

# Gender Mainstreaming Stereotypes and Socio-Economic Development of Cyeza Sector in Rwanda

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**Abstract:** This research project highlighted the fact that there were still gender mainstreaming stereotypes in our society that impede socioeconomic development, despite many efforts that have been made so far. The primary goal is to analyze how gender mainstreaming stereotypes influence socioeconomic advancement, with an emphasis on negative socio-cultural norms, religious beliefs, and leadership misconceptions. The significance of the study was to guide policy and practice by establishing a foundation for resolving gender disparities and promoting inclusive development. The research used structured questionnaires, to collect quantitative data and interviews to gather qualitative data. This comprehensive method ensured a full investigation of the effect of gender stereotypes on socioeconomic outcomes, intending to provide useful insights to policymakers, academia, and civil society organizations. The sample size of 392 respondents was selected from the target population of 18,684 using purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages, while inferential statistics involved Pearson Correlation Analysis using SPSS IBM version 21.0. Additionally, qualitative data was thematically analyzed and presented in narrative form. From the findings, the first objective showed that negative socio-cultural norms significantly restrict women's socio-economic development in the Cyeza Sector. Negative norms, with standard deviations between 0.392 and 0.418, undervalue women's economic contributions and limit their leadership opportunities. The second objective was that religious beliefs, ranging from 0.365 to 0.415, impact gender roles and family dynamics, often hindering women's autonomy. The third objective showed that leadership misconceptions, with standard deviations from 0.383 to 0.421, subject women to criticism and bias, restricting their leadership roles. Some recommendations were that bodies in charge of Gender equality should implement extensive education programs to challenge and change negative socio-cultural norms and stereotypes that undervalue women's roles in the economy and leadership. The conclusion was that efforts to change cultural perceptions and encourage gender-inclusive practices are crucial for the comprehensive growth of the Cyeza Sector.

**Keywords:** Gender, Gender Equality, Gender Mainstreaming, Socio-economic development, Gender social-cultural norms, and Gender stereotypes.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper highlighted the fact that there were still gender mainstreaming stereotypes in our society that impede socioeconomic development, despite many efforts that have been made so far. The project analyzed how gender mainstreaming stereotypes influence socioeconomic advancement, with an emphasis on negative socio-cultural norms,

religious beliefs, and leadership misconceptions. A recent study done by UNFPA, 2020, showed that social norms shape human behavior, determining the welfare, health, and opportunities of different individuals around the world. Societal norms can be transformed massively, with significant positive effects on the lives of women, men, girls, and boys. Social norm reform and gender equality are critical components of the Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda and the UN Population Fund mandate. For example, the 2030 Agenda recognizes that equal opportunities regardless of gender and women empowerment make essential contributions to progress across all SDGs (Hideg, et al., 2019).

The latest study done by CARE International in Uganda and Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies reveals that deeply entrenched gender norms and roles limit women's participation in economic activities. For instance, women often face substantial challenges in engaging in community activities due to their traditional gender roles, which confine them to unpaid care work and domestic responsibilities. These limitations not only restrict their economic advancement but also perpetuate gender inequalities in economic participation and decision-making. Additionally, the reluctance of men to involve in initiatives that challenge these norms further exacerbates the issue, slowing progress towards gender equality and sustainable socio-economic development (McClean, et al., 2018).

Numerous studies have investigated the relationship between gender and leadership. Scholars such as Kathryn, Erin, and Neil have discovered that men are stereotyped with agentic attributes such as confidence, assertiveness, independence, rationalism, and decisiveness, whereas women are frequently associated with communal features such as empathy, warmth, helpfulness, and nurture. Gender stereotypes portraying women as warm, loving, and caring, while men as cold, competitive, and authoritarian, may have led some to believe that women are less capable than men in leadership positions. It is vital to highlight that making generalizations about men's and women's success as leaders based on gender indicates that they focus on the Leadership Character domain. Interestingly, research indicates that men and women are equally competent leaders unless their leadership roles are gendered. In such instances, leaders who match their assumed gender are regarded as more effective. Leadership effectiveness is heavily influenced by social expectations and the context in which it occurs. When it comes to gendered leadership traits, traditional management efficiency is frequently viewed as masculine. This means that characteristics traditionally associated with men are frequently regarded as essential for success in management and leadership positions (Kathryn, et al., 2017).

Chiemezie (2018) highlights the success of gender mainstreaming policies; however, there is inadequate empirical information on which interventions are most effective in transforming cultural norms and discriminatory practices. This emphasizes the need for empirical research on effective gender mainstreaming programs that address these cultural norms.

The MINALOC (2023) report provides useful data on gender inequalities in leadership, but it lacks qualitative insights into the underlying causes of this gap. This research gap emphasizes the importance of qualitative studies aiming at fully understanding the factors that contribute to gender differences in leadership positions and developing effective methods to promote gender equality in these roles.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the methodological details, this study employed a descriptive research design to investigate how gender mainstreaming stereotypes influence socioeconomic advancement, with an emphasis on negative socio-cultural norms, religious beliefs, and leadership misconceptions. The researcher used quantitative research to analyze the questionnaires and the results into descriptive statistics.

The research was centered on the Cyeza Sector, located in Rwanda. The target population for this study encompasses the residents of Cyeza Sector, Muhanga District, Rwanda. The target population was 392 respondents and their characteristics included age and gender, with both sexes being 20 years old and above who will be able to express their views in answering questionnaires and interviews. The sample methods employed in this study include purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. The researcher collected the quantitative data from the sampled 392 respondents. For data analysis, SPSS tool version 21 was used to produce data with mean and standard deviation for decision-making regarding central tendencies.

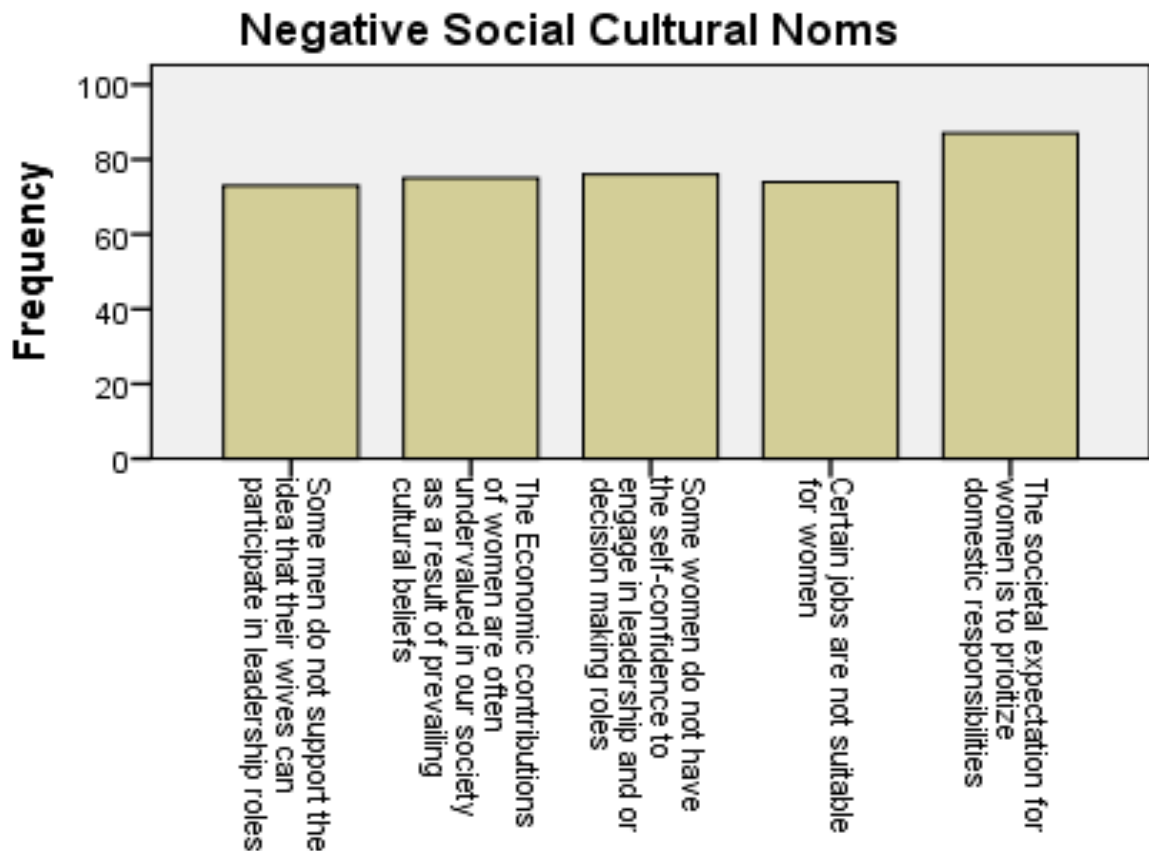
### 3. RESULTS

**Table 1: Negative Social-Cultural Norms and Socioeconomic Development**

Statement concerning negative effects	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD
Some men do not support the idea that their wives can participate in leadership roles	73	19.0	0.190	0.392
The Economic contributions of women are often undervalued in our society as a result of prevailing cultural beliefs	75	19.5	0.195	0.396
Some women do not have the self-confidence to engage in leadership and or decision-making roles	76	19.7	0.197	0.398
Certain jobs are not suitable for women	74	19.2	0.192	0.394
The societal expectation for women is to prioritize domestic responsibilities	87	22.6	0.226	0.418
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.07</b>	<b>1.432</b>

Key: 5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree

Source: Primary data (2024)



**Figure 1: Negative social-cultural norms**

**Table 2: Assessment of Socio-economic development**

Statement concerning socio-economic development	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S. D
Women's rights to land allow them to obtain loans for investment purposes	77	20.0	0.200	0.400
Enhancement of food security is linked to women's access to land and agricultural resources	72	18.7	0.187	0.390
Women's participation in economic activities raise household incomes	85	22.1	0.221	0.415
Complementarity of couples in decision-making on resource allocation accelerates family development	83	21.6	0.216	0.412
Community programs consider the needs of both men and women	68	17.7	0.177	0.382
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>1.383</b>

Key: 5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree

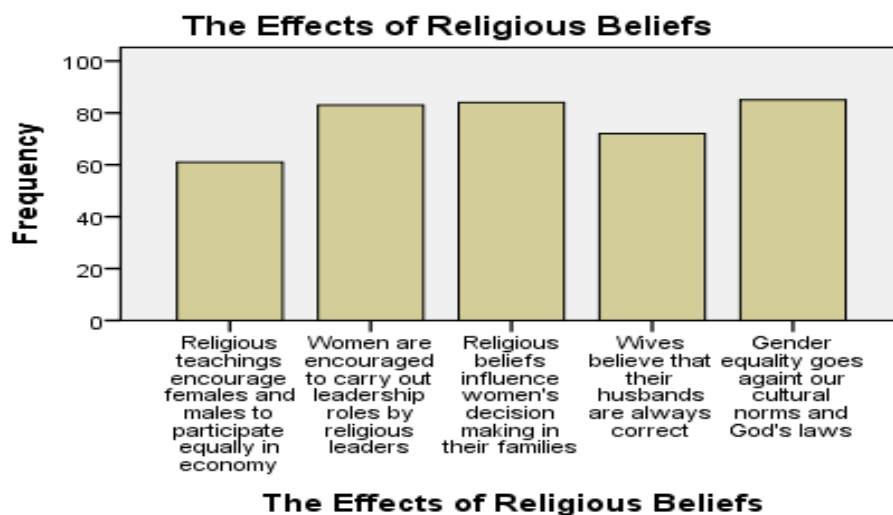
Source: Primary data (2024)

**Table 3: The effect of religious beliefs on socioeconomic development**

Statement concerning the effects of religious beliefs	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Religious teachings encourage females and males to participate equally in the economy	61	15.8	15.8	0.365
Women are encouraged to carry out leadership roles by some religious leaders	83	21.6	21.6	0.412
Religious beliefs influence women's decision-making in their families	84	21.8	21.8	0.413
Wives believe that their husbands are always correct	72	18.7	18.7	0.390
Gender equality goes against our cultural norms and God's laws	85	22.1	22.1	0.415
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.10</b>	<b>1.384</b>

Key: 5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree

Source: Primary data (2024)

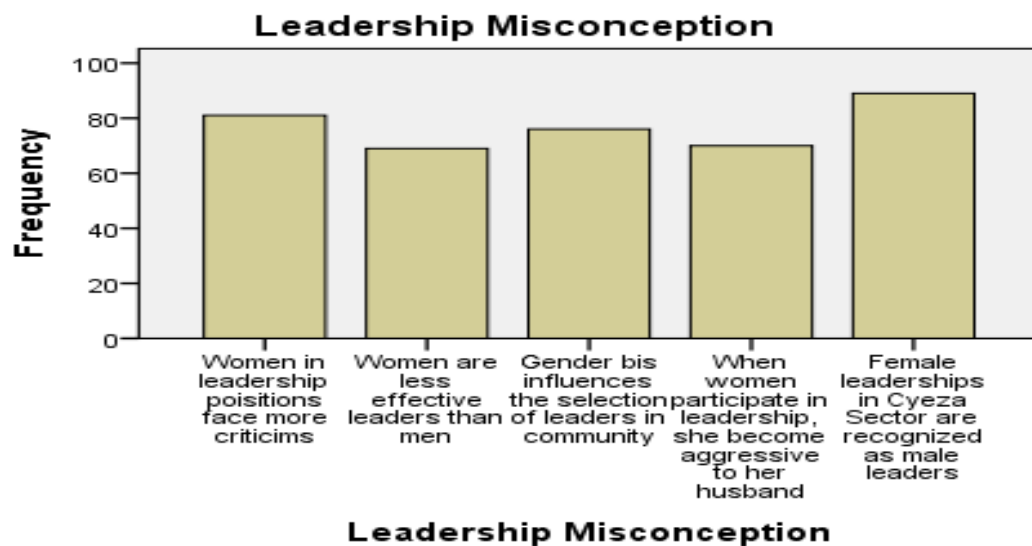
**Figure 2: The effects of religious beliefs**

**Table 4: Leadership Misconception and Socioeconomic Development**

Statement concerning Leadership misconception	Frequency	Percent	Mean	S.D
Women in leadership positions face more criticism	81	21.0	0.210	0.408
Women are less effective leaders than men	69	17.9	0.179	0.383
Gender bias influences the selection of leaders in the community	76	19.7	0.197	0.398
When women participate in leadership, they become aggressive to their husband	70	18.2	0.182	0.387
Female leaders in Cyeza Sector are recognized as male leaders	89	23.1	0.231	0.421
<b>Total</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2.04</b>	<b>1.460</b>

Key: 5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, 1 Strongly Disagree

Source: Primary data (2024)

**Figure 3: Leadership Misconception****Table 5: Correlations between gender mainstreaming stereotypes and socioeconomic development**

		Negative Social Cultural Noms	The Effects of Religious Beliefs	Leadership Misconception	Socio economic Development
Negative Social Cultural Norms	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	385			
The Effects of Religious Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	.986**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	385	385		
Leadership Misconception	Pearson Correlation	.992**	.981**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	385	385	385	
Socio-Economic Development	Pearson Correlation	.980**	.973**	.980**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	385	385	385	385

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

Source: Primary data (2024)

**Table 6: Coefficients, Model Summary, and ANOVA of Negative Socio-cultural Norms and Socioeconomic Development****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.021	.025		.860	
	Negative Social Cultural Norms	.947	.010	.980	96.906	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Socio-Economic Development

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.980 <sup>a</sup>	.961	.961	.274

a. Predictors: (Constant), Negative Social Cultural Norms

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	706.076	1	706.076	9390.764	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	28.797	383	.075		
	Total	734.873	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Socio-Economic Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Negative Social Cultural Noms

**Table 7: Coefficients, Model Summary, and ANOVA of Religious Beliefs and Socioeconomic Development****Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.058	.029		-1.975	.049
	The Effects of Religious Beliefs	.973	.012	.973	83.301	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Socioeconomic Development

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.973 <sup>a</sup>	.948	.948	.317

a. Predictors: (Constant), The Effects of Religious Beliefs

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	696.433	1	696.433	6938.982	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	38.440	383	.100		
	Total	734.873	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Socioeconomic Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), The Effects of Religious Beliefs

**Table 8: Coefficients, Model Summary, and ANOVA of Leading Misconception and Socioeconomic Development****Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.082	.024		3.448	.001
	Leadership Misconception	.929	.010	.980	97.607	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Socioeconomic Development

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.980 <sup>a</sup>	.961	.961	.272

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Misconception

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	706.472	1	706.472	9527.032	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	28.401	383	.074		
	Total	734.873	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Socioeconomic Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Misconception

#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this section, the researcher interprets data and concludes therefrom. Table 1 and Figure 1, showed some negative social-cultural norms and socio-economic development where data showed a slightly higher standard deviation of 0.398 for the statement “Some women do not have the self-confidence to engage in leadership and/or decision-making roles” highlights the internalization of societal expectations by women themselves, further inhibiting their socio-economic advancement. “The societal expectation for women is to prioritize domestic responsibilities” has the highest standard deviation at 0.418, indicating a significant variability but also a strong adherence to traditional gender roles that restrict women’s participation in broader socio-economic activities. In general, the data reveals that negative social-cultural norms are deeply rooted and widely accepted within the Cyeza Sector, significantly limiting women’s socio-economic development. These norms not only affect women’s confidence and participation in leadership but also perpetuate the undervaluation of their economic contributions and restrict their occupational choices.

Table 2 about the assessment of socio-economic development demonstrated that the highest standard deviation of 0.415 for “Women's participation in economic activities raises household incomes” highlights the substantial variability but also the strong agreement that women’s economic participation directly boosts household incomes. The statement “Complementarity of couples in decision making on resource allocation accelerates family development” with an SD of 0.412, indicates a strong belief in the positive impact of joint decision-making on family progress. Lastly, “Community programs consider the needs of both men and women” with an SD of 0.382, suggests that inclusive community programs are recognized as essential for balanced socio-economic development.

Table 3 and Figure 3 were about the effects of religious beliefs on socio-economic development. The results showed that the standard deviation for “Religious beliefs influence women’s decision-making in their families” is 0.413, highlighting the significant impact of religious beliefs on family dynamics and women’s roles within households. This influence can either empower or limit women’s socio-economic contributions depending on the nature of the beliefs. Generally, “Gender equality goes against our cultural norms and God’s laws” has the highest standard deviation at 0.415, indicating a considerable variability in opinions. This suggests a strong adherence to traditional beliefs that gender equality contradicts cultural and religious norms, posing a significant barrier to achieving gender parity and socio-economic progress.

Table 4 and Figure 4 were about Leadership, Misconception, and Socioeconomic Development. The results showed that the standard deviation for “Gender bias influences the selection of leaders in the community” is 0.398, highlighting the prevalent belief that leadership selection is biased against women. Such biases restrict women’s access to leadership positions, hindering their ability to influence socio-economic policies and decisions. In general, “Female leaders in Cyeza Sector are recognized as male leaders” has the highest standard deviation at 0.421, indicating considerable variability in responses. This suggests that while some progress has been made in recognizing female leaders, ingrained gender norms still affect the acceptance and perception of women's leadership.

From Table 5, correlations between gender mainstreaming stereotypes and socioeconomic development, the results reveal a very strong positive correlation between negative socio-cultural norms and socio-economic development, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.980 (p-value = 0.000). This indicates that as negative socio-cultural norms intensify, socio-economic development significantly suffers. Similarly, religious beliefs demonstrate a strong positive relationship with socio-economic development, reflected in a Pearson coefficient of 0.973 (p-value = 0.000), highlighting their substantial role in shaping development outcomes.

Table 6 about Coefficients, Model summary and ANOVA of Negative social cultural norms and socioeconomic development, the results showed the coefficient for negative socio-cultural norms is 0.947, with a standard error of 0.010, yielding a highly significant t-value of 96.906 ( $p < 0.001$ ) according to the coefficients table. This denotes a statistically significant positive influence of negative socio-cultural norms on socio-economic development, as evidenced by the standardized beta coefficient of 0.980, which confirms the dominance of this predictor in explaining variations in socio-economic development.

Table 7 showed the Coefficients, model summary and ANOVA of religious beliefs and socioeconomic development, the results showed that the unstandardized coefficient for the effects of religious beliefs is 0.973, with a standard error of 0.012, resulting in a highly significant t-value of 83.301 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This reflects a substantial positive impact of religious beliefs on socio-economic development, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.973, showing that religious beliefs are a strong predictor of socio-economic outcomes.

Table 8 shows the Coefficients, model summary, and ANOVA of leading misconception and socioeconomic development. The results made it clear that an unstandardized coefficient of 0.929 for leadership misconception with a standard error of 0.010 resulted in a highly significant t-value of 97.607 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates a strong positive influence of leadership misconceptions on socio-economic development, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.980, suggesting that leadership misconceptions are a major predictor of socio-economic outcomes.

After recognizing that the research was not exhaustive in this project, then the recommendations for further research were as follows: (i) how gender mainstreaming educational programs in schools and communities influence socio-economic development, (ii) to examine the effectiveness of current gender policies and their implementation at the local and national levels, (iii) to explore the effect of Rwandan culture on Gender mainstreaming implementation.

As I conclude, the findings emphasize the complex relationship between negative sociocultural norms, gender-based religious beliefs, gender-based leadership misconceptions, and socioeconomic development in the Cyeza Sector. These factors collectively limit women’s economic contributions, leadership opportunities, and autonomy. Standard deviations ranging from 0.365 to 0.421 across various aspects highlight the pervasive nature of these barriers. Efforts to change cultural perceptions and encourage gender-inclusive practices are essential for the overall development of the Cyeza Sector.

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