing skills that allowed them to produce and sell clothing. Primary school-age orphans were taught how to weave traditional mats to pay for their school fees. These examples and many others brought short-term economic relief to individuals and families. In my current research, I investigate whether these options can provide long-term sustainability and economic viability or rather whether such initiatives provide effective short-term relief while individuals seek other forms of livelihood.

Figure 3.1: Banana-Leaf Card Manufacturing
(Miller, 2011)

Although not without challenges, grassroots programs of this nature continue to find success and build networks by seeking markets for the goods produced in microeconomic ventures. As evident in the case of the Rwaramba's

efforts in the West, these alternative approaches are giving marginalized citizens a chance to succeed and provide for themselves and their families (S. Rwaramba, personal communication, March, 2008). Although sparse throughout the region, the Rwaramba's work does not stand alone. There are currently eight vocational training centers in the Rubavu district. Of the eight, only one is a government-sponsored facility while the other seven are community/NGO-supported centers. Other high quality, thriving, locally devised programs are situated throughout the country as well.

Figure 3.2: Garments and Crafts Produced by Vocational Trainees
(Miller, 2011)

For example, Françoise Muhorakeye, a produce vendor just outside of Kigali, has been instrumental in developing a ten-women cooperative that has significantly increased income generation for its participants (Microfinance Africa, 2010, para. 2, 3), and in the eastern Rwandan district of Kayonza there are 5 vocational training

centers (RoR Capacity Building, 2008, p. 10) where individuals are successfully preparing for careers outside of agriculture. Grassroots micro-industry training initiatives such as these also provide reminders to the world that Rwandans are not helpless, incapable and waiting for intervention from the outside.

The government, through the Vision 2020 initiative, encourages trained individuals to develop and/or join trade skill employment associations. The government of Rwanda officially supports the development of cooperatives, for they are seen as an effective means to help vulnerable people work together to gain resources and collective security within the society. Cooperatives are seen as especially useful in helping the marginalized population achieve communal strength and gain access to capital to further development their individual businesses (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

It seems that there will be no substantial government funding coming to the private sector vocational training programs in the foreseeable future. Those dollars simply do not exist. International and internal non-government funding continues to advance this work, yet it also is limited. The success of these micro-industry and vocational training initiatives seems to be local investment and input. When local ownership and personal commitment are evident, there is verification that these types of programs flourish. It is not enough for the national government to tout the future availability of alternative industry without research and a solid plan in place for developing alternative options. Thus additional research is definitely needed to determine the long-term viability of such measures.

Figure 3.3: Community Cooperative
(Miller, 2011)

The government wants additional training centers; however the means to develop such centers is sparse. The Rubavu sector currently has two vocational training centers, the Ndengera Foundation and a Catholic vocational training center. The Executive Secretary of this sector has suggested that an additional center is much needed in his area of governance alone. Yet the option to build a center is not currently fiscally viable. Non-government, community based options like the Ndengera Foundation seem to offer the greatest chances of advancement for vocational training (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

Thus the intention of this study is to examine the viability of small-scale alternative economic strategies and the educational and vocational training offered by Ndengera “Rescue Me” Foundation programs and others like it. Collaterally, I seek to determine whether the micro-business experience and training allows individuals to gain social and political capital needed to institute change within the community and within their own homes. If alternative strategies can be validated, they may in turn be replicated in other communities.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology

I. Methodology

As emphasized in chapter 3, both the Rwandan government and local citizens are interested in empirical research that generates information and data on vocational training and micro-industry development as a means of replacing agrarian forms of livelihood in the Rubavu region of Rwanda. "In the Rubavu sector a key development goal is to assist the people in gaining skills needed for employment. It is vital to increase jobs and employment in non-agriculture spheres. Therefore, the government encourages strategic placement of private vocational centers throughout the sector" (M. Habimana, Personal Communication, June, 2011).

As well, the national and international development communities recognize that it will no longer be possible for citizens of the region to sustain livelihoods through agricultural occupations into the next decade. Thus, the Vision 2020 development goals encourage research and planning for alternative livelihood strategies to include vocational training in the region.

In an attempt to help address these needs, I designed a study to extend what is already known about micro-industry, development studies and feminist political ecology in the northwestern lake region of Rwanda. As part of my research, I sought to learn the background of local project participants, affirm the contributions of local knowledge in the vocational and micro-business development training, assess the efficacy of programs and examine the value added to participants taking part in

vocational and micro-business development training programs. I used several research questions to guide my investigation. These included the following:

Research Questions

- Does micro-business offer sufficient economic viability to replace traditional agrarian options long-term for marginalized women and youth?
- Does cottage industry serve as a temporary solution to allow the marginalized time and training to gain further employment or enter another type of vocation?
- Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's social capital within a society? If so, what assets are realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What social navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?
- Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's civic and political capital within a society? If so, what political assets are leveraged, realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What political navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?
- Is it possible for those trained in micro-business principles and vocations to train others in the same projects or in replicated models of training?

I selected and employed three different methodological approaches for data collection, including: a survey of participants collected via a carefully designed questionnaire, observation of participants in local vocational training programs, and first-person interviews with participants currently receiving vocational training, participants who have completed training, individuals now operating micro-businesses as a result of the training, program trainers, local social workers, and local government officials.

II. Engagement of a Local Rwandan Research Colleague

I also chose to engage a local research colleague, Caritas Mukarurangwa, to assist me in gaining access to the target population and to help me gather information that might be perceived as sensitive. My decision to engage a female Rwandan colleague was multifaceted. First, since my study was to be focused primarily on women and youth, a female collaborator, with a lifetime of history and context in the region, seemed a must. I needed to quickly access information and confidences that would have taken years to build or discover over time, if discovery was even possible. Second, I was also concerned that my presence as a male researcher of different ethnicity, language and socioeconomic background might skew the way respondents answered the questions, particularly if I was the one presenting them with the task of completing the survey. I had worked previously with Caritas Mukarurangwa in the areas of child development and HIV/AIDS intervention, and hence our historic association led both of us to experience a sense of trust and mutual confidence in one another. As anticipated, her assistance in gathering research data was extremely valuable to the study.

In keeping with University of Kansas research policy, both Caritas Mukarurangwa and I completed the Human Subjects Committee application process before beginning research with field participants.

III. Survey of Participants via Questionnaire

After initial discussion with my research colleague, I felt that a written questionnaire would be the most time-efficient way to get responses from many program participants. I thus designed a questionnaire to use in surveying individuals involved in the vocational and micro-business training programs.

My research colleague and doctoral advisor perused the original version of the questionnaire and recommended several modifications to help the tool better fit the cultural context and reflect the rhetorical questioning style used in Kinyarwanda, the national language. In 2008, however, the Rwandan Government also declared English to be one of its official languages and mandated that all schools begin to teach in English rather than French, an additional nationally recognized language. Their ultimate desire in making the change was to replace French with English as the language of commerce, negotiation and academics (NPR, 2008, para. 1, 2). Keeping this consideration in mind, I made the decision to have the questions on the survey appear in both Kinyarwanda and English. (Please see Appendix A: Participate Survey Questionnaire to review the full survey.)

I had multiple goals for the survey/questionnaire. First, I wanted to obtain basic data from a large number of participants in a short period of time. Second, I wanted to ensure the willingness of individuals to answer questions of a somewhat personal nature for the study. Third, I hoped to use the results of the survey to choose individuals for further interviews and observation. My research colleague tested the questionnaire with a few individuals outside the population of study to

determine whether it would be understood and favorably received by the target audience, and she ultimately determined that it would be.

The first section of the survey/questionnaire asked program participants to disclose demographic information. Since the primary focus of the study was intended to address the challenges encountered by landless youth of Rwanda, I asked the ages of respondents in order to help me verify the number of respondents that met the definition of youth as put forth by Rwanda's Ministry of Youth, Sports, and Culture. Persons between the ages of 14 and 35 fit the Rwandan definition of youth (RoR Youth Policy, 2006, p. 8). Because I was trying to determine migration patterns of program participants and consider their movement in light of land-related economic circumstances, I needed to know from where participants had begun their life journeys, and therefore asked respondents for their places of birth.

For the same reason explained above, I also needed to know where program participants currently resided. To augment the information I gleaned from respondents about their regions of origin and their subsequent movement, I gathered district and sector maps from a local government agency to verify local migration patterns of respondents. Program participants from both genders were encouraged to complete the survey questionnaire. I deliberately tried to include a similar number of both genders among respondents, so I could look comparatively at the answers and determine possible gender-based patterns among respondents.

With a question on the level of education before the program, I was seeking to know whether program participants came primarily from situations where they

did not have access to traditional education offered by government or private schools. Thus, the question helped me establish the vulnerability of program participants in the larger society. I selected a question about any *change in economic status as a result of the program* for its potential in helping to answer research questions 1 and 2, dealing with micro-business as means to replace agrarian options. I was seeking to know if improvements in economic status as a result of the program provided ultimate relief to economic challenges or rather if increases in monetary resources provided a more temporary form of relief until other means could be accessed. I asked participants about their *length of time in the program* to help determine whether increasing economic gains were made proportionate to length of time of service in the area in which they were trained. I wanted to know the *year an individual moved to her/his current location* to determine the recent nature of any migration that occurred in the lives of respondents. Finally, I included a question on the *type of micro-business involvement* to determine what types of micro-businesses respondents were involved in. I hoped to distinguish which kinds of micro-business were more economically viable in helping vulnerable people achieve the goal of self-sustainability.

The second section of the survey/questionnaire asked participants to provide responses to ten questions directly aligned with the study's research questions. By asking the questions in a direct manner, I hoped to ascertain the respondents' perspective on the value of the vocational training, learn the participants' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the training, understand whether the participants gained social, civic, and political capital as a result of the

training, and know whether participants learned to engage in self-advocacy processes.

I included additional questions to help me obtain information about whether the trainings and newly introduced vocational opportunities helped individuals gain economic stability. I sought to learn what the participants and trainers viewed as possible barriers in the process of educating additional students. I sought to learn what was helpful and hurtful in the process of assisting trainees in launching and operating their own micro-businesses. Finally, I hoped to determine whether the recipients of vocational training felt prepared and confident in using the information and skills they gained to train others in grassroots initiatives. The specific questions used to glean this information appear ahead in Table 4.1.

My research colleague Caritas Mukarurangwa invited individuals in the midst of receiving vocational training as well as those who had already finished training programs at the Ndengera Foundation to take the survey/questionnaire. Local social workers also helped to seek out individuals who had previously received training and were employed or operating micro-businesses in other communities to complete the survey. Those who fit the demographic profile and wished to participate were included although no one was required to complete the survey/questionnaire.

Table 4.1: Survey Questions

Survey Questions	
1. What was your employment history prior to the program?	This question aligns with research question #1.
2. A. Do you or your family currently own land? B. Did you or your family own land at some time in the past? C. Explain your land ownership history.	These questions align with research question #1.
3. A. What type of vocational training have you received as part of this program? B. How has the training been valuable to you? C. What is the impact of your training?	These questions align with research question #2, 3, and 4.
4. How would you describe the strengths/weaknesses of the training?	This question aligns with research questions #1 and 3.
5. A. What types of new conversations are you engaging in (conversations you were not having before)? B. How are these conversations beneficial to you? C. What new relationships have you developed during your participation in the project? D. How are these relationships beneficial in your life?	These questions align with research questions #3 and 4.
6. A. Have you become more civically or politically involved as part of the project? If so, how? B. What self-advocacy skills have you learned and how have you helped your situation using these new skills?	These questions are aligned with research questions #3 and 4.
7. A. What employment and/or economic gains have you realized as a result of the training and micro-business opportunity? B. How would you describe your economic situation before the program versus now?	These questions are aligned with research question #1 and 2.
8. At this point in your training, what information and skills could you teach neighbors, family, friends that would be helpful to them in life and/or in business?	This question is aligned with research question #5.
9. What are the greatest challenges in operating a micro-business?	This question is aligned with research question #1.
10. If this program/training were to be replicated in another place much like your own community, what advice would you offer to make the training as successful as possible?	This question is aligned with research question #5.

The survey/questionnaire was administered between March 2011 and June of 2011. For some, the survey/questionnaire was administered orally and responses

transcribed because participants had limited literacy and writing skills. Individuals who were able to read the survey/questionnaire and write responses did so on their own. My original intention was to have approximately 30 survey/questionnaires to ensure a broad sample of responses. However, I was ultimately able to collect surveys/questionnaires from 48 participants, which far exceeded my initial goal. The data and information gained through this qualitative research-based approach was essential in answering the research questions.

IV. Observations of Participants

After arriving on site in June 2011 and engaging in discussion with my research colleague, we purposefully selected visit sites and planned for me to engage in interactions with current program participants, graduates of the vocational training programs, trainers, community leaders and a social worker in the Gisenyi area. This allowed me the opportunity to have first person interactions with local constituents, experience the vocational training classes and see the impact of the program within the local community. These observations, interactions and conversations were essential to my research.

Over the next few weeks I watched the training participants engage in the classroom setting as well as participate in hands-on activities to practice their vocations. For example, I was able to sit in on an auto mechanic classroom training session as well as engage with the trainer and students. I photographed the classroom and hands-on instruction. I also observed in a furniture-making

workshop, engaged with the trainees and trainer and photographed students implementing their newly learned vocational skills.

In other instances, I observed individuals creating products of their training in community settings. I visited the self-established micro-businesses of several participants to see the individuals interacting with in their customers. I also visited several trainees who were working for other employers and visited with their employers. I was able to witness first-hand auto mechanics, bead making, greeting card making, masonry, furniture making, hair braiding and sewing. I captured data from these observations and community visits to businesses through anecdotal field notes and photography of the activities.

V. Interviews

With the help of my colleague, Caritas Mukarurangwa and her husband Simon Pierre Rwaramba, I was able to gain access to the insights and perspectives of many individuals within the Rubavu district. Since they are engaged in the area of micro-business development in the northwestern city of Gisenyi, Rwanda, their daily relationship with the individuals upon whom my research is focused proved invaluable. I was able to enlist Caritas Mukarurangwa's services to assist in collecting data and in so doing was able to survey 48 individuals via the questionnaire. Her daily proximity to and trusting relationship with the individuals of this community allowed me to receive the benefit of candid and insightful dialogue from the surveyed participants. The access I was granted to trainees and

trainers from other vocational centers as well as the Ndengera Foundation, district social work professional and district government leaders further validated the conclusions drawn from my research.

Both Caritas and Simon Pierre's lifetime experiences with the culture and knowledge of the languages of the area proved to be instrumental as we engaged in deeper conversation with participants. The trust bestowed in them by the community was extended to me. This was apparent through the nine in-depth field interviews I was able to secure with the following individuals:

30 year old female	- Training recipient
27 year old male	- Training recipient
40 year old female	- Training recipient
24 year old male	- Training recipient
41 year old female	- Training recipient/Trainer
47 year old male	- Trainer
22 year old male	- Trainer
48 year old male	- Social worker
38 year old male	- Community leader

These individuals were purposefully selected for in-depth interviews because of the well-rounded insights they had to share and because of the multitude of affiliations they possessed with the vocational training initiatives. For example, some of the interviewees were currently going through training programs. Others had just finished training programs. Some were engaged in micro-business

implementation after being out of training for more extended periods. Some were trainers themselves. One local government official and one district social worker also provided valuable perspectives. Thus, I was able to glean feedback from multiple perspectives and from individuals representing low, middle and high-income levels within the community.

VI. Method of Data Analysis

The data collection tools utilized in this study included a demographic survey and questionnaire, first-person observation and focused interviews captured by anecdotal field notes. The data gleaned from the surveys/questionnaires and interviews focused significantly on human behaviors and reasoning. Therefore I used primarily qualitative analysis to determine the outcomes.

Nonetheless, quantitative insight was also valuable in determining findings. Descriptive statistics were used to define the demography of the participants. Additionally, since most of the data was categorical, I introduced inferential statistics with the use of the Fisher's exact test to analyze nominal data. Fisher's exact test helped to extend quantitative objectivity by determining correlations in the data set between participants and their gender, educational attainment and type of micro-business training.

Chapter 5 – Study Findings

Research data was collected, reviewed and categorized. Statistical analyses were completed using Fisher's exact test to determine if statistically significant differences in categorical data were evident. Findings in the demographic categories are provided as well as findings related to the five research questions. Results are first represented through tables and clarified through expository explanations.

I. Demographic Findings

Gender Demographics

Table 5.1: Gender

Gender	
Males:	31
Females:	17

In reviewing feminist political ecology history and theory germane to issues of land pressure in Rwanda and the need for alternative economic options, I found an abundance of information documenting the challenges faced by women in the society. I thus assumed that the need for vocational training and subsequent business launching might be more poignant for women. However, when I arrived in Rwanda and began on-ground research among the participants of the vocational training programs, I found that men too were drawn to the programs out of similar needs for alternative economic options. I found both males and females enrolled in

training programs. Those who volunteered to complete the questionnaire/survey and engage in interviews also represented both genders.

When I realized the significant population of males among those being trained, I speculated as to whether gender bias might have been a hindrance to women feeling welcome in the programs. Knowing that women's initiatives are sometimes stymied by threats and that women often report "being made to feel simply, 'out of place'" (Massey, 1994, p. 148) in the society and in business, I wanted to obtain women's first-person perspectives on this issue. When I examined the notion of female welcomeness in the programs through interviews with a host a women, I found that they reported very little prejudice toward them while they were participating in the training. In fact, the goal to strengthen women's participation in the training programs was emphasized by male and female participants, graduates, trainers, social workers and a government official.

Nonetheless, I did find some training programs that were more "gendered" than others. Females more often chose production-based activities such as sewing or jewelry/bead making over service-based skills such as auto mechanics, although only by a slim margin. Men, on the other hand, sought out service-based skills training by a margin of almost 2 to 1 in my sampling.

Table 5.2: Gender – Training Type

Gender – Training Type	
Male-Production	11
Female-Production	10
Male-Service	20
Female-Service	7

I used Fisher's exact test to further determine whether the type of micro-business differed across gender. Fisher's exact test is similar to a chi square test, but it is more accurate for smaller sample sizes (Maxwell and Delaney, 2004, p.41) like mine. The test had a p-value above 0.05 indicating that there was no significant difference in the type of micro-business selected across genders.

Table 5.3: Fisher's exact test – Micro-Business/Gender

Fisher's exact test – Micro-Business/Gender	
Outcome Tested	P-value
Type of Micro-business – Gender	0.1404

There was however one female participating in the auto mechanics class. Her personal story, gleaned through an interview with her trainer, revealed a more complex perspective on gender roles in business and society. The woman's trainer shared that she was one of the more highly skilled pupils in the auto mechanics class, yet he expressed concern that she might encounter difficulty finding a job in a local garage due to her gender. The trainer's fears for the woman paralleled those of

Duflo and Topalova (2004, p. 2) who also recognized a strong cultural bias inferring that men are more capable of performing tasks that have traditionally been male positions. The trainer explained that in the Rwandan society men are typically the owners of vehicles, and he recognized that unfortunately many men in the culture would find it embarrassing and unacceptable to have women work on their cars. Thus the trainer was working with the female trainee to help her think about ways she could find gainful employing in spite of this gender-based challenge. He was also working with her to help her develop self-advocacy skills if she chose to work in a garage. He further suggested that she might try to find employment selling auto parts in a store because of her superior knowledge of automotive parts.

This vignette provided a glimpse into one of the societal issues subjugating women in Rwanda. I witnessed variations on this theme in political and religious contexts as well. For example, I was invited to attend a marriage ceremony where the host shared insights into the rituals and symbols of the day. One ceremony symbolically gave the woman to the man. However, after cultural interpretation I found that the meaning of the ritual went beyond symbolism. It was quite literal, for even today in Rwanda a married woman must seek the permission of her husband for almost anything she chooses to do outside the home including working or taking part in vocational training. Although official law and government policies may call for equal and fair treatment of women, strong cultural mores continue to put women at a disadvantage when they seek to better their situations.

Although I found no evidence of maltreatment of women in the vocational training programs, these societal occurrences did cause me to pause and wonder about the many women who were not represented among the vocational trainees. I know it is probable that many others were not there because of male dominance in their lives.

Age Demographics

The government of Rwanda officially defines youth as those between the ages of 14 and 35. Youth account for 36% of the country's inhabitants (Shema, 2004, p. 4). When I examined the age demographic of those who participated in my study, as anticipated I found mostly youth.

Table 5.4: Age

Age	
Median	22
Mean Age:	23
Age Range:	16-42

The age-related findings confirmed my supposition that many of those seeking to find alternative sources of livelihood beyond agrarian options would indeed be youth. Nonetheless, the median age of 22 for the survey respondents was actually higher than the country's median age of 18 among its citizenry. Acknowledging that the average lifespan in Rwanda is 58 years of age (CIA World

Factbook, 2010, Rwanda), my sampling of respondents was representative of the wage earning population found throughout the country.

Educational Attainment Demographics

The levels of education reported by study participants illustrated the limited opportunities to which the majority of the individuals going through vocational training programs had access. Of the 48 individuals surveyed, only 16 graduated from primary school, and of those 16 who were fortunate enough to be able to move on to secondary school, none were able to graduate from secondary school.

Table 5.5: Educational Attainment

Education (Attended)	
Primary School	32
Secondary	16

Table 5.6: Gender - Education

Gender - Education	
Male-Primary	19
Female-Primary	13
Male-Secondary	12
Female-Secondary	4

Again, I used Fisher's exact test to determine if there might be a significant difference between educational attainment and gender. The test had a p-value above

0.05 indicating that there was no significant difference between gender and educational attainment.

Table 5.7: Fisher's exact test – Education/Gender

Fisher's exact test – Education/Gender	
Outcome Tested	P-value
Gender - Education	0.3503

Finally, I wanted to test to see if there was a significant difference between educational attainment and type of micro-business entered into by participants.

Table 5.8: Education - Type MB

Education - Type MB	
Primary -Production	13
Secondary - Production	8
Primary - Service	19
Secondary - Service	8

With a p-value of 0.5553, I found no significant difference between the level of educational attainment and the type of micro-business entered by participants.

Table 5.9: Fisher's exact test – Micro-business/Education

Fisher's exact test – Micro-business/Education	
Outcome Tested	P-value
Type of Micro-business - Education	0.5553

In Rwanda moving on to higher levels of secondary schooling can become competitive and costly. The final three years of secondary school are known as "Senior Secondary" and "fewer than 13,000 students can be admitted into the 734 secondary schools. The vast majority of Rwandan students attend public boarding schools, many of which are highly competitive; there are also private secondary schools in the country" (Embassy of the US –Kigali, 2012, para. 3) available to students with financial resources to pay sizable tuitions. Those who have the opportunity to finish secondary school are much more likely to find sustainable employment in the formal sector and obtain access to higher education.

The educational demographic data gathered from respondents in my study indeed confirmed that marginalized populations with few traditional schooling options are the ones taking advantage of community-based vocational training programs. These vulnerable individuals simply do not have access to traditional educational opportunities that might help them reach self-sustainability through careers in the formal sector.

Residency Demographics

As suspected and as supported in the development studies literature, rural to urban migration patterns were distinctly evident in the responses made by survey participants and further reinforced in interview elaborations. As it is becoming increasingly more difficult for Rwandan citizens to sustain agrarian livelihoods,

rural to urban migration is on the increase. Although more than half of the individuals surveyed originated from rural settings, the majority now live in urban areas.

Table 5.10: Place of Residence at Birth and Place of Residence Currently

Place of Residence at Birth and Currently			
Urban	21	Urban (Current):	42
Rural (Birth):	23	Rural (Current):	5

This data coupled with the education-related data are telling. As Jennifer Olson points out, "the composition of the urban immigrant stream has undergone a change due to the decline of agricultural options. Although earlier urban immigrants had relatively high levels of schooling, the educational level has declined as individuals with little or no education, those who previously sought land in rural areas, now migrate to the cities" (as cited in Silberfein, 1998, p. 188). My study confirmed that those arriving in urban areas with little education are especially hard-pressed to find forms of wealth generation.

Land-Ownership Demographics

I obtained history of land ownership from the respondents and found that many owned land previously and many still owned land. Of the 48 respondents to the survey, 28 said that they currently own land; however, of that group 22 reported

either that their land was no longer fertile or their land was of such small size that it was impossible to sustain livelihoods for themselves and their families.

Table 5.11: Owns Land

Owns Land	
Yes	28
No	20

Table 5.12: Owns Sustainable Land Plots

Sustainable Land Plots	
Yes	6
No	22

Of those respondents who were landowners, only 6 indicated that their land plots played roles in sustaining themselves and their families. The other 22 landowners repeatedly recognized that it was not possible to sustain their families through agriculture alone. These land ownership demographics were also helpful to me in answering my first research question.

II. Research Question 1

Does micro-business offer sufficient economic viability to replace traditional agrarian options long-term for marginalized women and youth? In order to answer research question #1, I purposefully designed survey questions germane to the

research question and collected responses. I considered these areas in answering research question #1:

- Participants' employment history prior to the program
- Participants' land ownership information
- Participants' perceived strengths/weaknesses of the program
- Participants' reported employment and economic gains as a result of the program
- Participants' challenges in micro-business sustainability

I augmented the information gleaned on surveys by asking purposeful questions in follow-up interviews. Findings are presented ahead.

Employment History Prior to the Program

In attempting to answer research question #1, I considered participants' employment history prior to the vocational training program.

Table 5.13: Employment History Prior to the Program

Previous Employment	
Informal	28
Formal	13
Unemployed	7

When asked about their means of sustaining themselves prior to receiving vocational training, 6 out of 48 responded that they unsuccessfully tried to support themselves through agriculture. 29 others had no access to formal employment and indicated that they worked as a domestic laborer. Some reported carrying packages home from the market for others, stealing, begging in the streets, engaging in prostitution or having no form of employment.

Table 5.14: Survey Responses: Employment History

Survey Responses: Employment History	
Before the program, I used to carry packages in the market in order to feed my younger brothers, clothe them, and pay the rent.	Respondent 31
I wandered in the town and engaged in prostitution.	Respondent 13
Formally I was a pupil, but I lacked school fees and dropped out. Then I went into carrying parcels.	Respondent 12
I relied on begging in town and robbery.	Respondent 15
I was accustomed to housework and sometimes carrying parcels.	Respondent 22

Land Ownership Information

In attempting to answer research question #1, I considered participants' land ownership information. Land ownership statistics were previously presented in tables 5.11 and 5.12. While some respondents owned land, most experienced insufficient yields for sustainability, if they farmed the land at all. My findings were consistent with those of Clay who reported that Rwandan agrarians have

experienced a decrease in productivity in their land holdings due to soil overuse and degradation (Clay, 1996, p. 13).

Table 5.15: Survey Responses: Land Ownership

Survey Responses: Land Ownership	
I haven't seen anyone from my family getting revenue from the use of our land. We use it every year, but we don't have fertilizers in order to increase production.	Respondent 5
Our land yielded some production but not enough. We wouldn't die from hunger but there was no economic gain from it. I decided to shift to another activity that helped me build a house and progress.	Respondent 8
Our land is in a rural area but it doesn't give enough revenue to feed the whole family. In order to live we have to practice other activities.	Respondent 7

Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program

In attempting to answer research question #1, I considered participants' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the vocational training program.

Table 5.16: Strengths in Program

Strengths in Program	
Gained knowledge/skills	29
Access to training materials	9
Connections from training	2

Of the 48 respondents, 40 offered comments about the strengths of the vocational training program. 29 respondents acknowledged that the vocational training programs had notably enhanced their knowledge and skills in ways that could provide or were already providing sustainable livelihoods upon graduation. The remaining respondents commented that the training materials and relationship building opportunities positioned them positively as they entered the work force.

Table 5.17: Survey Responses: Training Strengths

Survey Responses: Training Strengths	
I came to know how one can be self-reliant by using one's efforts and willingness.	Respondent 34
There was enough equipment to learn from the place of the training.	Respondent 43
There are enough equipment and good trainers.	Respondent 19
The training helped me know how to find a market for my production.	Respondent 13

Table 5.18: Weaknesses in Program

Weaknesses in Program	
Too short	9
Cost/Difficult schedule	5
Lack of opportunities after	12
Poor training materials	5
Lack of experience	1

Of the 48 respondents, 32 conveyed concerns about the training as it pertained to post-training sustainability. The greatest concern, voiced by 12 persons, regarded the difficulty of entering the workforce with limited access to start up capital. Others were concerned that their training period was not long enough to gain the skills needed to enter the workforce competitively. Although perceived in a positive light by others, in some trainings venues the issue of inadequate training materials to enter the workplace was brought to light.

Table 5.19: Survey Responses: Training Weaknesses

Survey Responses: Training Weaknesses	
We were trained but without being given means to be able to launch our businesses.	Respondent 44
It is difficult to make a profit from a very small amount of investment.	Respondent 26
The problem is that the period allotted for the program is relatively short	Respondent 20
After my training I encountered more modern materials I hadn't experienced at school.	Respondent 27

Employment and Economic Gains as a Result of the Program

In attempting to answer research question #1, I considered participants' employment and economic gains as a result of the vocational training program.

Table 5.20: Change in Economic Status

Change Economic Status	
Increase	43
Decrease	2
No Response	3

These responses were particularly telling in that 43 of the 48 respondents reported that they had experienced positive changes in economic status due to their participation in the vocational training programs.

Table 5.21: Survey Responses: Employment and Economic Gains

Survey Responses: Employment and Economic Gains	
The economic gains I got are that I am able to support myself, to pay school fees for my children, and sensitize young people to initiate their own projects/businesses.	Respondent 16
I am able to be self-reliant. This protects me from wandering.	Respondent 21
Sewing allows me to solve my problems of life without begging.	Respondent 4

When asked how they would describe their economic situations before they became involved with the vocational training programs in comparison with their economic situations after, the respondents overwhelmingly reported enhanced circumstances.

Table 5.22: Survey Responses: Pre-Training Economic Situation

Survey Responses: Pre-Training Economic Situation	
My economic situation was very bad. I begged my husband when I was in pressing need, but today that is not the case. I try to solve my own problems.	Respondent 8
It was hard. I had no hope of living. I was still small and without strength. Coming from the village, it was hard to adapt in town.	Respondent 46
My economic situation was not good because I knew nothing that would help me to gain money in order to live a decent life.	Respondent 11
Before starting a job, I had no money but now I can get jobs and I am living a better life.	Respondent 30
I used to cultivate, but I could not build a house. But when I moved into this job, I was able to get a house.	Respondent 44

Challenges to Micro-business Sustainability

In attempting to answer research question #1, I considered participants' challenges in obtaining micro-business sustainability. When asked for comment as to what challenges they faced when trying to develop or sustain micro-businesses almost all respondents shared thoughts with some putting forward multiple considerations. Access to materials and investment capital were the most common concerns voiced by the respondents. Access to markets and shear fatigue were also mentioned often. Since Rwanda has officially instituted English as the new language of commerce, language learning was expressed as a challenge by some.

Table 5.23: Challenges to Micro-Business Sustainability

Challenges to Micro-Business Sustainability	
Access to materials for trade	22
Investment capital	12
Access to markets	7
Fatigue	7
Language barrier	3
Limited continuing education	1
No challenges	1

Respondents shared many similar views in reference to their challenges in launching micro-businesses.

Table 5.24: Survey Responses: Challenges to Micro-Business

Survey Responses: Challenges to Micro-Business	
Finding tools in order to perform well. Finding money to buy basic tools such as tires and paste. Lack of tools is an obstacle to my work.	Respondent 15
My materials are not enough. Some of my clients come from far away. Many clients wanting my services do not have money.	Respondent 18
Finding money for investing and being ready with the taxes though they weigh heavily on my activity as well as finding a location that fits for this type of business.	Respondent 23
I will struggle in order to obtain a market for my product. The lack of a market handicaps my activity.	Respondent 16
The equipment for mechanics is too expensive. I have no stand. Knowing only the Kinyarwanda language is a challenge.	Respondent 19

These multiple findings regarding research question #1 prompted the cumulative conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

III. Research Question 2

Does cottage industry serve as a temporary solution to allow the marginalized time and training to gain further employment or enter another type of vocation?

In order to answer research question #2, I purposefully designed survey questions relevant to the research question and collected responses. I considered these areas in answering research question #2.

- Participants' type of vocational training and its value and impact.
- Participants' employment and economic gains after the training versus before the training.

I augmented the information gleaned on surveys by asking purposeful questions in follow-up interviews. Findings are presented ahead.

Type of Vocational Training and Its Value and Impact

In attempting to answer research question #2, I considered participants' type of vocational training and it value and impact in gaining employment or launching micro-businesses.

Table 5.25: Type of Micro-Business

Type of Micro-Business	
Sewing	8
Hair Styling/Barber	9
Building/Carpentry/Masonry	8
Motorbike transport	4
Selling produce (small market)	3
Bead making	2
Mechanics/Tire repair	7
Teaching vocational skills to others	1
Banana leaf cards	1
Cooking	2
Shoe repair	1
Sports and acrobatics	1
Car cleaning	1

The 48 respondents identified 13 different cottage industry professions in which they were trained. From the onset I was curious to know if any or all of these vocational options could provide long-term economic solutions or if certain vocational options offered sustainability while others could only provide temporary relief until a more secure profession could be found.

When I investigated this question, I found that graduates of the training programs were indeed practicing the actual vocations in which they had been trained. The vast majority had been either hired by someone or continued the vocation as a cottage industry.

Table 5.26: Training was the same as Current Employment

Training Same as Current Employment	
Yes	45
No	1
No Response	2

There was little indication that graduates were using the vocational skills they learned in training as only temporary solutions or stepping-stone into different vocations. There was little evidence that graduates were using their vocational skills to try to purchase land and get back into agriculture. Rather, most graduates were continuing to hone their skills and seek additional training and experience in the vocations in which they had been trained.

However, there was evidence that respondents were looking for new and enhanced ways to apply the training and collaborate with others to produce more generative effects. Some graduates were practicing multiple professions simultaneously to increase results. In some cases individuals were able to supplement their newly formed vocational livelihoods with small agricultural plots and related micro-business extension endeavors.

Table 5.27: Survey Response: Extension Endeavors

Survey Response: Extension Endeavors	
I am now training others in the skills I have learned and I am also increasing my own knowledge.	Respondent 17
Because of this training, I was able to buy a plot in town. I was able to open an account at the bank. This was impossible before my business.	Respondent 31
If you know what you are doing, exhibit good behavior, and have an objective you can have a job and live well. You may also invest in other projects.	Respondent 7
The work I am doing is improved and I managed to obtain money to meet my home needs. Now I can also buy clothes, land, livestock, etc.	Respondent 30

Virtually everyone, both those in the midst of training and those who had completed training were applying skills learned in their training programs to provide for themselves and their families. The one respondent who indicated that he was not currently employed in the same vocation as he was trained shared that he is currently in the business of training others in vocational skills. Twenty-five of the respondents indicated that they have been practicing their vocations for a minimum of 4 years. Respondents also elaborated on the many ways the training and had been valuable and impacting in their lives.

Table 5.28: Time in Vocation

Time in Vocation	
15 years	3
10 years	10
7 years	1
5 years	10
4 years	2

Table 5.29: Survey Response: Training Value and Impact

Survey Response: Training Value and Impact	
The training helped me to have a vision and plan for what I can do.	Respondent 31
I built my life and reputation as a result of the training. I no longer have to beg because I have become self-reliant.	Respondent 48
It has increased my knowledge so that today I am able to be self-reliant. I do not work for another person. This training has helped me to determine my future.	Respondent 6

These multiple findings regarding research question #2 prompted the overarching conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

IV. Research Question 3

Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's social capital within a society? If so, what assets are realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What social navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?

In order to answer research question #3, I purposefully designed survey questions pertinent to the research question and collected responses. I considered these areas in answering research question #3.

- Participants' type of vocational training and its value and impact.
- Participants' perceived strengths/weaknesses of the program
- Participants' new conversations and relationships and the benefits of these.
- Participants' new found civic and political involvement and development of self-advocacy skills.

I augmented the information gleaned on surveys by asking purposeful questions in follow-up interviews. Findings are presented ahead.

Type of Vocational Training and Its Value and Impact

In attempting to answer research question #3, I considered participants' type of vocational training and its value and impact in augmenting one's social capital within the society as well as its value in enhancing self-reliance.

Table 5.30: Training Impact on Social Navigations

Training Impact on Social Navigations	
Increased Social Connections	46
Increased Self-Reliance	32

A large preponderance of respondents noted that the training had significant impact on their social relationships. Fully 32 respondents recognized a positive impact on their ability to be self-reliant and find their voices in the community.

Table 5.31: Survey Responses: Training Impact on Social Connections

Survey Responses: Training Impact on Social Connections	
I got to know many things and through the training I made many new acquaintances.	Respondent 9
This training has strengthened me. People now respect me.	Respondent 10
This training was beneficial to me and I made many friends from it.	Respondent 11
The training made me certain about my future. People now respect me. It made me capable of supporting myself.	Respondent 41
It caused all who know me to respect me.	Respondent 42
To live in harmony with others and to win people's trust. To keep me from being sent to prison all the time.	Respondent 19
It has helped me know how to live with others and how to create/initiate activities.	Respondent 36

Table 5.32: Survey Responses: Training Impact on Self-Advocacy

Survey Responses: Training Impact on Self-Advocacy	
It taught me how to initiate my business. It opened my mind.	Respondent 22
I became self-reliant and was respected for that.	Respondent 23
It increased my knowledge and initiative of my own activities in order to be self-reliant.	Respondent 24
It taught me to be able to look for job for myself.	Respondent 32

Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of the Program

In attempting to answer research question #3, I considered participants' perceived strengths and weaknesses of the vocational training program. There were 5 respondents who recognized strengths in areas related to attainment of social capital and self-advocacy.

Table 5.33: Survey Responses: Training Strengths Pertaining to Social Capital/Self-Advocacy

Survey Responses: Training Strengths Pertaining to Social Capital/Self-Advocacy	
I am now able to talk with people about work and get clients.	Respondent 8
The strength of this training is that I got from it the knowledge to support myself.	Respondent 11
I was taught to love my work that helps me to perform it with efficiency in order to gain much and solve other's problems.	Respondent 18
I came to know how one can be self-reliant by using one's efforts and willingness.	Respondent 34
The training gave me value in the community.	Respondent 48

There was only one respondent who noted concern about social relationships after the training. The individual worried that his youthful look might be a social hindrance with clients expecting older individuals to engage in his type of work. He expressed apprehension about the unwarranted social prejudice against youth.

New Conversations and Relationships

In attempting to answer research question #3, I considered participants' reports of new conversations and relationships emerging out of the vocational training and subsequent micro-business endeavors and investigated how these relationships augmented one's social capital within a society. All 48 respondents recognized that the vocational training had positive impacts on their interpersonal relationships. An unforeseen theme emerged as the respondents spoke about their former struggles with loneliness and isolation. Many respondents, both female and male, related stories of how the vocational training provided a venue in which to build social connections and break barriers of separation.

> "I feel that I am now with others. Now it is different from how I was. I didn't see or talk to anyone because people were not allowed to talk in my former work. Before I did not have anybody to talk to because I was a servant, but today I talk with others about progress. This draws me from loneliness and helps me know how far others have progressed" (Respondent 36, Female).

> "Before my training, I was really shy and rarely communicated with people. Now I feel more confident and competent to communicate with others in all walks of society. I purposefully try to engage others in conversations, especially about work and life. During my life hiding in the jungle, I didn't have time to converse with others in a meaningful way. Now I have learned how to be integrated in a community. I learned how to communicate with the low class, middle class, and high class" (Respondent 48, Male).

Table 5.34: Survey Responses: Relationship Impacts – Loneliness

Survey Responses: Relationship Impacts – Loneliness	
It drew me out of loneliness and opened my mind. It gave me happiness and I don't feel alone anymore.	Respondent 9
The constructive conversations help us to avoid loneliness. I now interact with others.	Respondent 21
I feel that I am not alone and have hope for the future.	Respondent 1
These relationships helped me to come out of loneliness. I am feeling like I can be with others now.	Respondent 16
These conversations draw me from loneliness.	Respondent 37
The relationships have helped me not to feel alone and to feel prepared for the future.	Respondent 42

Development of Self-Advocacy Skills.

In attempting to answer research question #3, I considered participants' development of self-advocacy skills and their reports of practicing these skills through social navigation. Of the 48 people surveyed, 25 respondents recognized

growth in their introspective skills. They reported heightened feelings of self-confidence and increased problem solving skills.

Table 5.35: Survey Responses: Skills Development and Implementation

Survey Responses: Skills Development and Implementation	
I struggled on my own in order to initiate my micro-business. After training, I went to find the place to perform my activity, and made my own arrangements with the owner.	Respondent 8
Now I have courage to converse with people about work.	Respondent 29
To find clients and those who can assist in order to extend my activities. These showed me that my business is progressing. I try to satisfy the demands of those who need my materials.	Respondent 34
I advertised and this helped me to get clients.	Respondent 38
The advertisements informed all the villages around about my business. This helped me to progress.	Respondent 40
I learned the skills of negotiating with other parties. I am now able to advocate for myself when a job might be available.	Respondent 48

These multiple findings regarding research question #3 prompted the comprehensive conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

V. Research Question 4

Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's civic and political capital within a society? If so, what

political assets are leveraged, realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What political navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?

In order to answer research question #4, I purposefully designed survey questions applicable to the research question and collected responses. I considered these areas in answering research question #4.

- Participants' type of vocational training and its value and impact.
- Participants' new conversations and relationships and the benefits of these.
- Participants' new found civic and political involvement.

I augmented the information gleaned on surveys by asking purposeful questions in follow-up interviews. Findings are presented ahead.

Type of Vocational Training and Its Value and Impact

In attempting to answer research question #4, I considered participants' types of vocational training and explored the value and impact of the training in augmenting one's civic and political capital within the society. Respondents overwhelmingly found that they were able to interact more effectively with others in the community as a result of the training. Many identified gains in knowledge in terms of dealing with government agencies and seeking various forms of licensure.

Table 5.36: Survey Responses: Value and Impact on Civic/Political Relationships

Survey Responses: Value and Impact on Civic/Political Relationships	
This training increased my knowledge and made me known in the community	Respondent 16
To have a permit and to be a driver.	Respondent 28
Training provided me with skills so that I can make a living, and I can train others.	Respondent 44
I got the driving license category A	Respondent 20
To have the capacity to find work, to live in harmony with others.	Respondent 39
Acquiring new skills and getting acquainted with other people.	Respondent 46

New Conversations and Relationships

In attempting to answer research question #4, I considered the new conversations and relationships participants' reported as helpful in leveraging political capital within the society. As well, I considered the political navigation and self-advocacy skill gains to which participants' and graduates provided testimony.

Table 5.37: Types of New Conversations

Types of New Conversations	
Training	34
Improvement	4
Civic Engagement	5
Co-Op	1
Others in Same Vocation	3
No Response	1

Of the 48 individuals surveyed, 47 respondents recognized their engagement in new and productive conversations with other members of their communities. There were 34 indicated that they were engaged in conversations with others that were focused on their acquired vocational and business skills. Other helpful conversations included self-improvement, civic enhancement and purposeful strategizing with individuals who shared similar vocations.

Table 5.38: Survey Responses: New Types of Conversations

Survey Responses: New Types of Conversations	
Sometimes I work with schools and train other people.	Respondent 1
I am engaged in sensitizing my friends so that collectively they may have some activity to improve their lives.	Respondent 8
I engage in conversations about welfare and social development.	Respondent 9
I call people to work together in their businesses and to consider the value of their activity and love their work. I am able to teach others.	Respondent 16
I have conversations with those whom we share the same activities. They are directed to how the work is done and how we can perform to improve it.	Respondent 18

Table 5.39: Survey Responses: Benefits of New Conversations

Survey Responses: Benefits of New Conversations	
These conversations help me to reason about initiatives other than what I have today in order to reach higher stages of development.	Respondent 6
By these conversations I get beneficial experiences and then we try to work together and share ideas that we can use to improve and progress in our micro-businesses.	Respondent 8
These conversations are beneficial to me since they increase my knowledge in what I am doing in my career. They help me to ensure the efficiency of my work and to acquire experiences from others.	Respondent 17
I have gained some friends who have more knowledge than I do. They help me to know more about development.	Respondent 6
I learn how to live with other people and know how to deal with association of which I am a member. These relationships augment my knowledge.	Respondent 40

New Found Civic and Political Involvement/Development of Self-Advocacy Skills

In attempting to answer research question #4, I considered participants' newly found civic and political involvement. Of the 48 Respondents, 34 individuals recognized that they had become more civically or politically involved in their local communities after the vocational training.

Table 5.40: Civically/Politically Involved Post Training

Civically/Politically Involved Post Training	
Yes	34
No	13
No Response	1

The 34 persons who expressed that they were civically or politically involved in ways they had not been before spoke often about learning the processes for receiving appropriate government licensure and certification. They expressed pleasure in knowing that the government recognized them as valid business persons in their communities. Some spoke about paying their taxes, receiving their official identification documents and being officially recognized as part of cooperatives. They felt proud of these accomplishments and deemed them as indicators of their advancements in entering their voices into civic and political discourse. The ability to formally register themselves and their businesses was acknowledged by them as significant in legitimizing themselves and concretely demonstrating their value within their society.

Table 5.41: Civic/Political Advancement

Civic/Political Advancement	
Acquiring Licensure/Certification	27
Paying Taxes	8
Receiving Official Identification	3
Member of Cooperative	2

Table 5.42: Survey Responses: Civic/Political Advancement

Survey Responses: Civic/Political Advancement	
I got all the legal documents so that I can work officially.	Respondent 1
I can now pay taxes and respond to other requirements.	Respondent 23
I was able to respect the laws before starting off in my business by paying the first tax that allows me to open.	Respondent 32
I obtained all of the required documents in order to establish a cooperative with other members of my career.	Respondent 35
I was able to purchase an identity card in order to avoid being called a street boy and have legal documents for my business	Respondent 39
The documents allowing me to work were given to me by the government.	Respondent 44

These multiple findings regarding research question #4 prompted the collective conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

VI. Research Question 5

Is it possible for those trained in micro-business principles and vocations to train others in the same projects or in replicated models of training?

In order to answer research question #5, I purposefully designed survey questions germane to the research question and collected responses. I considered these areas in answering research question #5.

- Participants' self-perceived ability to teach newly gained information and skills to neighbors, family or friends.
- Participants' advice for making replications of the training successful.

I augmented the information gleaned on surveys by asking purposeful questions in follow-up interviews. Findings are presented ahead.

Self-Perceived Ability to Teach Skills to Others

In attempting to answer research question #5, I considered participants' ability to teach their newly learned skills to others. I asked participants to reflect on their training processes and consider what information they could teach neighbors, family and friends that would be helpful to them in life and or in business.

Table 5.43: Information Sharing with Others

Information Sharing with Others	
Seek Training	14
Work Hard	10
Love to Work	9
Seek to Better Ones Self	9
Train Others	6

Only 6 of 48 respondents directly stated that they could train others in similar vocational skills. Although all respondents offered comments to the prompt, the majority spoke about life skills and attitudinal insights they could pass on to

others. 14 individuals shared that they had become advocates for vocational training by encouraging others to seek out vocational training opportunities. Many respondents reported encouraging neighbors, family and friends to enjoy the act of working. They spoke about encouraging others to engage fully in their labors and continually seek opportunities for self-improvement.

Table 5.44: Survey Responses: Information Sharing with Others

Survey Responses: Information Sharing with Others	
I call them for the training about micro-business so that they may reach an acceptable level of well-being.	Respondent 37
I share with them to be able to find something to do other than cultivation.	Respondent 27
I ask my neighbors and other people not to neglect anything because the job is life. Any activity (micro-business) can help one to gain life. I ask people to work hard.	Respondent 31
I ask them to love their work, whatever it can be so that they can progress toward self-sustainability.	Respondent 25
It is to tell them to find out what they can do so that they may help themselves.	Respondent 35
I could teach almost anyone how to build using masonry. I would like to help students in high schools who are learning how to build. I am already teaching others in the vocational training classes.	Respondent 48

Advice for Making Replications of the Training Successful

In attempting to answer research question #5, I considered participants' advice as to how to design a successful training model in other areas. 47 of the 48 individuals surveyed thought the vocational and micro-business training model could be successfully replicated in other areas. The charted responses are

illustrative of the key themes deemed important by participants for successful replication. These multiple findings regarding research question #5 prompted the summative conclusions presented in Chapter 6.

Table 5.45: Survey Responses: Key Considerations of a Successful Training Model

Survey Responses: Key Considerations of a Successful Training Model	
The trainer must pay attention to the capacity/strengths of every trainee so that all of the participants profit from the training. It is also important to provide leisure moments during the training. The trainer should explain clearly the strengths and weaknesses of the training.	Respondent 6
Don't charge people a lot of money. Plan how they will live after this training.	Respondent 20
First to hear from those who are to be trained. To help us see or provide for what will happen after training. To select a trainer who actually lives on a micro-business he s/he is teaching. To ask the participants to be ready to train other people after their training is complete. The training must aim the projects at those who are able to generate revenues.	Respondent 23
That people can choose for themselves what kind of training is beneficial to them. Because the trainees are poor, meals should be given to them while training. To train them to initiate projects that can generate revenue.	Respondent 26
To initiate different micro-businesses for a length of time as a trial/test period and then train people according to their strengths and talents. To teach financial management and prepare the trainees to join the market of employment.	Respondent 33
To know if the trainee will get a job after being trained. To get ready all the materials that will be needed in the training. To choose skilled trainers. To teach how to care for the customer.	Respondent 45
To take a census of all youth in town. To help them find a job after training. To avoid skills training in the areas where the market is already saturated.	Respondent 46
To train but then to follow up with those trained after training.	Respondent 47
A caring relationship between the teacher and students is the key to success. Sometimes, vocational teachers/trainers care only about the subject/content but not about the lives of the students. The best teachers know all about the students.	Respondent 48

Chapter 6 - Conclusions

Determining the viability of alternative economic strategies developed at grassroots levels in the western province of the Rubavu district of Rwanda was the focus of this study. Specifically the study sought to test the notion that micro-business training and implementation could offer successful alternative livelihood opportunities, beyond agrarian options for marginalized people by introducing and promoting off-farm income earning opportunities through vocational training and subsequent launching of micro-businesses. My research explored the intersection between development studies and feminist political ecology and added to the storehouse of research on these issues by testing the merits of practical programs developed by and for the citizenry. Five research questions were investigated. From the findings detailed in Chapter 5, several overarching conclusions emerged.

I. Conclusions Related to Demographics

Several conclusions emerged from the demographic findings. First, as would be expected much of the feminist political ecology literature focusing on the problem of land scarcity recognized threats to women in the land distribution practice and called for action to address inequities through processes of social change. While this literature and Rocheleau's insights regarding gender, livelihood and environmental challenges for women were confirmed in some respects, I was also surprised to find so many males enrolled in the vocational training programs. Marginalized men as well as women struggled to establish means of livelihood and

make their voices heard in their local communities. Thus I found that the vocational and business training programs operated in ways that were mutually beneficial for both women and men.

Through on-site visits, first-person conversations with program participants, reviews of the survey responses, and interviews with trainers, social workers, and a government official, I concluded that the vocational training programs are indeed serving disenfranchised subsets within the western province of the Rubavu district. As anticipated, the demographic findings confirmed that youth, citizens with little or no traditional education, and those without land (or those with diminutive or non-fertile land) were indeed the populations struggling to find ways of making a living. Thus, I determined that the vocational and business training programs were expediently assisting many of the society's most marginalized people. In this regard the efficacy of the programs was confirmed.

II. Conclusions Related to the Research Questions

Research question #1: Does micro-business offer sufficient economic viability to replace traditional agrarian options for marginalized women and youth?

From the findings related to research question #1, I concluded that micro-business does indeed offer sufficient economic viability to replace traditional agrarian options for marginalized youth and women as well as for marginalized men. This conclusion was reached primarily by studying the responses of program

participants and juxtaposing information about participants' employment history and financial situation prior to the program against their reports regarding employment and economic gains after (or as a result of) the program. Some 94% of the respondents reported positive changes in economic status as a result of being trained and engaging in subsequent micro-business development. None of the respondents who completed the programs reported a need to rely upon agrarian options to sustain livelihoods after the training. However, some used agrarian options to supplement their incomes.

As confirmed in interviews with social workers and a government official, Rwandan government policy encourages citizens to make their own enterprises and move toward self-reliance. Nevertheless, limited funding to support proper training programs exists in an environment where training is critical in preparing marginalized citizens for successful entry into non-farming endeavors. Thus, the training programs and subsequent business launches are making a difference in propelling marginalized citizens toward self-reliance.

Research question #2: Does cottage industry serve as a temporary solution to allow the marginalized time and training to gain further employment or enter another type of vocation?

From the findings related to research question #2, I concluded that cottage industry is not often used only as a temporary solution to allow marginalized citizens time and training to enter another type of vocation. There were 94% who reported that their current employment was the same as what their vocational

training programs had prepared them to do. Just over 50% reported that they had been practicing the vocations in which they had been training for at least four years. Some participants went on to say that they had sought additional training in the same vocations to further enhance their skills.

The conclusions of my study related to research question #2 contrast those drawn from the research on non-formal vocational training programs initiated by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Tanzania which resulted in production of "trained" individuals who did not necessarily have continuing intentions of engaging their training in income producing ways. The participants studied in my research clearly sought to make long-term livelihoods from their newly gained vocational skills and were doing so effectively.

I believe there were limiting factors at play in the Tanzanian model that were not present in the Rwandan model. For example in Tanzania, a number of the individuals taking part in the training did so only to receive follow up support from the NGO's administering the training. Additionally, many of the youth were placed in the programs simply to give them something to do. From the onset this produced many trained persons who never had long-term interests or intentions of utilizing their training. Those individuals who did take their training seriously had a shallow market in which to work given the constraints of the refugee camp that did not allow them access much beyond the camp boundaries to seek employment. Their geography denied them access to local markets.

In contrast in the Rwanda model, individuals took part in the training primarily because they recognized the need to be self-sustaining and thus chose to be there of their own accord without external incentive to do so. As well, upon completion of the training they gained access to the entire local market and economy to sustain gainful employment.

Research question #3: Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's social capital within a society? If so, what assets are realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What social and self-advocacy skills are gained?

From the findings related to research question #3, I concluded that education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors does augment one's social capital within the society. It was striking to see that 95% of respondents reported that the training increased their social connectedness and 100% recognized that the vocational training had positive impacts on their interpersonal relationships.

My conclusions were similar to those drawn by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) survey of refugee camp-based training programs in Tanzania where respondents extolled the benefits of the social capital they developed from the training. IRC survey respondents greatly valued the opportunity to be part of a group of like-skilled and like-minded individuals (Lyby, 2002, p. 236).

Research question #4: Does the education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors augment one's civic and political capital within a

society? If so, what political assets are leveraged, realized or legitimized as individuals engage in micro-business? What political navigation and self-advocacy skills are gained?

From the findings related to research question #4, I concluded that education and vocational training provided through micro-business endeavors does augment one's civic and political capital within the society. The evidence is strong: 98% of the respondents reported involvement in new and productive conversations with other members of their communities, and 71% of the respondents expressed that they were civically or politically involved in ways they had not been before. Many spoke about learning the processes for receiving appropriate government licensure and certification. They expressed pleasure in knowing that the government recognized them as valid business persons in their communities. Some spoke about paying their taxes, receiving their official identification documents and being officially recognized as part of cooperatives. These conclusions augment the theories of economist Esther Duflo and political anthropologist James Scott who both believe, in different ways, that marginalized people can impact social and political change in spite of their diminished individual positions.

Research question #5: Is it possible for those trained in micro-business principles and vocations to train others in the same projects or in replicated models of training?

From the findings related to research question #5, I concluded that program participants were indeed enthusiastic about passing on principles and concepts

learned in training to others. However, since only 13% of the respondents indicated that they could train others in similar vocational skills my general answer to the research question was no. Nonetheless, participants spoke about many ways in which they were able to pass on valuable information and training principles regarding self-improvement, enhancing personal work ethic, and reaching self-sustainability goals. With the exception of one individual, the respondents' suggestions for replicated models of training did not include involving newly trained individuals in subsequent training processes.

Similar to the camp-based vocational training programs in the Kigoma and Kagera regions, the Ndengera programs provided instruction to participants in vocational and business skills with the collateral objective of enabling target groups to transfer meaningful skills. While there was significant transfer of meaningful skills, those skills were not necessarily related to the vocation itself.

I believe the respondents in my research were not speaking out of false modesty nor were they reticent to train others in the same ways they had been trained. Rather, the individuals were confident in their newly learned skill set and many were actively and informally passing their skills on to family and friends as verified in the interviews and through observation. Nonetheless, I perceive that the non-elaborate responses from participants on the survey instrument were largely due to the way I posed my survey question. I believe respondents answered the question in relation to serving as formal trainers in an official capacity. Though the majority of respondents reported that were not currently engaged as trainers in an

official capacity, there was significant evidence that many were engaged in informally trainers others in their circles of influence.

III. Auxiliary Conclusions

Several other conclusions drawn from the response patterns were auxiliary to the five research questions, yet highly informative for development planning in the area of vocational training and micro-business expansion. These additional conclusions were gleaned from survey/questionnaire responses made by participants and interviews with participants, trainers, social workers and a government official. These supplemental conclusions will be essential in refining and strengthening existing vocational training programs in the region and in developing new programs intended to serve marginalized populations in similar cultural, economic and political contexts.

Auxiliary Conclusion #1

Vocational training participants, trainers, social workers and government officials alike reported the need to fully consider natural propensities, interests, talents and intellectual capacities of trainees when matching trainees to vocational programs. Unfortunately, trainees channeled into vocational training programs without consideration of personal factors and individual differences often reported loss of interest and focus. As well, many participants assigned to training programs that did not match their personal interests and needs never successfully launched viable micro-businesses even when they effectively completed their programs.

Vocational training participants and program completers spoke repeatedly about the need for careful differentiation.

Table 6.1: Auxiliary Conclusion #1 Responses

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Auxiliary Conclusion #1 Responses</th></tr>
<tr><th>Responses From Program Participants</th><th>Responses From Trainers</th></tr>
<tr><td>Trainees must be allowed to select a type of work they love and feel motivated to do.</td><td rowspan="3">Some NGOs do not allow trainees to select the vocations they enter; therefore, participants may not be fully committed to learning the skills needed to be successful.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Trainees must be trained in skills that augment their natural talents and gifts.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Training must be suitable to the intellectual capacities of the individuals.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Trainers should make vocational recommendations based on the strengths participants exhibit during training.</td><td>One of the greatest challenges is having skilled workers who are serious about and committed to their specific professions.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Trainees should be grouped by ability so trainers can tailor the instruction to the needs of homogeneous groups.</td><td rowspan="2">Trainees who are channeled into certain vocations without personal input into the decision-making processes most often abandon the work.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Trainers should conduct trials or pre-assessments to help individuals determine where their natural gifts lie.</td></tr>
<tr><th>Responses From Social Workers</th><th>Response From Government Official</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">I find it helpful to pre-screen possible candidates for vocational training using games and non-threatening exercises to get more information about their interests, talents, and intellectual capacities.</td><td>Those with personal interest in their vocations are definitely more successful in making their enterprises work.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Levels of literacy must be considered when matching individuals with vocational training opportunities.</td></tr>
<tr><td>I find it beneficial to ask questions about what participants most want to do vocationally before assigning them to training programs.</td><td>Those trained in vocations about which they are truly passionate can continue to make money informally even if they eventually enter the formal employment sector. Often if they love the work, they will continue to do it.</td></tr>
</table>

Auxiliary Conclusion #2

A second auxiliary conclusion had to do with the availability of materials and tools needed for training as well as those needed by participants to enter vocations at the completion of training. As expressed in table 6.2, all four groups of constituents considered in this research (program participants, trainers, social workers, and a government official) concluded that meeting the demand for tools and materials was essential in assuring that vocational training program completers were ready to enter the market place and sustain their micro-businesses.

A promising recommendation to alleviate materials procurement issues was offered by trainers. It involved establishing a warehouse where graduates of the multiple training programs could purchase (initially on credit) the materials and tools needed to begin their businesses. This model would allow graduates a reasonable period of time to pay back start-up costs using profits from their newly formed micro-businesses.

Table 6.2: Auxiliary Conclusion #2 Responses

Auxiliary Conclusion #2 Responses	
Responses From Program Participants	**Responses From Trainers**
Needs during the training	*Needs during the training*
A weakness of my training was the lack of up-to-date tools for very specific vocations like mine.	Insufficient materials became an ongoing concern during the training. For example, there were not enough wrenches for all students to use them at once and trainees had only gasoline engine cars upon which to practice. There were no diesel engines.
After my training I encountered different and more modern materials I had never experienced during the training.	

More materials are needed to meet our needs while the training is still underway. (Similar responses were offered by 5 additional respondents).	
<u>Needs in launching micro-businesses after the training</u>	*<u>Needs in launching micro-businesses after the training</u>*
In order to provide a service, there must be enough equipment. The equipment is expensive to acquire. Therefore, one must find a way to have access to equipment whether it is done through a cooperative or otherwise.	Many NGOs do not give the tools or equipment to the trainees when the training is complete, nor do they provide a plan for individuals to get the materials. Therefore, newly trained individuals have difficulty getting their businesses going.
My biggest challenge in launching my business was absence of investment capital to get the equipment and materials needed to begin the business on my own.	
My trainer had to personally loan me money to begin my enterprise.	
A weakness of the vocational training program was that it did not offer the material and equipment to begin. Equipment and materials to launch a micro-business can be extremely expensive. (Similar responses were offered by 19 additional respondents).	
<u>Needs in sustaining micro-businesses</u>	*<u>Needs in sustaining micro-businesses</u>*
I don't have enough investment capital to make my project successful in the long-term.	A substantive challenge is finding enough quality wood for production. Often employees must go to the Congo to find wood and then carry it back across the border in hand carts. This requires paying an expensive inter-country tax.
I came to know how one can be self-reliant by using personal effort and willingness, but there aren't enough materials to sustain my business. Thus, I know it will be difficult.	

Finding money to buy basic tools such as tires and paste is my greatest challenge. Lack of tools is an obstacle to my work and my micro-business.	
Lack of adequate materials to sustain my micro-business is my largest problem.	
(Similar responses were offered by 13 additional respondents).	
Responses From Social Workers	**Response From Government Official**
Needs during the training	
Vocational programs are definitely beginning to address the needs of people who will benefit from this type training, yet the on-going challenge of having enough materials remains.	
Needs in launching micro-businesses after the training	*Needs in launching micro-businesses after the training*
One of the largest problems for vocational training graduates is that they have no means, tools, or materials to begin their micro-businesses.	In my opinion one of the greatest challenges to those attempting to start micro-businesses is the lack of sufficient materials. Individuals lack the funding needed to procure materials.

A related proposal put forward by program participants suggested that graduates receive a set of basic tools needed for their vocations upon completion of training with the obligation to pay back the cost overtime. However, in this model graduates would be responsible for finding and procuring their own materials.

Having tools in-hand immediately after the training was concluded by all constituents to be essential in ensuring successful entry into the market place. Having equal access to materials was highly valuable as well. Therefore, these needs

must be considered in future development plans which include vocational training for marginalized populations in similar contexts.

Auxiliary Conclusion #3

A third conclusion drawn from the survey responses and interviews was the need to provide graduates with assistance and training in finding marketplaces, customers, clients, and professional connections. Many program completers found limited success in marketing themselves, especially if they had to operate solely out of their homes. Often the program completers felt that they were not seen as legitimate goods and services providers alongside other competitors. As well, those operating solely from their homes more frequently reported lack of access to conventional business relationships that would allow them to establish markets, meet other vendors and partner productively with other tradesmen and service providers. Hence, program participants, trainers, social workers, and the government official all concluded that establishing relationships within the community, with other businesses, with government agencies, and with development cooperatives would ease entry into the vocational arena and lead to greater economic successes.

Table 6.3: Auxiliary Conclusion #3 Responses

Auxiliary Conclusion #3 Responses	
Responses From Program Participants	**Responses From Trainers**
Networking with other businesses and business owners	*Networking with other businesses and business owners*
I found it helpful to develop professional relationships with businessmen in the Gisenyi restaurant market and with restaurant clients.	There are several learning objectives of the program beyond teaching mechanics. For example, I discuss with trainees how to network with others. I begin class by trying to get students to develop good work ethic, respect the profession and work with customers and other service providers.
I am developing professional relationships with those who come to me for building or remodeling services. We are learning to trust each other.	
The training helped me know how to work with other people undertaking the same type of business.	I will soon begin a campaign to get other ladies in the community involved in the vocational training. I will do my best to help them understand that they can benefit in multiple ways from the training as well as from developing business relationships with others in the community.
My micro-business training helped me form partnerships with schools as I was attempting to make uniforms for them and for individual people.	
I learned to network with other businesses and business owners. This has been very helpful to my business endeavors. (Similar responses were offered by 17 additional respondents).	
Finding jobs and markets for products	*Finding jobs and markets for products*
I struggle to find a market for my product. The lack of a market handicaps my activities.	The greatest challenge associated with trainees involves their ability to find jobs upon graduation. There is not a fool-proof method of job placement and follow-up. These are components that need to be built into the design.
The training helped me know how to find a market for my product although I know it takes time.	
The training helped us learn how to find fair markets for our products although more help is needed.	I began training street children in carpentry and often allowed the best students to stay on and work with me in

In the training, I learned how to make advertisements that informed all the surrounding villages about my business.	an apprenticeship model and later as permanent employees because many had difficulty finding jobs once the training was over.
By far my greatest challenge is attracting clients. (Similar responses were offered by 12 additional respondents).	A frequent challenge for new business launchers includes finding customers to buy their products.
Finding a location other than a personal home from which to operate a business	There is a need for me to go out after training hours at the center and find tourist shops to buy the trainees' beads.
Some clients come expecting to pay less because they see a business operating out of a home rather than a shop.	
I am concerned that I do not have a permanent business/company address. It can be a problem in getting jobs.	
Some clients don't pay on time because they see my business as informal. I would like to have a formal constructed enterprise with a legitimate address.	
I struggled on my own to find the locations where the activities related to my training are being performed.	
I have a need to find and secure a suitable location that fits my type of business. (Similar responses were offered by 13 additional respondents).	
Finding a job or initiating a business	
I would like the program to work with local leaders to identify what trainees might be able to do for the community after training while at the same time earning a wage.	
I would like the program to help youth find jobs after training and help us avoid locations where the market is already saturated.	

I would like the training to prepare the trainees to join the market of employment and get jobs after being trained. (Similar responses were offered by 12 additional respondents).	
Responses From Social Workers	**Response From Government Official**
The training itself, the market, the community, the government, the authorities, and the society are all important pieces to consider in the process of designing development interventions. Trainees must be trained to connect with all relevant constituents. They must be taught how to find markets in order to be successful.	One of the key tenants of the Vision 2020 initiative is to promote service cooperatives to help vulnerable people work together to gain resources and collective power within the society.

One promising idea raised by trainers and social workers was to use a job fair or exposition model to connect graduates to community business and civic leaders near the conclusion of the training. They felt that providing a venue and event such as this would help trainees gain access to potential employers and customers immediately upon completion of training as well as help program completers establish themselves as legitimate goods and services providers. As an added benefit, the event itself would provide an authentic context for teaching professional dispositions and helping trainees develop professional deportment and confidence.

Auxiliary Conclusion #4

In reviewing responses and engaging in conversations with the four types of constituents it became apparent that training in areas such as personal financial

management, business management, accounting practices, marketing and customer service needed to occur in tandem with vocational skills training. Understanding the importance and being able to practice basic business skills such as budgeting appropriating funds, saving for the future and reinvesting in the business were key to success. Often business launchers who were able to produce quality products or provide needed services were still taken advantage of by savvy business people if it became apparent that the individuals lacked basic business skills and confidence.

The frequency and poignancy of the multi-constituent responses regarding the importance of basic business training led to the conclusion that responsible vocational training programs need to purposefully plan for this component. Of course, the ultimate goal in micro-business training and implementation is to offer alternative livelihood opportunities which are sustainable in the long-term. Business training appeared to be paramount in frontloading marginalized participants with the skills needed for self-sustainability.

Table 6.4: Auxiliary Conclusion #4 Responses

Auxiliary Conclusion #4 Responses	
Responses From Program Participants	**Responses From Trainers**
My trainer helped me prepare myself to earn money and use it in a financially wise and responsible way. (Similar responses were offered by 6 additional respondents).	A trainer spoke positively about one of his former trainee who used the basic business knowledge he acquired during training to begin a personal savings plan. The trainee began doing musical performances in a Gisenyi hotel and used the extra money from the performances to save for a driver's license and motorcycle for his motor delivery business. He was later able to build a house with the money he has saved.
I would advise the vocational training programs to teach financial management and prepare trainees to join the market of employment. (Similar responses were offered by 4 respondents).	
My training impacted me by helping me be able to manage my business.	

I learned how to plan ahead when operating my micro-business.	A trainer who had previously been a trainee herself reported that she learned how to put a business plan in place for the future. She learned how to open a micro-finance account. She reported saving money for the first time in her life and actually planning for future needs.
I talked with my trainer about how to work hard, provide good customer service, promote myself and plan for my future.	
I am learning how to progress toward development and how to work with banks to save money and get loans.	When asked about whether trainees had the chance to learn about general business and accounting practices, the trainer responded by saying that only a few students in vocational training have had a chance receive this type of information along with vocational training, but those who have are generally much more successful in operating their enterprises.
I am learning how to generate business income.	
I am learning how to be ready with the taxes.	
Responses From Social Workers	**Response From Government Official**
In addition to vocational skills it is most important that individuals have basic occupational proficiencies. An essential part of his responsibilities is to visit the training programs to provide training and consultation on business skills.	When asked what makes the biggest difference in starting a successful micro-business, he stated that it is very important for micro-business owner to be hardworking, honest with clients, and knowledgeable about basic business practices.

Auxiliary Conclusion #5

A final pattern in the responses led to the conclusion that systematic follow-up with trainees is needed for a period of time after the vocational instruction in order for experienced mentors to offer guidance and support during the early stages of vocational entry. Many program participants and graduates spoke about the value of having social and emotional support during the training and during the transition from training to business operation. Additionally, program participants and graduates expressed a desire to learn more about cooperatives and their function in

amplifying individual efforts. Although trainers built some information about cooperatives into the training itself, they too felt that follow-up assistance would be very valuable. Trainers and social workers suggested that additional support in areas such as craftsmanship and customer care might be needed to ensure maximal successes as well. Thus, all constituents agreed that vocational training models should include some form of post-training support and coaching.

In keeping with economist Esther Duflo's exploration of the ways knowledge is circulated among marginalized women via social networks, program participants also expressed in an interest in having their own social networks for keeping in touch and disseminating information. They wanted additional opportunities to share experiences and gain knowledge from each other and from their former trainers. From their responses it appeared that the orchestration of organized physical venues as well as individual post-training conversations would be helpful to both female and male participants.

Table 6.5: Auxiliary Conclusion #5 Responses

Auxiliary Conclusion #5 Responses	
Responses From Program Participants	**Responses From Trainers**
The need for general follow-up support	*The need for general follow-up support*
I would offer advice to the program to train but then to follow up with those trained after the training period.	Some NGOs do not provide follow-up and mentoring to the students as they enter the profession. This can be a hindrance to success.
I find it helpful when the leaders (the trainers who taught me and my former colleagues) make contact with me in my activity.	Trainers reported often hearing only by word of mouth what trainees were doing

When I began this initiative I gained friends who have more knowledge than I do. They helped me to know more about development. I must maintain relationships with my former trainers and colleagues.	once they left the programs. They identified the need for more systematic follow-up.
The relationships are beneficial to me. When we are talking I gain courage and feel better about my life. Among my friends from the training are those who give me advice that is important to me.	
We met different people with different knowledge, and from that interaction I gained a lot of strength.	
The relationships developed during training offer me hope to have a decent life and friends. They offer me the opportunity to get to know things from others and learn from their experiences.	
A caring relationship between the teacher and students is the key to success. Sometimes, vocational trainers care only about the subject/content but not about the lives of the students. The best teachers know all about the students and follow-up with them.	
New relationships I have developed are those with the trainers and colleagues from whom I got important advice. I would like these relationships to continue. (Similar responses were offered by 10 additional respondents).	
The advice I would offer the program is to plan how people will live after the training and offer assistance. (Similar responses were offered by 3 additional respondents).	
<u>The need for information and training about cooperatives</u>	*<u>The need for information and training about cooperatives</u>*
One way to minimize the initial investment needed to enter a business is to join a cooperative. Information about this option is important to us.	The government model for vocational training tries to promote and encourage the development of cooperatives. However, most of the students don't fully understand

The training helped me know how to join other people doing the same business in a cooperative.	this model and its benefits. The government provides no training on the issue. Young people often want to own their own business without the involvement of others. Cooperatives are helpful in many regards because they allow the participants a chance to purchase tools together and share expenses, but it takes work and training to manage a successful cooperative.
I would like to teach my neighbors, family, and friends to initiate their own small-scale projects/business that would help generate revenue. They need to know how to come together into cooperatives.	
I learned how to deal with the association of which I am now a member. These relationships augmented my knowledge.	A program graduate who later became a trainer spoke about her plan to partner with two other women in a cooperative to raise and slaughter a cow. She encouraged teaching other graduates that they can be involved in cooperatives to increase their profits and share expenses.
I struggled on my own in order to initiate my micro-business. After training, I went to find the place to perform my activity and had to make my own arrangements.	
I struggled to find where the activities related to my training were being performed and how I could be a part of that.	
My advice is to train participants to be patient and think about how they can have their own activities. The lessons about cooperatives should definitely be taught.	
Responses From Social Workers	**Response From Government Official**
<u>*The need for general follow-up support*</u>	
One social worker reported that he had worked with approximately 3,000 street people over the last 15 years. He reported spending a great deal of time doing follow-up with clients who completed training programs. He found that having a mentor who stayed with trainees in the months and years following training was essential in helping them get started and stay on-track.	
The problem for vocational training graduates is that there is often no follow-up counseling once they enter the marketplace.	

The need for information and training about cooperatives	*The need for information and training about cooperatives*
One social worker reported that he is engaged in consultation work establishing cooperatives and legal contracts for groups of individuals who want to work together. He goes to the government to finalize these agreements on behalf of the groups since they are not always sure how to approach the task.	The cooperatives are especially useful in helping the vulnerable secure loans. However, training is necessary so that vulnerable people know how cooperatives work and how to benefit from them.
A social worker constructed a follow-up program to help cooperatives meet together and network. He found it important for them to have a chance to share successes and failures and gain advice and assistance from one another. He now works with 11 transportation cooperatives, 10 music, culture, arts, and sports cooperatives, 10 business-related cooperatives, and 34 vocational teachers who have banded together in one cooperative. He consults with one group of HIV positive/AIDS individuals, one handicapped group, and one group for the elderly.	Current government policy is very much focused on developing cooperatives to give vulnerable members of society greater strength in numbers. Ndengera programs are engaged in this work.

Chattopadhyay and Duflo contended that vulnerable women are often less experienced, less educated, and less likely to be literate" (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004, p. 1434) and may need the additional support offered by social networks to help them find their voices. In like manner, one social worker reported that marginalized women in the Rubavu district of Rwanda typically do struggle with issues of confidence, and therefore they often find additional social support, scaffolding and coaching helpful.

Having knowledge of the workings of cooperatives and participating at local and regional levels, certainly offers additional opportunities for women and all

marginalized members of society to be part of community leadership while furthering their own enterprises. Like the Naam Movement found in Burkina Faso, an approach that provides a way for poor men and women to organize, identify community priorities and address local problems (Eneh, 2010, p. 104) is well-received by the citizenry and well-poised to initiate lasting change.

In order to decrease reliance upon agrarian sources of livelihood in a land-scarce nation like Rwanda, other income generating occupations must be available. Vocational training and subsequent launching of product or service producing initiatives certainly offers promise, but common pitfalls must be recognized and overcome to ensure maximal successes for participants. The aforementioned five auxiliary conclusions present critical practices that will help participants build financially viable businesses in increasingly competitive markets. Thus these auxiliary components must be made part of future development plans for vocational training in the region.

As well, the efficacy of these conclusions is underscored by the nature of their collection. Anthropologist James C. Scott contends that practical knowledge is as valuable as formal knowledge in economic development and planning. Undoubtedly, sustainable development is greatly enhanced by valuing geographically present knowledge and allowing geographically present participants to give perspective to the planning. In the case of this research, grassroots participants essentially brought these wisdoms to the table because a strong tenet of my examination was to recognize and validate the practical knowledge and learning of the marginalized.

Thus, my conclusions seek to amplify the voices of marginalized people by bringing their words as tools to impact change.

Additional insights from Interviewees

By spending time with trainees, trainers, social workers and a government official and truly listening to their insights, I was able to hear their multiple perspectives and bring forward their powerful voices. Several unanticipated, yet insightful themes emerged from the conversations. These themes helped me better understand the social context, the needs and desires of the geographically present people and realize the ramifications of their thoughts for future development planning.

I had anticipated that those struggling with issues of dearth might be products of generational poverty; however, the number of interviewees who reported that they were at one time living comfortable and financially secure lives surprised me. Nevertheless due to various destabilizing factors, they later found themselves without hope and living on the margins.

One trainee reported that before the death of his parents, he was part of a middle class family, but when his parents contracted HIV/AIDS it changed every facet of his life. Similarly another program participant reported that his family had owned fertile farmland, but when his mother died, things changed for the worse in his life.

Space and place also seemed to be a factor influencing economic stability. One trainee who later became a trainer shared that she and her husband were at one time doing well in business. However, when they had to relocate to the Congo because of violence, they found themselves alienated and resented. The discrimination against them caused them to lose everything. Another male trainer reported that his father had once worked for the government. Although his father was Rwandan by birth, he was forced to flee to Burundi because of political unrest. His family's assets were overtaken never to be returned.

Even educated social workers found themselves victims of societal and economic unrest. One shared that he had originally worked for a German NGO, but during the economic crisis the program had closed. He went on to work for the government of the Rubavu district, but short on funds, the government closed that program as well. In spite of his education, he had difficulty maintaining employment. He later went on to engage in volunteer social work while supporting himself as a French teacher and consultant. This trainer recognized that having alternate options for making a living was critical to his financial recovery. Thus fear and instability seemed to reach across all strata of society.

Another emergent theme had to do with recognition of the effects of poverty on the societal stability. Many individuals, although marginalized themselves, recognized the negative effects of poverty on the large society. One trainer spoke passionately about the many ways he saw poverty driving the violence in his community. He identified those at the lowest levels of poverty as street children.

Another social worker confirmed that many landless youth in Rwanda simply have nothing to do. They need productive activities in which to engage in order to make lives for themselves and stay out of trouble. The government official also confirmed that the misconduct of street children is a significant problem for the country. He spoke about the need for these youth to find familial, community, and educational integration. The vocational and education training initiatives under investigation are certainly part of human development efforts to help marginalized people find potential within themselves and activate it to meet their own needs.

A final pattern evident in the interviews was the indelible drive of marginalized people to succeed in spite of life's adversities. One female trainee, who later became a trainer, walked for one and a half hours each way to get to and from the vocational training center each day. She often went out after the center closed to find clients to buy her trainees beads. Another young man who missed out on traditional education as a child because he was conscripted as a child soldier and taken away from his home later returned to secondary school even though he was well past the traditional age to finish his education. He uses the skills learned in vocational training to help him earn money to pay for his secondary education. He struggles to balance working for sustenance with going to school. His insights into the needs of marginalized learners were deep and his thoughts for structuring meaningful educational programs were powerful. Only by listening keenly to such voices will post-development initiatives be advanced.

IV. Limitations of the Study

The results of this study appear to reflect the influences of a few limitations that were unavoidable because the investigator chose to conduct the research in an authentic community-based setting.

Limitation of Language Barriers & Translation

During the processes of reviewing participants' responses on the translated questionnaires/surveys and listening to translated responses during oral interviews, I found that respondents often appeared to use parallel language and similar patterns of discourse. The translators' knowledge of both Kinyarwanda and English may have homogenized the natural modes of expression a bit. However, this limitation was somewhat minimized by my practice of using multiple translators who often augmented or clarified ideas expressed by a single translator.

Limitation of Illiteracy & Interpretations

In a few cases respondents to the survey/questionnaire were illiterate in Kinyarwanda. Therefore, translators provided oral renditions of the survey questions and assisted participants with production of written responses. Again, second-party interpretations may have limited the natural modes of expression traditionally expected from respondents. Nonetheless, the use of interpretation for illiterate participants encouraged the voices of the most marginalized to be included in the study.

Limitation of Self-reported Data

Reliance upon self-reported data might be considered a limitation of the study since the information is only as good as the candor of the respondents. Nevertheless, the forthright nature of many of the responses gleaned from participants indicated that marginalized citizens felt fairly comfortable self-disclosing non-flattering information. For example, several respondents reported subsistence living prior to the vocational training through means such as thievery, violence, and prostitution. Having the use of interpreters of both genders, of like ethnicity and with lifetimes of history in the region was invaluable in mitigating this limitation. It allowed me to have access to candid information and confidences that would have taken years to discover otherwise.

Limitation Posed By Lack Of Control Group

While my research offered in-depth insights into the perspectives of individuals who had access to vocational training, the research did not include interviews and survey questionnaire responses from individuals who do not have access to vocational educational opportunities. With only eight vocational training facilities throughout the Rubavu district, there is, of course, a large population with little or no access to instruction. At this time 344,000 individuals live in the Rubavu District (RoR Challenge, 2011, p. 3). An estimated 20% of the Rwandan population has never had access to any form of formal education. This statistic suggests tens of thousands of persons in the Rubavu district alone (RoR National Agricultural, 2010,

pp. 90, 91). Nonetheless, there is little doubt that vocational training programs like the Ndengera program are having a positive effect on the community. At the same time, the staggering number of people on the margins who are not afforded training emphasizes the urgency of the need to replicate working models and develop enhanced models of community based vocational training that fully considers the voices of marginalized people.

V. Future Implications of the Study

This research resulted in findings concerning the efficacy of alternative economic strategies developed at grassroots levels for marginalized citizens in the western province of the Rubavu district of Rwanda. From the study's conclusions, several future implications can be drawn.

First, since the vocational training and launching of productive micro-businesses indeed produced viable alternative economic options capable of sustaining participants in non-agrarian forms of livelihood, it would then seem worthwhile to expand training initiatives such as the Ndengera programs to other parts the nation since the same sorts of conditions are common throughout Rwanda. An interview with a social worker who engages regions throughout the country also revealed the need for replication. Logic would suggest that if these results are possible in the western province of the Rubavu district of Rwanda, similar results might also be realized in other African nations with similar demographic populations, land scarcity issues and economic contexts.

Second, the study results imply that direct dialogue with grassroots participants may play a crucial role in the development of future programs. Participants seemed appreciative of opportunities to talk about their successes and challenges, beliefs and shared experiences with the training and micro-business launches. Similarly, trainers and social workers seemed to profit from the collaborative conversations. They too spoke positively about the opportunities to compare their thoughts, re-visit their views and hone their teaching and intervention practices as they learned from each other and gained experience working with vulnerable populations.

Third, the results suggest the need for future fleshing out of the definition and roles for long-term mentors and/or coaches. Social workers report that the concept of volunteerism is almost unheard of in the Rwandan context. Currently follow-up measures with trainees are conducted almost exclusively on a volunteer basis by trainers and social workers. At the present time there is no government monetary support for this type of follow-up. Thus, if more formalized follow-up and coaching processes becomes a structured part of vocational training and micro-business launch initiatives, a re-educating process will need to take place to help trainers and coaches see follow-up tasks as part of their jobs.

Members of cooperatives might also be empowered to take on coaching tasks. Other possible models might involve pairing workers in the formal employment sector with trainees or new business launchers in the informal sector.

However, if this work is to done on an informal basis, the concept of volunteerism must again be bolstered.

Fourth, the results imply promise regarding the generational passing of knowledge. A number of trainees spoke about working with youthful family members and orphaned children in their care. They reported finding purpose in reinvesting their newly found knowledge in trainees coming behind them. With parents and young adults taking more self-actualized roles in their own sustainability, the value of the knowledge base and the potential for modeling sustainable practices to youth are obvious.

Fifth, a collateral objective of this research was to legitimize and offer scholarly support to vocational training and micro-business implementation programs already in place and to present them as viable alternatives to agrarian lifestyles. The results of this study do indeed imply the need to advocate for official government recognition of training programs like Ndengera. I do recognize that affording recognition to programs is not a solution that will solve the problem for all of Africa or even for all of Rwanda. I acknowledge that my study explores one single example within a broader context, but I feel that the symbolic gesture of the government recognizing the centers would go a long way in affirming the efforts of the geographically present populations to promote develop in their own regions. I sense that local and regional governments are more aware of and responsive to the needs of the marginalized within their own spheres of influence than is the state government. I also noted that the government official overseeing the sector where

my study was conducted was a unique individual. To suggest that all local and regional government leaders are as dedicated to addressing the plight of society's most marginalized would be overstepping.

I do believe that a similar training model could be expanded throughout Rwanda and add value to many communities. Of course, I stop short of suggesting that this very model is or should be the final answer and would succeed everywhere. For a micro-business vocational training model like this to thrive on a national scale and possibly throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, a transparent relationship between the state and the society is paramount. The government must genuinely value the poor and see their voices as relevant in development discourse and planning. In my opinion this is the only way for a model such as this to sustain long-term success. This will remain challenging for those countries that have historically taken an authoritarian approach in governing the people.

VI. Recommendations for Further Research

It is hoped that this research will stimulate further investigation in the fields of development studies and feminist political ecology as these disciplines pertain to vocational training and subsequent launching of micro-businesses by marginalized citizens. A number of avenues for further investigation became apparent as the study reached its conclusion.

Studying Other Populations of Vulnerability

Since the conclusions of this study support micro-business development as an efficient model for helping marginalized women and youth attain self-sustainability, further research might beneficially be focused on other populations of vulnerability such as elderly and disabled citizens to see if similar interventions would produce equally promising results. Although the vocations and skills might need to be carefully selected to match the mobility, health, and wellness needs of elderly and disabled participants, the tenets of the vocational and business training seem promising. Nonetheless, further research would be needed to verify the efficacy.

Studying the Efficacy of Post-Training Follow-up Measures

Further research would also be helpful in measuring the value added component of augmenting existing vocational training models with follow-up measures such as providing support groups, post-training mentoring and pairing of workers in the formal employment sector with trainees or new business launchers in the informal sector.

Studying the Efficacy of Generational Training

Further research to explore the benefits of generational passing of vocational and business skills on to children might be conducted. It stands to reason that generative effects might be realized as adults learn and perfect skills and pass these

down to youth in their homes and lives. However at this point, evidence of this phenomenon is primarily anecdotal. If an empirical process of longitudinal investigation was undertaken, the generational efficacy of the vocational training might be confirmed.

VII. Role of This Research in Advancing Development Studies In Rwanda

My study began with a historical review of land tenure issues in Rwanda. After I understood the causes of land conflicts, brought about by population pressures and the return of displaced citizens to their homes, and recognized the consequences of overusing the land on a consistent basis, I turned my lens toward the future. I sought to identify and help shape working development strategies that provide viable practices for alleviating terrestrial pressures and sustaining the land for future generations while providing options for current generations to survive and thrive.

Historically, and especially since 1994 Rwanda is considered a low human development country and a less economically developed country by the UNDP international human development indicators (UNDP Human Development, 2011, p.1). Thus, my research focused primarily upon human aspects of development and how economics, geography and human issues are intertwined. It brought together two distinct, yet complementary, theoretical development perspectives: sustainable development and post-development. Within these theoretical frameworks, my study

extended knowledge as to how to construct and implement gender-based and grassroots development approaches in a land scarce area.

Drawing upon sustainable development constructs, my study explored multiple means of helping both women and youth of the present generation meet economic needs without compromising the needs of future generations. The educational and vocational training programs under investigation in my study were designed with the primary intent of addressing landlessness and land degradation concerns for future generations while offering opportunities for self-sustainability to present generations. My work helped to establish their efficacy in solving a key problem with the society.

The study also sought to extend post-development ideologies by involving participants in grassroots efforts to define and refine their own development initiatives. While the majority of development measures worldwide are quantitative in nature and focused upon millions of people from a top-down perspective, my study took a more qualitative approach by seeking the wisdom and experiences of the most marginalized people. I recognized that successful development models, which include education and training, must be based directly on the needs and perceptions of the people undergoing changes as they seek to advance their lives in ways that allow them to preserve their values (Tarekegn and Overton, 2011, p. 42).

In concert with post-development ideologies, current trends in African development lean heavily toward decentralization, whereby the control of resources and decision-making are transferred from central governments to

regional and community entities. Top-down programs are being deemphasized and more responsibility is being directed toward cooperative groups comprised of geographically present people seeking their own betterment (Silberfein, 1998, p. 323). My investigation adds to African development studies by exploring both the strengths and challenges of such grassroots programs. It highlights the perceptions of first-hand participants in a culture where the government's development approaches historically take a very limited view of grassroots concerns. The notion, that marginalized people of the Gisenyi region can best shape development plans that include educational and vocational training, is certainly advanced by my study's conclusions.

While some theorists view economic growth and increases in economic wealth as key definitions of development, others consider development to encompass ideas of greater autonomy and choice about how individuals live their lives (Willis, 2005, p. 200). My study participants seemed to adopt both views as they considered development in their context. I found that their concepts of development were highly connected to the realities of their everyday existence. Prominent impressions of development for them were measures that moved them forward in living independently, learning skills and working hard to gain the monetary resources needed to feed themselves and meet life needs (Tarekegn and Overton, 2011, p. 42).

Thus, my research and conclusions forwarded the efforts of geographically present people in the Gisenyi region in constructing and honing their own

development models to serve their under-represented and marginalized neighbors while helping themselves. It gave voice to those who are not often heard in top-down development planning.

VIII. Role of This Research in Advancing Feminist Political Ecology In Rwanda

Over many years, Rwandan women have sought equality, human rights, dignity, and chances for healthier and more productive lives. In spite of official gains in political venues, daily threats still assail women from all sides. HIV/AIDS, unemployment, gender based violence, discrimination, poverty, harmful cultural practices, lack of social and political capital, inadequate mobility, and unequal historical inheritance practices have created widespread power disparities between men and women.

Feminist political ecologists fight against gender disparity on both theoretical and pragmatic plains. Practitioners of the theory have tackled these threats in Rwanda by promoting political legislation to bolster fair land and resource use. They have advanced sustainable development practices that promote equity between genders and create livelihood options for women through education, training and resource generation. Rwandan women themselves, often with little knowledge of theoretical constructs, act in brave and responsive ways to overcome the combinations of threats they face. They have invented their own brands of social and political action to change the daily realities of their existence. My study sought

to affirm the efforts of sustainable development programs that are giving options, power and voice to vulnerable and often marginalized women.

A major impediment to women's ability to forge livelihoods in Rwanda is the absence of opportunities to engage in income generating enterprises. While men are more tightly linked to the world outside their homes, women often remain dependent on men's income generating activities or suffer from their lack thereof (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 293). Women seldom have equal opportunities to participate in income generating spaces and enterprises. Although Rwandan women provide needed goods and services within the society, they are frequently compensated through in-kind mechanisms or bartering arrangements. The programs examined in my study sought to disband structural limitations placed on women by space, cultural mores, and societal expectations. Rather, the programs sought to empower women by providing education and training needed to operate income-generating enterprises. My study sought to move these ideologies forward by examining strengths and weaknesses of the programs and exploring ideas for replicating the models in other communities.

The focus of my investigation and the conclusions of my study also affirm and seek to extend feminist political ecology practices actually utilized among Rwandan women in the informal sector. Although acquiring sufficient land to sustain agricultural livelihoods was virtually impossible for the vulnerable women in my sampling, I found them using skills and knowledge provided to them through vocational and business training to forge other innovative off-farm incoming

generating options. Women participants thought creatively about ways to garner resources and use readily available materials in inventive ways to better their situations.

The training modifications and proposed follow-up measures put forward as a result of my study further extend feminine political ecology by recognizing and valuing informal, grassroots driven affiliations and actions to improve women's knowledge, resource base, access to materials and capital investment opportunities. Women in the study were affirmed in their efforts to redefine their identities, and the meaning of gender, through expressions of human agency, collective action, and cooperation (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 15). Sometimes in concert with trainers, and most often in association with fellow trainees, women of the sampling engaged in collaborative efforts to diminish risks and overcome insecurity. They discovered for themselves voice, power and synergy in working together. My study made these voices known.

Feminist political ecology certainly recognizes the importance of female involvement in regional and resident processes and practices. Rwandan women have demonstrated that the issues, which concern them, are broader than the family or the immediate household (Rocheleau, 1996, p. 288). The training provided to women via the vocational training programs helped them learn to register, receive licensure, pay fees and gain official recognition from the government. In small ways these vulnerable women realized the influence of making official connections to civic and political processes in their communities.

My research explored and added to the bank of existing knowledge regarding the interconnectedness of economics and culture in spurring societal change. The vocational and business training placed women trainees alongside their male counterparts in a space and atmosphere not often experienced by Rwandan women, yet they discovered it to be a space of safety, security and mutual collaboration. Historical attempts to confine women to domestic spaces and place social and economic limitations on them (Massey, 1994, p. 179) were broken. Together with male trainees Rwandan women began the process of instigating personal economic changes that clearly enhanced the livelihoods and social relationships of both genders.

Thus my study and the conclusions of my research help map a way forward for feminine political ecology in Rwanda perhaps most poignantly by listening to women's voices. By bringing forward perspectives and experiences often silenced and by affirming women's practices and wisdoms in forging new possibilities for their lives, I contributed to the theoretical and practical constructs of feminist political ecology.

VIX. Final Thoughts

In Rwanda, land space is not plentiful enough to meet the long-term financial needs of the population and especially of women and youth who have limited access to agricultural land. Financial assistance from the government or private charity is minimal. Traditional education is unavailable to many living on the margins. Vision

2020 initiatives create a strong imperative for the rural poor to migrate from rural settlements to urban settings. However, the government has had a very poor history of successfully creating "off-farm employment" (Pottier, 2006, p. 524) opportunities although they officially acknowledge the need for it to happen.

Thus, grassroots development programs that provide vocational and business training to help marginalized citizens initiate other forms of livelihood beyond agriculture have much potential. However, recipients and beneficiaries of vocational training need to be seen as full equals in the process of developing workable programs that best meet the needs the citizenry. The participants themselves, or the geographically present voices, bring with them grassroots knowledge that enhances the entire course of action. They must be a part of the community of discourse in future development and planning efforts.

Commonly held beliefs are "'that the poor areas of the world are recruiting and planning zones for terrorists" (McCormick, 2004, p. 154) or nursing sites for the eruption of violence. It is also well documented that violence indeed often erupts out of desperate situations where the poor feel marginalized and disempowered. Without alternative livelihood options for Rwanda's most vulnerable people, it is widely understood that immanent potential for violence exists, as the country's history makes clear. My call, like that of Daley, is for the Rwandan society to abandon views that perpetuate violence and impoverishment as well as devalue human life (Daley, 2008, p. 237). Instead, the need for sensitive, grassroots-oriented development models that give marginalized people chances for financial stability,

community connections, self-advocacy skills, and civic input is palpable. Vocational training and purposeful follow-up can help alleviate desperation and provide the "spaces of hope" that Daley hopes to see created through alternative livelihood strategies (Daley, 2008, p. 238).

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Appendix

Questionnaire
Ibibazo

Demographic Information
Umwirondoro

Age:
Imyaaka:

Place of birth:
- Urban or Rural?
- District:
- Sector:
- Cell:

Aho yavukiye:
- Mu mugi cyanwa mu giturage?
- Akarere:
- Umurenge:
- Akagari:

Current residency:
- Urban or Rural?
- District
- Sector
- Cell

Aho abarizwa:
- Mu mugi cyanwa mu giturage?
- Akarere:
- Umurenge:
- Akagari:

Gender:
Igitsina:

Level of education before the program:
Amashuri yize mbere ya program:

Has economic status increased, decreased, or stayed the same?
Ese ubukungu bwariyongeye bwaragabanutse cyangwa se bwagumye hamwe?

Length of time in program:
Igihe program izamara:

Year individual moved to current location:
Umwaka yagereye ahantu akorera ubu:

What type of Micro-business are you involved in?
Nubuhe bwoko bw'igikorwa / Umurimo urimo?

Interview Questions
Ibibazo

1. What was your employment history prior to the program?
   Nubuhe bwoko bwakazi wakoraga mbere ya program?

2. A. Do you or your family currently own land?
   Ese wowe cyangwa umuryango mufite isambu?

   B. Did you or your family own land at some time in the past?
   Ese wowe cyangwa umuryango wawe mwaba mwarigeze mugira isambu mugihe cyashize?

   C. Explain your land ownership history.
   Sobanura amateka y'isambu yanyu.

3. A. What type of vocation training have you received as part of this program?
   Nuwuhe mwuga wigishijwe ujyanye n'ibyo ukora?

   B. How has the training been valuable to you?
   Nakahe gaciro wabonaga ayo mahugurwa afite?

   C. What is the impact of your training?
   Ayo mahugurwa yakongereye iki?

4. How would you describe the strengths/weaknesses of the training?
   Nizihe ngufu / integenke zayo masomo?

5. A. What types of new conversations are you engaging in (conversations that you were not having before)?
   Nubuhe bwoko bw'biganiro bishya urimo ugira? (ibiganiro utagiraga mbere)?

   B. How are these conversations beneficial to you?
   Ibyo biganiro bigufitiye akahe kamaro?

   C. What new relationships have you developed during your participation in the project?
   Nizihe nshuti nshya wagize mugihe watangiraga uyu mushinga?

   D. How are these relationships beneficial in your life?
   Ubwo busabane bugufitiye akahe kamaro mu buzima bwawe?

6. A. Have you become more civically or politically involved as part of the project? If so, how?
Hari ibikorwa bya politiki wifashishije mugutangiza umushinga wawe? Niba aribyo ute?

B. What self-advocacy skills have you learned and how have you helped your situation using these new skills?
Nubuhe buvugizi bwo ku giti cyawe waba waragize kandi ni gute bwagufashize?

7. A. What employment and/or economics gains have you realized as a result of the training and microbusiness opportunity?
Nuwuhe murimo cyangwa izindi nyungu wabonye kubera amahugurwa namasomo yo gukora uturimo duciriritse?

B. How would you describe your economic situation before the program versus now?
Nigute wasobanura uko ubukungu bwawe bwari buhagaze mbere ya program?

8. At this point in your training, what information and skills could you teach neighbors, family, friends that would be helpful to them in life and/or in business?
Kubijyanye nibyo wize, niki wabwira cyangwa wakwigisha abaturanyi, umuryango, inshuti byabagirira akamaro mu buzima cyangwa mu mirimo?

9. What are the greatest challenges in operating a micro-business?
Nizihe ngorane zikomeye mu umwuga wawe?

10. If this program/training were to be replicated in another place much like your own community, what advice would you offer to make the training as successful as possible?
Iyi program cyangwa aya mahugurwa aramutse yimuriwe ahandi hantu wenda nkiwanyu, niyihe nama watanga kugirango agere ku ntego?