

**EVALUATION OF BANANA MARKETING PERFORMANCE IN MBEYA
REGION: A CASE STUDY OF RUNGWE DISTRICT**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Rungwe district with the main objective of evaluating the banana marketing performance in Mbeya region. The specific objectives of the study were to examine the existing banana marketing channels and the roles played by various marketing participants in Rungwe district, to evaluate the pricing structure of bananas at different levels of market chain with the view towards establish margins at different levels of banana market chain and to examine the key constraints and opportunities for improved banana marketing in the district.

Structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from banana growers and traders while secondary data was collected from district agricultural extension office and literature search from various sources. Population of this study was households of three villages (the highest producer, middle and the lowest producer). The sample size was 125 households. The study also collected information from 10 purposely selected truckers/transporters and 30 other traders (wholesalers, retailers, assemblers/village assemblers). The study revealed that there were ten (10) different channels through which bananas passed from farmers to consumers.

Survey results shows that the concentration indices for banana traders were; retailers 64.4%, assemblers 70.77%, brokers 53.22%, transporter 75.36% and overall traders were 66.01%. These market indices suggest that the market in the study area was highly concentrated. Study results also shows that the major problems faced by farmers were; unreliable market, low prices, high cost of inputs, lack of extension services, high transport cost/ long distance to the market, high market levies, perishability of the produce and absence of weighing scales. It is recommended that farmers should form groups and organizations to enhance bargaining power during selling.