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**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN”
MPTF OFFICE GENERIC ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2015**

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in <i>Liberia</i> MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 92003 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results²</p> <p>Liberia, West Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Margibi County: <i>(Gibi District & Kakata District)</i> Grand Bassa County: <i>(Buchanan District, District #2, and District #3)</i> Maryland County: <i>(Barrobo District & Karluway District)</i> Sinoe County: <i>(Juarzon District Jeadea District)</i> River Gee County: <i>(Fish Town District Tienpo District, Chedepo District, Beapo District, and Webbo District)</i> Montserrado County: <i>(Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17)</i> <p>The strategic result is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</p>
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAO, UNWOMEN, WFP in Liberia 	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender Children, and Social Protection Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Commerce & Industry Ministry of Internal Affairs National Rural Women’s Structure Association of Women in Cross Border Trade Liberia Marketing Association EduCARE Liberia THINK Liberia Foundation for Community Initiatives Central Bank of Liberia – Microfinance Unit Development Education Network of Liberia
<p align="center">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: \$ 1,288,255</p>	<p align="center">Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration 5 YEARS</p>

¹ The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

³ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number are as follows: ETHIOPIA: 00092000; GUATEMALA: 00092001; KYRGYZSTAN: 00092002; LIBERIA: 00092003; LIBERIA: 00092004; NEPAL: 00092005; NIGER: 00092006; RWANDA: 00092007.

MPTF Contribution ⁴ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UN Women Liberia</i> \$ 899,763 • <i>WFP Liberia</i> \$ 283,574 • <i>FAO Liberia</i> \$ 104,918 Agency Contribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UN Women Liberia</i> \$ 21,787.75 Government Contribution <i>(if applicable)</i> Other Contributions (donors) <i>(if applicable)</i> TOTAL: \$ 1,310,042.75	Start Date <i>(15 10 2012)</i> Original End Date <i>(14 10 217)</i>
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval. Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i> Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>	Report Submitted By <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name: Ramon G. Garway ○ Title: National Programme Manager ○ Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women ○ Email address: ramon.garway@unwomen.org

⁴ The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the global amount (sum of Norway’s and Sweden’s contributions) transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2015 Consolidated Annual Progress Report covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015. This report is in fulfillment of the reporting requirements set out in the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) concluded with the Donors. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by Participating UN Organizations, the Annual Progress Report is consolidated based on information, data and financial statements submitted by Participating Organizations. It is neither an evaluation of the Joint Programme nor an assessment of the performance of the Participating Organizations. The report provides the Steering Committee with a comprehensive overview of achievements and challenges associated with the Joint Programme, enabling it to make strategic decisions and take corrective measures, where applicable.

The Joint Programme made significant gains to advance gender equality and to empower rural women in Liberia. Mechanisms for the accountability of Government to gender equality commitments were strengthened through the effective practice of gender mainstreaming at local level and support for women's economic rights and livelihoods. There is increased practice of gender-responsive planning and budgeting with the Ministries of Gender and Agriculture including increased economic security for rural women. In addition, a Women's Minimum Agenda in support of the Constitutional Review process was adopted with 5 key issues considered; two are suggestions for the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) to take into account the utilization of gender sensitive language in the drafting of the new constitution and the call for equal representation amongst others.

The capacity of local rural women-based structures including the National Rural Women Structure and the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade was strengthened with these structure now actively engaged in national and regional processes including key policy debates (e.g. Land Rights Bill, Domestic Violence Bill, Constitutional Review Process, Draft Local Governance Bill, etc.). In addition, these structures now have increased capacity to participate in and advocate for rural women's rights in decision-making processes at all levels; and women's farming cooperatives and groups through capacity building in organizational development and leadership skills amongst others have also improved their access to market opportunities and are now accessing and using new storage facilities and post-harvest technologies in the most vulnerable and neglected communities. Moreover, there has been increased access to credit for these rural women through the establishment of Savings and Loan Associations with a minimum of 25 women per association. Hence, over 3,000 women have access to credit under newly established and functional SLAs with more than 2,000 of these women having increased access to information and services including skills in literacy, numeracy and business management. These market women are better understanding their businesses and have expanded their existing businesses, having greater access to increased income-generating opportunities.

This report is presented in two parts. Part I is the Annual Narrative Progress Report and Part II is the Annual Consolidated Financial Progress Report. The report generally covers the Executive Summary, Purpose of the Joint Programme, Overview of Resources, and it also highlights implementation and monitoring arrangements along with an overview of the achievement of the Joint Programme and the challenges, etc.

This report covers only those achievements of the Joint Programme that have been made through the pass-through portion of funding.

I. Purpose

The **Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE)** provides significant and strategic support to the Government of Liberia in furtherance of its public sector reforms and economic development efforts to achieve the following outcomes: (1) Improved food and nutrition security, (2) Increased income to sustain livelihoods, (3) Enhanced participation and leadership in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes, and (4) Improved gender-responsive policy environments for economic empowerment.

The Government of Liberia, Civil Society, and the Private Sector are highly involved in the implementation of the joint programme activities at country level and remain actively engaged with all processes aimed at ensuring a successful implementation.

At the country level, the joint programme considers ten strategic outputs under its programming framework:

1. Organizational capacity of the National Rural Women's Structure enhanced to represent the needs and concerns of rural women across Liberia, particularly the most vulnerable
2. Women's access to land, agricultural inputs and assets, innovative technologies and extension services improved
3. Capacity of women's cooperatives supported and strengthened to improve their access to markets opportunities, such as the Purchase for Progress programme
4. Rural women's access to sustainable finance services improved to support their engagement in economic activities through the Savings and Loan Association (SLA) methodology/and or approach
5. Vocational, entrepreneurial and marketing skills among women enhanced and transformed from subsistence/informal to formal and sustainable business, and women and girls are more informed and knowledgeable through increased literacy and access to appropriate learning and information
6. Rural women's leadership and participation in local governance, particularly in the constitutional reform process strengthened
7. Gender mainstreamed into existing sector policies, national plans and at local government level
8. Local level gender responsive planning and budgeting strengthened, in line with implementation of Liberia's Decentralization Policy.
9. Capacity of civil society to network and advocate for rural women's economic empowerment strengthened
10. Rural women and girls have increased access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) education and services including knowledge on SGBV prevention and response

In line with the United Nations core principles and strategies for Multi-Partner Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JP RWEE):

- Supports gender equality and rural women's economic empowerment priorities that are identified and led by the Government of Liberia through its Agenda for Transformation (AfT) – the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Involves all relevant stakeholders including Liberia's National Rural Women Structure, multiple Government Ministries, international donors and participating UN Organizations in the planning and decision-making process, led by the Joint Programme Steering Committee;
- Builds on ongoing and existing Government frameworks and strategies including the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), the National Gender Policy (NGP), the Agriculture Policy, the Trade Policy, and Liberia's Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan (ESRP) - support to the Ebola recovery process;
- Strengthens financial support effectiveness through coordination and harmonization of cross-cutting gender interventions under the oversight of one Steering Committee; and
- Ensures that the funding, operations and implementation modalities provide for full transparency and accountability, involving an active Steering Committee and including the submission of reports to that committee and other relevant stakeholders (i.e. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, etc.)

The joint programme reached a total of 5,635 beneficiaries with the Norwegian and Swedish funds. Of the 5,635 beneficiaries reached, 3,250 had access to a delivery of strategic interventions, namely Adult Literacy & Numeracy Skills + Business Development Skills + SLAs trainings at community level.

465 women leaders from farming groups and the National Rural Women Structure including other grass-root structures benefitted from trainings in organizational development and leadership skills; and from the 5,635 reached, 2,000 were women and men in targeted farming groups benefitted from capacity building initiatives

in improved agricultural practice, food security and nutrition. In addition, gender mainstreaming and nutrition-sensitive agriculture capacity building trainings reached 62 participants in project locations.

II. Results

1. Strategic Mapping and Assessment of Women's Farming Groups for JP RWEE Programming (by agricultural production area, geographic distribution, size and gender of farming groups, and prioritization of capacity building needs)

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 1: *Rural women have improved food and nutrition security*

Output 1.1: *Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security*

In February 2015, Subah-Belleh Associates, a Liberian owned and managed consultancy firm conducted a strategic mapping and scoping of women's farming groups in 3 counties for securing data on the needs of existing women's farming groups in targeted counties (by agricultural production area, geographic distribution, size and gender of farming groups, and prioritization of capacity building needs). As a result:

- Baseline information on 18 farming groups (a minimum of 100 persons per group) in 19 rural communities is available and was also used for the development of strategic interventions under programming on Food Security and Nutrition with WFP, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture. The mapping and scoping exercise had originally considered approximately 2,000 women and men involved in agricultural activities as outlined in the country programme document; and
- The findings from the mapping and scoping study had revealed that the main income generating activity of most of the farming groups is rice, cassava and vegetables production including marketing. Only one of the fifteen groups grows corn and beans, in addition to rice and cassava. A very few members have secondary income generating activities in the form of petty trading and livestock rearing. Also, the women were still using rudimentary farming practices at the time of the study. The most common was the "slash and burn" method. Men usually brush the bushes and fell the trees, while the women scratch the land, plant the seeds, harvest the produce and market them.

2. Increased Organizational Development and Leadership Skills for Rural Women-based Structures (e.g. NRWS, Farming Groups, AWICBT, Farming Cooperatives, etc.)

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 3: *Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes*

Output 3.1: *Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to take an active part in local governance systems.*

A training session was organized from 7th September to 11th September in Monrovia on Organizational Development & Leadership Skills for 80 leaders from 16 rural women-based structures. As a result:

- 80 leaders from 16 rural women-based structures (e.g. NRWS, Farming Groups, AWICBT, Farming Cooperatives, etc.) have increased knowledge and practical skills in the organization and management of their respective structures at community level, thus, contributing to the understanding of their rights and improved livelihoods.

A national consultant was hired to develop a simplified version of a training module in organizational development and leadership skills in June of 2015. From June 8, 2015 to July 31, 2015, this consultant

worked with the RWEE country team to develop and finalize a comprehensive training module on organizational development and leadership skills for use under the RWEE joint programme in Liberia. As a result:

- A simplified version of a training module in organizational development and leadership skills was developed and integrated into existing adult literacy and numeracy training curricula for facilitating discussions with over 2,000 rural women that graduated from level 1 literacy and numeracy classes in over 40 targeted communities.

From March 4, 2015 – March 6, 2015, a National Rural Women’s Conference was hosted with Liberia’s National Rural Women Structure. The event included targeted trainings in leadership and democratic representation, and consultations on governance reforms (Constitutional Review and Decentralization). As a result:

- 412 rural women leaders from 5 rural counties have increased knowledge and understanding of democratic representation, current governance reforms (e.g. Constitutional Review and Decentralization Processes).

The leadership of the National Rural Women Structure including technicians from the structure received capacity building trainings in leadership skills including monitoring and reporting during the second and third quarters of 2015. In addition, the joint programme provided stationeries, a computer and printer, office desks and chairs including a generator to support the structure’s head office. The structure has been linked to implementing partners (i.e. EduCARE and THINK) at county level, so as to enable focal persons from the NRWS to access the RWEE motorcycles to conduct spot checks in targeted rural communities. As a result:

- The National Rural Women Structure now has the logistical capacity for monitoring and reporting on the joint programme’s activity at community level. The structure remains active in project communities, documenting change from the various interventions being provided by UN Women, WFP, and FAO. Support with logistics has encouraged the structure to particularly remain supportive of the joint programme and has also resulted in the expansion of the structure’s core activities at a more decentralized level.

3. Women’s Access to Land, Agricultural Inputs and Assets, Innovative Technologies and Extension Services Improved

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth

Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products

Through the June 15, 2015 to December 31, 2015 implementation of the adult literacy and numeracy skills classes in targeted communities, rural women attending classes were educated on the issues of access to land and their participation in the decision-making processes when it comes to the management of their natural resources at community level. These topics form a part of the existing training curricula administered to project participants. As a result:

- 2,000 rural women have increased knowledge on women’s access to land within the context of land rights including for their participation in decision-making processes when it comes to the management of natural resources in their environment. Awareness raising aimed at increasing awareness amongst rural women on natural resource management, the environment and concession agreements that affect their communities was done through the rollout of adult literacy and numeracy skills classes for rural women in targeted communities.

- 20 farming groups (1,100 beneficiaries: 877 women; 223 men) in 3 counties received mixed vegetable seeds including insecticide for pest control, protective gears for farming, cutlasses, hoes, shovels, etc.
- Through the administration of the V/SLA methodology trainings including coaching and mentoring from July 2015 to December 2015, 35 agriculture SLAs were formed, providing access to credit for over 1,000 rural women farmers in 15 rural communities. Women now have access to increased savings, thus, providing the potential for growing more food and ensuring its security at community level. The overall goal was to ensure that women are not just raised out of poverty (the SLAs approach) but that they have the opportunity to create wealth.
- 15 rural communities were identified as potential spots for providing approximately 1,000 rural women farmers with access to innovative technologies, with 3 out of the 15 rural communities having increased yield and sale due to the provision of agriculture trainings, post-harvest technologies and warehouse equipment for 3 existing community grain reserves. Currently, activities are completed for 3 out of the 15 targeted communities.

4. Capacity of Women's Cooperatives Supported and Strengthened to Improve their Access to Markets Opportunities

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

Output 1.2: Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production

- There is improved food security and access to WASH for approximately 2,000 rural women and men from across 3 targeted rural communities who have access to 3 existing community grain reserves including drying floors toilets and hand pumps. In addition, approximately 1,100 women and men (877 women; 223 men) in targeted farming groups have access to 90 MT locally procured rice seeds for planting this agriculture season including access to post-harvest technologies and warehouse equipment for the CGRs. Farming groups have increased capacity to manage their own farming activities and to generate income from the production and sale of crops at local markets.
- The 18 farming groups (900 women) were linked to WFP's Purchase for Progress programme. These groups are benefitting from the purchasing of local staple food commodities for training and capacity development activities for farmers and farmers' organizations. These activities were designed to address constraints along the entire value chain from production, post-harvest handling and marketing including quality control. It is expected to address infrastructure constraints and enable smallholder farmers' organizations and their members to engage profitably in the wider local market - principally for milled rice and beans in 2016.

5. Rural Women's Access to Sustainable Financial Services Improved to Support their Engagement in Economic Activities through the Savings and Loan Association (SLA) Methodology/and or Approach

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth

Output 2.1: Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products

In June 2015, UN Women under the RWEE joint programme contracted EduCARE to expand rural women's access to financial services through the expansion of Village Savings and Loan Associations (SLAs), with a particular focus on piloting training modules for agricultural SLAs in 15 rural communities

for 2,000 women and men in targeted farming groups. From June 2015 to December 2015, these rural farmers were trained and formed into agricultural V/SLAs for ensuring increased access to finance/credit at the community level. As a result:

- 1,750 women and men engaged in entrepreneurial and agricultural activities at the community level are accessing financial services through 70 newly established Savings and Loan Associations. Of the 2,000 targeted, 1,000 women are participating in entrepreneurial SLAs along with 66 men while the remaining 750 are participating in agricultural SLAs. Market women and women farmers are expanding their respective income-generating activities in support of improved livelihoods.

6. Vocational, Entrepreneurial and Marketing Skills among Women Enhanced and Transformed from Subsistence/Informal to Formal and Sustainable Business; and Women and Girls are more Informed and Knowledgeable through Increased Literacy and Access to appropriate Learning and Information

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth

Output 2.1: Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products

In June 2015, UN Women under the RWEE joint programme contracted THINK to increase the skills of rural women, including girls and young women, in literacy, numeracy and business development. This also included support for local facilitators at community level and advocacy work around women opening of bank accounts for increased savings. Approximately 2,750 women were reached by the implementing partner in close collaboration with EduCARE at the community level from June 2015 to December 2015. As a result:

- 2,750 women entrepreneurs and women farmers have increased knowledge in business management and practice including literacy and numeracy skills. These women are better understanding their respective businesses and are generating increased income through practicing their newly acquired skills. In addition, illiterate rural women are able to spell their names on bank deposit and withdrawal slips without any outside help; thus, they have increased self-confidence and respect in their communities;
- 1,412 of the 2,750 women targeted with access to literacy and numeracy skills classes including business skills classes now have bank accounts and are no longer saving their personal and business money at home. In addition, these women are accessing financial services (i.e. credit/loan) from the banks they are registered with; and
- 80 local facilitators at community level have increased knowledge on facilitating literacy and numeracy skills classes including business skills classes for semi-literate and illiterate women. These facilitators have built the capacity of 3,250 women entrepreneurs and farmers across 40 communities in 6 of Liberia's 15 counties.

7. Rural Women's Leadership and Participation in Local Governance, particularly in the Constitutional Reform process strengthened

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes

Output 3.1: Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to take an active part in local governance systems

Capacity building sessions were held with the National Rural Women Structure and the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade on the strengthening rural women's leadership and participation in decision-making in local governance, particularly in the constitutional reform process in March 2015. As a result:

- 10 national and county leaders from the National Rural Women Structure and 5 county leaders from the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade were able to attend and participate in the 'Gbarnga Constitutional Review Committee Delegates Conference' held in Bong County from 31st March 2015 – 1st April 2015. At the conference, the leadership structures were provided the opportunity in ensuring that the voice of women are captured in the ongoing review process. A Women's Minimum Agenda in support of the CRC reform process was adopted with 5 key issues considered. Some of these included gender sensitive language and equal representation amongst others. The JP's support to the structure was just one attempt at strengthening rural women's leadership and participation in local governance, particularly in the constitutional reform process.

In February 2015, training sessions were held for leaders/participants from the National Rural Women Structure on leadership skills, women's political participation, decision-making process, and women's rights. As a result:

- 1,430 women have increased capacity to participate in decision-making processes (i.e. ongoing constitutional review process and the current decentralization process in Liberia).

The RWEE joint programme supported the attendance and participation of delegates from the AWICBT and the NRWS to attend and participate in the 'Gbarnga Constitutional Review Committee Delegates Conference' held in Bong County from March 31, 2015 –April 1, 2015. As a result:

- 40 county leaders from the National Rural Women Structured have increased knowledge on the Women's Minimum Agenda for advocacy work around ensuring that the agenda is met at the end of the Constitutional Review Process and the new constitution is engendered.

Through the NRWS and community-based local facilitators' participation in the literacy and numeracy skills classes including that of the business skills classes, there was awareness raising during classes on women's access to land and their land rights including their participation in decision-making processes on the management of their natural resources, the environment, and concession agreements that affect rural women. Topics are embedded in the adult literacy and numeracy skills training curricula being used for teaching literacy and numeracy skills classes to rural illiterate and semi-literate women. As a result:

- 84 county leaders from the National Rural Women Structure and 80 community facilitators have increased knowledge and the capacity for advocacy and awareness raising on women's access to land and their land rights including their participation in decision-making processes on natural resource management, the environment, and concession agreements that affect rural women in targeted communities.

8. Local Level Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting Strengthened

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women

Output 4.1: Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets

The RWEE joint programme provided financial and technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture for monitoring and supervision; local level gender responsive planning and budgeting including support for its Agriculture County Coordinators. From September 23 - 24, 2015; September 28 - 29, 2015; and October

1 - 2, 2015, training sessions were held on gender mainstreaming and nutrition-sensitive agriculture at the county level. As a result:

- 5 Agriculture County Coordinators and 122 community leaders from 15 women farming groups in 5 rural counties have increased understanding of gender, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and the roles rural women play in agriculture. Farming groups' leaders are now ensuring equal participation of both women and men in decision-making processes at the community level with regards to agriculture. County coordinators are also ensuring that their implementation plans and strategies at county, district, and community levels are gender friendly. Both women and men engaged in agriculture in 15 rural communities are equally benefitting from the planning and budgeting that Agriculture County Coordinators are ensuring; and
- There is increased logistical support for the Food Security and Nutrition Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture. The unit has access to transport (5 motorcycles) for monitoring and reporting at county level, information technology for research and reporting, farming tools and seeds for support to local communities involved in agriculture and small-garden practices.

9. Capacity of Civil Society to Network and Advocate for Rural Women's Economic Empowerment Strengthened

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes

Output 3.3: Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels

Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women, have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment

In the first and second quarters of 2015, the RWEE team stepped up the holding of regular consultative and coordination meetings with key stakeholders and relevant partners on forming synergies with other programmes being implemented at country level. For example, one key future collaboration area happens to be the area of WEE & WASH with OXFAM and UN Women. RWEE continues to gradually form synergies with this upcoming initiative that will be implemented in both Liberia and Sierra Leone over the next four years. The joint initiative is expected to complement what RWEE has already done at country level within the context of strengthening women's economic empowerment and WASH after Ebola. As a result:

- The National Rural Women Structure in Liberia has built strategic partnerships with Women's Campaign International, OXFAM, UN Women, Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection, UNFPA, Constitutional Review Committee, Land Commission, Ministry of International Affairs, and Women's Legislative Caucus amongst others around promoting advocacy work on achieving women's empowerment in post Ebola Liberia. These structures played a key role during consultations for the development of the JP RWEE Country Programme (2013 – 2017), a UN WOMEN Gender Sector Support Programme and a UN WOMEN and OXFAM Joint Initiative on Women's Economic Empowerment and WASH in support of the Ebola recovery process.
- The GSSP and the UN WOMEN and OXFAM joint initiative are two programmes that are expected to contribute significantly to women's economic empowerment in Liberia. These two programmes will complement JP RWEE activities at country level and will form synergies with the joint programme throughout their implementation.

10. Rural Women and Girls have Increased Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Education and Services including Knowledge on SGBV Prevention and Response

RWEE Global ProDoc:

Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes

Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women, have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment

In March 2015, a comprehensive training module on SGBV prevention and response was embedded into the RWEE business skills training curricula like the training module on gender and the management of natural resources was included in the adult literacy training curricula. In addition, a training module was also included on Sexual and Reproductive Health Education. Facilitators teaching business skills classes also taught classes on SGBV prevention and response to 2,250 women that attended classes at the community level including 115 adolescent girls who accessed similar training. As a result:

- 2,250 women entrepreneurs and women farmers have increased knowledge on SGBV prevention and response and are monitoring and reporting cases of SGBV at the community level for access to justice in 40 targeted communities. This had been achieved through the rollout of the literacy skills training. In addition, women are transferring knowledge on the subject to other community women and men during town hall meetings, SLA meetings, and during farming activities, etc.; and
- 115 rural adolescent girls are accessing Sexual and Reproduction Health education and services. There has been a significant decrease in teenage pregnancies in 3 rural communities as a result of increased awareness around SRH at community level.

Narrative reporting on results:

Liberia's National Rural Women Structure including the Government of Liberia (through the Gender and Agriculture Ministries, the Liberian Legislature, Civil Society, and the private sector have increased knowledge on the overall goal of the 5-year global joint programme, which is focused on securing women and girls' economic rights and livelihoods in the context of sustainable development and the post MDGs, referencing the four outcome areas: improved food and nutrition security; increased income to secure their livelihoods; enhanced leadership and participation in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes; and gender responsive policy environments for the economic empowerment of rural women.

In addition, the NRWS is supporting the monitoring and reporting of change at community level. The enthusiasm with rural women remains unchanged. Other rural women-based structures are also conducting spot-checks on the joint programme activities, ensuring check and balances. The United Nations Country Team continues to keep track of the JP's progress, reporting on progress, challenges and constraints through regular field missions to targeted counties.

The private sector has remained committed in partnering with the joint programme. New strategic partnerships have been built with the private sector, and these include partnership with Coca-Cola on economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs and Cellcom GSM on Mobile Money and support for the JP's visibility through Information Communication Technology (ICT). Both Cellcom and UN Women are currently working on a market survey to support its Mobile Money services for rural women across Liberia.

The JP is accelerating agricultural activities in targeted for increased agricultural produce despite the tremendous level of expansion of the palm plantation by Golden Veroleum and the effects of limited farming activities on the part of locals at the county, district, and community levels. The JP formed synergies with existing projects, specifically with the Peacebuilding Fund Projects: Building Peace, Promoting Prosperity and the Community Conflict Mediation Projects, the H4+, the Joint Programme on Human Security, the EPAG Programme, and the Joint Programme on Adolescent Girls.

Another key focus has been on the JP's involvement with rural women in the context of natural resource management, an area of strategic focus under the joint programme, especially in concession areas (i.e. Maryland, Sinoe, etc.) where there continues to be a tendency for conflict with concession companies and rural women involved in agriculture – those affected by the loss of farmlands to private/concession companies. RWEE continues to engage rural women on their land rights and participation in decision-making processes in the areas of constitutional review process, elections, decentralization, and the management of natural resources in the environment.

The Joint Programme has worked and continues to work closely with Civil Society and local implementing partners, both to ensure community ownership and overall sustainability beyond the Joint Programme's implementation. The National Rural Women's Structure remains active at all levels of implementation under the joint programme. In addition, targeted trainings in leadership and democratic representation during the hosting of the March 2015 National Rural Women Conference resulted in increased knowledge and awareness on leadership skills and rural women's political participation, taking into account the current governance reforms which includes Constitutional Review and Decentralization. It is also crucial to acknowledge that the 225 rural women delegates including 3 representatives from WFP and FAO and 8 representatives from 4 other stakeholders (Ministry of Agriculture, Liberia Marketing Association, Association of Women in Cross Border Trade, Cellcom GSM) expressed their commitment to the JP's expanded support for women's economic security and rights through the National Rural Women's Structure with a strong focus on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.

The Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women has formed synergies with the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress in Maternal and Newborn Health in Liberia (H4+ SIDA collaboration), particularly for wider programming on SGBV prevention and response, as well as sexual and reproductive health education and services. As UN Women and other participating UN agencies are moving with the development of the second phase of the Joint Programme on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, it is clear that synergies will be developed with JP RWEE throughout 2016 implementation year. Additionally, RWEE in Liberia is beginning to form synergies with Liberia's Joint Programme on Human Security through its current engagement with Community Peace Huts in mitigating conflicts and working with men as Male Champions in ending Violence Against Women at the community level in 2 of RWEE's targeted counties.

Due to the Ebola Virus Disease Crisis and the death of a fellow colleague from EVD in nearby Sierra Leone, the UN Women Country Office had to put a restriction on local travel to project locations, fearing that staff would easily get infected with the virus. This resulted in the delay of several key activities under the joint programme early this year. These included the hosting of the rural women's conference, the mapping and scoping of communities and farming groups, initial organizational development and leadership skills trainings for women amongst others. As UN Women is the lead UN agency under the joint programme at country level, it placed the UN agency in a rather seemingly comprising position as both WFP and FAO remained activities with other field activities outside the joint programme.

The JP RWEE baseline study revealed that rural women farming groups are generally at a very low level of organizational development and capacity. In fact, in the true sense of the word organization, many of the groups fail to qualify. There seems to have been little effectiveness in the planning and organization of the establishment of the groups across all targeted communities. For example, in terms of population and the availability of an agricultural labor force, some communities profiled lacked the desired agriculture labor force. Glaring examples of these are found in town targeted communities, namely Gayteh Town (Sinoe) and Jaytoken (River Gee).

Poor organization is not the only issue affecting most groups. In fact, all groups lack adequate access to resources and support systems (loans/credits, roads, markets, planting materials and production resources, etc.) and utilize purely traditional methods of agriculture, without any access to extension services. This situation directly undermines the purpose of the groups and limits their capacity to impact their socio-economic status in any significant way.

Despite their poor organization and capacity and the lack of resources and support systems, group members everywhere continue to be receptive and committed to the idea of coming together and working together for their individual and collective benefits. The key challenge, though, is overcoming the widespread levels of illiteracy among group members and members of their community in order to build formal organizations out of what they have and ensure they are managed with the minimum management standards. Another key challenge is building the support system they need to raise the level of their activities and output and truly impact their livelihood.

There was a delay in the final selection of UN Women's implementing partners (i.e. DEN-L, EduCARE, THINK Liberia) due to a highly competitive process and the fact that the Country Office needed to have a regional participant to sit on the Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) to make the final decision regarding the selection of implementing partners. It took a while for the Regional Office to nominate its representative to sit on the committee.

Other challenge to implementation had been the rainy season. Hard rains had prevented several field missions to targeted communities. The roads leading to these communities were inaccessible due to heavy downpour of rain and the fact that bridges have been also destroyed by flooding.

As a result of the rainy season and the fact that field missions have been delayed due to bad road conditions, the County Coordinators both from the Ministry of Agriculture and Gender are supporting monitoring and tacking of the JP's intervention at county level due to the fact that they are present in the counties targeted by the joint programme. As the rains subside, joint field missions will take place to ensure that outstanding activities are implemented by partners concerned.

The leaderships of 3 targeted farming groups have better organized their groups and members for increased accountability and improved livelihoods. Groups' members are better organize with the leaders of these groups being able to better manage the groups within the context of better managing and selling of farming produce in the local markets, thus, resulting in increased income generation for these groups. The members of farming groups including their leaders now have self-confidence and remained committed to improving their lives through further collaboration with the joint programme.

The National Rural Women Structure is actively involved with the existing governance reforms with regards to the Constitutional Review and Decentralization processes all levels. The structure has managed to solicit increased recognition for its role in ensuring that needs and concerns of rural women across Liberia, particularly the most vulnerable are being met. Rural women's participation in decision-making at the Gbarnga Constitutional Review Committee Delegates Conference in Bong County in April 2015 with regards to ensuring that the voice of rural women was captured in the review process is a clear and evident example. With support from the structure and other existing structures (i.e. LMA, AWICBT, WLC, etc.), a Women's Minimum Agenda in support of the CRC reform process was adopted with 5 key issues considered. Some of these issues included gender sensitive language and equal representation amongst others.

The joint programme's engagement with men at the inception phase of the JP and throughout implementation has resulted in increased ownership of the programme at community level. Through men's participation along with women leaders in the mobilization of potential women for recruitment into the skills training programmes (i.e. adult literacy, business development skills, etc.) and their commitment to having their spouses (women) lives improve, it is clearly visible at the community level that men too are excited for the programmes that are yet to be rolled out. Planned interventions with men in terms of support for the HeForShe Campaign, the engagement of men in gender equality coupled with training in women's rights are the ones seemingly encouraging men to support the joint programme's overall goal. In addition, the recruitment of some male facilitators that are going to teach classes in adult literacy and numeracy at the community level has also resulted in increased ownership of the programme and recognition by men, as these male facilitators are right from within the community and will be trained there before classes roll out in the third quarter of 2015.

Despite the Ebola crisis at the time, one key lesson learnt is that the National Rural Women's Conference that was held in Gbarnga seemingly brought back to the Government's table the rural women's agenda and status within the context of sustainable women's economic empowerment. Rural women also wanted national government to know that they too could play an important role in the fight against Ebola regardless of the fact that the disease had crippled the economy and that women were gravely affected. The conference had been used as an opportunity to inform local government of rural women's interest to support social mobilization, EVD awareness, prevention, and response including that of the recovery process.

The Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women has formed synergies with the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress in Maternal and Newborn Health in Liberia (H4+ SIDA collaboration), particularly for wider programming on SGBV prevention and response, as well as sexual and reproductive health education and services. As UN Women and other participating UN agencies are moving with the development of the second phase of the Joint Programme on Sexual and Gender Based Violence, it is clear that synergies will be developed with JP RWEE throughout 2016 implementation year.

Joint field missions are critical to supporting the Delivering as One (DaO) ideology; hence, the joint programme led two joint initiatives, namely the mapping and scoping of project locations and potential beneficiaries including for the assessment and selection of communities targeted under the JP. Involvement of women in the process through the National Rural Women Structure, the Liberia Marketing Association, and the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade has ensured ownership at national, county, district, and community levels.

Men's involvement with the joint programme has played a major part in fostering increased ownership of the programme. From the inception of the joint programme, men have been engaged and will continue to be engaged throughout implementation, as this is strategic to ensuring a successful implementation of the JP. It is quite obvious that we usually neglect to take into account the impact women's empowerment programs have on men. Work with men has included dialogues and consultations with men during community entry, the HeForShe Campaign, recruitment of local male facilitators to support the facilitation of trainings at the community level, and the linking of other programming areas (i.e. men as male champions on ending violence against women – Joint Programme on Human Security) in the RWEE-supported communities amongst others.

The Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women at country level is ensuring work at two strategic levels:

- Policy level with a focus on implementation of commitments in the National Gender Policy (NGP) through supporting development of government capacities to coordinate delivery of this policy; and
- Community level with a focus on the delivery of a comprehensive women's empowerment programme employing a more comprehensive approach to directly empower women economically, socially and politically

At the policy level, one key priority area has been engaging in more strategic gender mainstreaming work. Rather than abstract work to "mainstream gender". As it stands, RWEE is currently engaged with existing opportunities (e.g. Constitutional reform, land reform, decentralization) and will work to develop a strategy to influence the different reform processes through working simultaneously with relevant line ministries and government bodies, parliamentarians and civil society networks and organisations.

At a community-level, the JP is focusing on ensuring joint delivery of a comprehensive, sequenced 'package' of core interventions to support women's economic and social empowerment - through a combination of direct implementation and on-the-ground coordination with other community-level programming. These include:

- Access to Finance for women and adolescent girls through further expansions of the SLA approach and working with the CBL and others on access to finance for agriculture.
- Business development and management skills

- Social safety nets / social protection for vulnerable women and girls
- Agricultural development – women’s access to land, credit, agricultural inputs and services
- Social norm change – engaging men and boys and community leaders and building the capacity of grassroots women’s leaders and organisations in order to challenge and change attitudes and behavior towards women, their value, roles and responsibilities.
- Literacy training for rural women and adolescent girls, especially the most vulnerable

In addition, the joint programme is coordinating at community-level with other programmes that are delivering interventions that are vital to women’s empowerment:

- Increasing access to education for girls, especially in rural areas (i.e. JP on Adolescent Girls);
- Accessing sexual and reproductive health services – including for adolescent girls (i.e. H4+ Programme);
- Mechanisms to monitor, prevent and respond to SGBV (i.e. Community Conflict Mediation – PBF Programme);
- Building women’s participation in decision-making in politics and peacebuilding (i.e. Building Peace, Promoting Prosperity – PBF).

RWEE remains fixed on focusing on two key target groups both at community level: a.) the poorest, most vulnerable and excluded women, who rarely benefit from economic empowerment programmes, and b.) entrepreneurial women with the potential to grow their businesses further and contribute to economic revitalization and growth in their communities.

The joint programme developed transparent, harmonized protocols for work at community level including for community selection, initial community engagement and needs assessment, clear criteria for the selection of women and a consistent standardized curriculum/curricula and teaching methods.

Throughout the implementation period of the joint programme, the Liberia Country Programme will scale-up its combined adult literacy and numeracy + Business development skills + Savings and Loan Associations (SLA) approach in 2016 and beyond for increased sustainability of the programme at community level once RWEE phases out in late 2017.

There is increased capacity of the NRWS to represent the needs and concerns of rural women and girls across Liberia, particularly the most vulnerable. There has also been an increased profile and voice of rural women through this structure including improved social cohesion that is in line with national priorities in the Agenda for Transformation (AfT) and the UNDAF 2013 – 2017 (i.e. women’s decision making, political participation, land rights, etc.) The leadership of the structure is leading discussions at country level on women’s decision-making, political participation, and women’s empowerment and also working to ensure that the joint programme meets its objectives.

The county and national leaders of the National Rural Women Structure and the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade have increased knowledge and access to simplified information on gender and natural resource management within the context of land rights and environmental protection and are disseminating such information to other community women for better understanding and practice.

CELLCOM GSM, a mobile phone company, remains committed to working with the joint programme through support for its communication strategy. Partnership with the Mobile Phone giant in the country was strengthened in the third and fourth quarter of 2015 to ensure increased visibility of the joint programme activities through ICT including rural women access to Mobile Money services. In 2016, RWEE will rollout activities with CELLCOM GSM and will follow up closely with how the partnership will effect change in the lives of women farmers and entrepreneurs.

UN Women as led UN agency and the participating UN agencies, namely WFP and FAO, have worked jointly to ensure that activities are effectively implemented at the country level despite slight setbacks from WFP and FAO in terms of delivery of their programmes. For example, WFP and FAO actively participated in the

trainings on organization development and leadership skills along with the one on gender and natural resource management in collaboration with the NRWS. To date, WFP constructed the warehouses and WASH facilities including the provision of warehouse equipment. FAO trained and established agriculture Savings and Loan Associations (SLAs).

Partnership was also built with UNESCO during consultations on the finalization of training curricula for Level 1 and 2 on adult literacy and numeracy skills. This was done also in close collaboration with the National Adult Education Association of Liberia (NAEAL) in terms of their own technical support in the finalization of the training manuals for teaching level 1 and 2 adult literacy and numeracy skills in targeted rural communities under the JP. Thus, all training curricula are standardized and have been used by facilitators during classroom facilitation. The simplification of training materials made the learning environment favorable for rural women participants.

EduCARE and THINK remain effective implementing partners and are engaged in follow up visits with beneficiaries who graduated from literacy and numeracy skills classes. This includes women who also graduated from business skills classes. These NGOs continue to have a good history in terms of quality delivery of services and/or programmes under RWEE programming in Liberia.

There has been increased technical assistance and logistical support to the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection for overall monitoring and reporting of the JP's activities (i.e. mid-term review of Liberia's National Gender Policy and its implementation status) and the Ministry of Agriculture's local gender responsive planning and budgeting programming including support for County Agriculture Coordinators for monitoring and supervision of the JP's agriculture activities at the county level.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

Using the **Programme Results Framework from the Project Document / AWP** - provide an update on the achievement of indicators at both the output and outcome level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, clear explanation should be given explaining why, as well as plans on how and when this data will be collected.

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 Improved food and nutrition security			
Indicator: Capacity building trainings in the importance of agriculture, nutrition-sensitive agriculture and organizational development for 2,000 women farmers completed Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,000	The leadership of 18 women farming groups (100 members per group) are ensuring the practice of nutrition-sensitive agriculture with their members; and there is enhanced capacity of the leadership of farming groups to better organize themselves and manage their internal affairs without outside interference.	The remaining 200 was not met due to the fact that they had either changed their location or had secured employment with the concession companies, etc. The remaining will be reached before the end of October 2017.	1. Reports from FAO, WFP and MoA on trainings available; and 2. Attendance logs from trainings available
Output 1.1 Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security			
Indicator 1.1.1: 18 women farming groups have the capacity to better organize themselves and practice nutrition-sensitive agriculture Planned Target: 2,000 Baseline: 0	The leadership of 18 farming groups were provided capacity building in organizational development and leadership skills and are ensuring nutrition-sensitive agriculture with approximately 1,235 farmers and are better managing and leading their respective farming groups	The target of 2,000 was not met. 765 did not participate for various reasons, namely relocation due to the search for employment with concession companies, ventures in non-agriculture petty trade	1. Reports from FAO, WFP and MoA on trainings available; and 2. Attendance logs from trainings available
Indicator 1.1.2: 20 farming groups have access farming inputs like seeds and tools including others for farming activities Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,000	20 farming groups in 3 counties received mixed vegetable seeds including insecticide for pest control, protective gears for farming, cutlasses, hoes, and shovels, etc.	2 additional groups were met as the local community in one county requested the joint programme to support them.	1. Reports from FAO, WFP and MoA on trainings available; and 2. Attendance logs from trainings available
Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production			
Indicator 1.1.1: 1,124 rural farmers are accessing community grain reserves including drying floors, toilets and hand pumps in 3 rural communities Planned Target: Approximately 2,000 women and men in targeted farming groups Baseline: 0	3 community grain reserves were constructed including drying floors, toilets and hand pumps; 90 MT locally procured rice available for planting in 2016; post-harvest equipment for the 3 CGRs were secured; and agriculture trainings were rolled out for selected farming groups	Of the 2,000 targeted, 876 rural farmers were not met. This was due to the fact that the 2015 farming cycle took the attention of some of these farmers away from working with the warehouses including the move of some farmers into concession areas to seek employment.	1. Technical construction plans available 2. Reports from construction firm 3. Training modules for Agri trainings and attendance logs

<p>Indicator 1.2.2: 18 farming groups are benefitting from WFP's P4P programme Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Approximately 2,000 women and men in targeted farming groups</p>	<p>1,124 rural women farmers from 18 farming groups were linked to WFP's P4P programme and are benefitting from the purchasing of local staple food commodities for training and capacity development activities for farmers and farmers' organizations. These activities were designed to address constraints along the entire value chain from production, post-harvest handling and marketing including quality control. It is expected to enable smallholder farmers' organizations and their members to engage profitably in the wider local market - principally for milled rice and beans in 2016.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WFP's P4P programme reports available 2. Capacity building training workshops reports and attendance logs available
<p>Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.</p>			
<p>Indicator: Targeted trainings in literacy, numeracy and business development completed for 4,250 women farmers and entrepreneurs including for their access to finance using the SLA methodology Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,500 skills trainings; and 3,000 access to finance = 4,500</p>	<p>4,750 beneficiaries are better understanding their businesses and have increased income and savings for expanding their businesses including increased self-confidence and respect in society</p>	<p>An additional 250 beneficiaries were reached outside the 4,500 targeted under skills trainings and access to finance (SLAs) due to fact that there was increased demand at community level for participation in the RWEЕ trainings; so, implementing partners (i.e. THINK and EduCARE) recruited the extra number of participants and invested in the cost for reaching these other project participants with access to skills trainings including the establishment of SLAs.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint monitoring reports available 2. Implementing partners reports available 3. available 4. Trainees' attendance logs available 5. SLAs meeting attendance and financial roster available
<p>Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products</p>			
<p>Indicator 2.1.1: 3,250 beneficiaries participated in and completed literacy, numeracy and business skills classes Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,000 rural women and girls including 500 market women for access to skills trainings</p>	<p>3,250 women entrepreneurs and women farmers have increased knowledge in business management and practice including literacy and numeracy skills. These women are better understanding their respective businesses and are generating increased income through practicing their newly acquired skills. In addition, illiterate rural women are able to spelt their names on bank deposit and withdrawal slips without any outside help; thus, they have increased self-confidence and respect in their communities; 1,412 of the 2,750 women targeted now have bank accounts and are no longer saving their personal and business money at</p>	<p>An extra 1,750 beneficiaries were reached outside the 1,500 targeted under skills trainings due to fact that there was increased demand at community level for participation in the RWEЕ trainings; so, implementing partners (i.e. THINK and EduCARE) recruited the extra number of participants and invested in the cost for reaching these other project participants with access to literacy, numeracy, and business skills trainings</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring reports available 2. Trainees' attendance logs available 3. Implementing partners reports available

<p>Indicator 2.1.2: 1560 2,000 beneficiaries were formed into SLAs for access to credit Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,000</p>	<p>home. In addition, these women are accessing financial services (i.e. credit/loan) from the banks they are registered with; and 80 local facilitators at community level have increased knowledge on facilitating literacy and numeracy skills classes including business skills classes for semi-literate and illiterate women. These facilitators have built the capacity of 3,250 women entrepreneurs and farmers across 40 communities in 6 of Liberia's 15 counties.</p> <p>1,750 beneficiaries (1,684 women and 66 men) engaged in entrepreneurial and agricultural activities at the community level are accessing financial services through 70 newly established Savings and Loan Associations. Of the 1,750 met, 1,000 women are participating in entrepreneurial SLAs along with 66 men while the remaining 750 are participating in agricultural SLAs. Market women and women farmers are expanding their respective income-generating activities in support of improved livelihoods through SLAs.</p>	<p>The remaining 250 targeted was not met due to the fact that some recruits under RWEE relocated from the communities they were recruited in. Thus, these group of beneficiaries were never targeted.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring reports available 2. SLAs meeting attendance and financial roster available 3. Implementing partner reports available
<p>Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.</p>			
<p>Indicator: 80 women leaders have the capacity to participate in decision-making processes like in local governance, particularly in the constitutional reform process amongst others Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 80 women leaders</p>	<p>Rural women leaders and institutions have increased capacity to participate in decision-making processes.</p>	<p>Target was overachieved. An additional 139 persons were reached with interventions aim at enhancing leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions based on recommendation from civil society</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NRWS 2015 Conference report and attendance log available 2. AWICBT 2015 General Assembly report and attendance log available 3. Gbarnga 2015 Constitutional Review Committee Delegates Conference report available
<p>Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.1.1: Rural women leaders and structures at community level are exhibiting the capacity to better organize themselves in terms of participation in decision-making as it relates to governance reform processes Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 80</p>	<p>10 national and county leaders from the NRWS and 5 county leaders from the AWICBT have increased understanding of the constitutional review and decentralization processes and are actively engaged with the ongoing processes; and</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NRWS 2015 Conference report and attendance log available 2. AWICBT 2015 General Assembly report and attendance log available

	84 county leaders from the NRWS and 80 community facilitators have increased knowledge and the capacity for advocacy and awareness raising on women's access to land and their land rights including their participation in decision-making processes on natural resource management, the environment, and concession agreements that affect rural women in targeted communities.		3. Gbarnga 2015 Constitutional Review Committee Delegates Conference report available
Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.			
Indicator 3.4.1: 2,250 women have the knowledge on the SGBV referral pathway and 50% of them are reporting incidences of SGBV at the community level Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,500	2,250 women entrepreneurs and women farmers have increased knowledge on SGBV prevention and response and are monitoring and reporting cases of SGBV at the community level for access to justice in 40 targeted communities. This was achieved through the rollout of the literacy skills training. In addition, women are transferring knowledge on the subject to other community women and men during town hall meetings, SLA meetings, and during farming activities, etc.	An additional 750 persons were reached because they were a part of the skills training programme which had a training component on SGBV awareness, prevention and response	1. Training reports from implementing partners available 2. Joint monitoring reports available
Indicator 3.4.2 Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,500	115 rural adolescent girls are accessing Sexual and Reproduction Health education and services. There has been a significant decrease in teenage pregnancies in 3 rural communities as a result of increased awareness around SRH at community level.	Overall target was not met in 2015. However, the remaining is currently being met.	1. Training reports from implementing partners available 2. Joint monitoring reports available
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
Indicator: MoA has the capacity to engendered plans and budget for implementation at county level Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1 Gender Unit at MoA and 5 CCs in targeted counties	The Ministry of Agriculture has the capacity at county level to ensure local level gender responsive planning and budgeting with county coordinators and other relevant structures		1. MoA report available 2. Monitoring report available 3. County Coordinators reports available
Output 4.1: Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets.			
Indicator 4.1.1: 5 county coordinators are practicing gender responsive planning and budgeting Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 5 county coordinators	The capacity of Liberia's Ministry of Agriculture was built to ensure that its county coordinators at county level were considering the mainstreaming of gender across all activities. 5 Agriculture County	Achieved	1. MoA report available 2. Monitoring report available 3. County Coordinators reports available

	<p>Coordinators and 122 community leaders from 15 women farming groups in 5 rural counties have increased understanding of gender, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and the roles rural women play in agriculture. Farming groups' leaders are now ensuring equal participation of both women and men in decision-making processes at the community level with regards to agriculture. County coordinators are also ensuring that their implementation plans and strategies at county, district, and community levels are gender friendly. Both women and men engaged in agriculture in 15 rural communities are equally benefitting from the planning and budgeting that Agriculture County Coordinators are ensuring; and</p>		
<p>Indicator 4.1.2: Increased logistic support for monition and supervision with 1 Gender Unit at MoA Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1 Gender Unit at MoA</p>	<p>There is increased logistical support for the Food Security and Nutrition Unit at the Ministry of Agriculture. The unit has access to transport for monitoring and reporting at county level, information technology for research and reporting, faming tools and seeds for support to local communities involved in agriculture and small-garden practices.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MoA report available 2. Monitoring report available 3. County Coordinators reports available

**Mariama Kpah,
Grand Gedeh County, Liberia**

A success Story of a Cross Border Trader

“Before my participation in the RWEE programme, I used to sell in the local market in my village. I had the finances and wanted to be a cross border trader since my business was growing, but I didn’t understand the security issues at the border. I had low self-esteem because I had no idea or knowledge about my rights as a cross border trader nor the security issues that many women in cross border trade face at the borders. When I participated in the RWEE programme, I was able to understand my rights as a woman and what to do when my rights were abused while attending business skills classes. I begin to understand my rights and how to get justice. The training was an eye-opener for me, and today, I am now crossing the borders to trade goods and to buy goods because I now have self-confidence as a trader and as a rural woman. I now have the knowledge and skills in my village to discuss issues affecting women and what to do to address them. Also, my business as a cross border trader has grown, and I continue to get mentoring and coaching services from the programme.”



III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable)

A mapping and scoping study was conducted. Report is available for read. The main results from the scoping study included:

- Most of the women’s groups were recently established. They were primarily established for the purpose of pooling labor through the traditional “Kuu System” to increase agricultural production. A secondary objective common to most of the groups is the mobilization of informal savings and loans for the purpose of enhancing farming and other economic activities of individual members. Both purposes are seen as vehicles to the economic empowerment of group members, their households, and communities.
- The membership of most of the groups is largely women. Only two groups (Kenwenken and Wessitoken) have an all-female membership. Enrollment is generally voluntary and open, although one’s character in the community is an implicit, common criterion. Membership is permanent, except someone decides to leave on his/her own accord, which is not so often. But when this occurs, it is usually on account of poor health and/or family engagements.
- As informal organizations, most groups do not have formal and effective governance structures. There are no constitutions and bylaws, no annual meetings of members, and no boards of directors/advisors. For the few that claim to have board of directors/advisors, their roles are not consistent with those normally expected of boards. Some boards are really advisory bodies to assist guide groups’ management teams.
- The groups generally have leadership structures. The most common structure of a group is made up of a Chairlady, Co-Chairlady, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chaplain. The Chairlady typically leads the group and is assisted by the Co-Chair, who acts as leader either in the absence of the Chair or when the chair is incapacitated. The Secretary keeps all non-financial records, while the Treasures keeps the monies and all financial records and the Chaplain provides spiritual guidance for the group and prays when the

group meets. A few groups have Speakers and Advisors, even though it is not clear what role the speaker actually plays.

- Most of the groups do not have any form of standard operating procedures (SOPs). For those that have any kind of SOPs, they are centered mostly on how members can borrow money from the savings and loans club, and, regrettably, these procedures are not written.
- The main income generating activity of most of the groups is rice, cassava and vegetables production and marketing. Only one group (Kanwenken) grows corn and beans, in addition to rice and cassava. A very few members have secondary income generating activities in the form of petty trading and livestock rearing.
- The women are still using rudimentary farming practices. The most common is the “slash and burn” method. Men usually brush the bushes and fell the trees, while the women scratch the land, plant the seeds, harvest the produce and market them. Most groups lack access to agricultural extension services such as improved farming methods. Training in modern agriculture practices is most needed across all the groups.
- Most of the groups have needs in the areas of agricultural tools and implements, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. With regards to fertilizers and pesticides, they will definitely need training in their effective and efficient utilization.
- Women and community members are aware of gender-based violence issues in the various communities. However, among the various kinds of gender-based violence issues, rape is said to be uncommon. The most common problem is domestic violence involving men beating on their wives and/or girlfriends. Often family members settle these “the family way”.
- Capacity needs are many: they include the need for organizational development such as constitution and bylaws development, Board of Directors and basic management training; seeds and farming tools and implements; agriculture training; extension services; home economics and skills training, as well as literacy and numeracy training.

IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable)

No major adjustments were made to the programme other than an increase in the number of women recruited for access to skills training in adult literacy and numeracy skills including business development skills due to the high demand at community level and the recommendation of Government for RWEE to engage with the support of Civil Society.

Some members of the National Rural Women Structure, the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade and other high profile community members volunteered their services for the facilitation of classes for the extra women accessing the trainings. In addition, participants purchased their own notebooks and pencils, and some communities provided training halls free of charge for these women. Most of the women were able to purchase notebooks and pencils as a result of actively participating in the RWEE Villages Savings and Loan Associations, where they have access to finance/credit. In this case, women were accessing the social fund under their respective VSLAs. In some instances, the women were able to secure the notebooks and pencils through their traditional Susu scheme that exist at the community level.

V. Coordination mechanisms

Programme Planning and Management

Overall responsibility for strategic leadership and oversight of the Joint Programme lies with the government and for this JP specifically, with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection. The Minister of Gender, Children, and Social Protection and the UN Resident Coordinator (DSRSG/RC) co-chair the Joint Programme Steering Committee (JPSC) with representatives from key ministries, including Agriculture, Finance and Development Planning, Commerce and Industry, and Education; participating UN agencies; and donor representatives. This body guides the programme on strategic matters, exercising oversight of the programme's progress and responsibility for the re-allocation of funds within the programme to different outputs, as may be needed. Decisions of the Steering Committee are made through consensus.

UN WOMEN serves as the lead agency and is responsible for overall coordination of the programme, including supporting MoGCSP in its capacity as the lead Ministry. UN WOMEN also supports the Joint Programme Manager and ensures the smooth running of the programme. The day-to-day technical coordination of the overall programme is the responsibility of the Programme Manager, who reports to UN WOMEN (as lead agency).

Output level implementation is planned and coordinated by a Technical Committee comprising focal points from all agencies on the Steering Committee, as well as implementing partners, as deemed necessary. The Joint Programme Manager chairs the Technical Committee.

Individual outputs remain the responsibility of the individual UN organizations as identified in annual work plans. The coordination of components, shared outputs and overall Joint Programme is the responsibility of UN WOMEN as lead agency.

Programme Procurement

The responsibility for procurement of goods and services rests with each individual UN organization and all procurement must follow the appropriate standards and regulations. In the event of procuring services or hiring personnel, selection committees comprise of both UN and Government of Liberia representatives.

Programme Monitoring System

Monitoring occurs throughout the year by individual agencies / participating Ministries, leading to an annual review of the Joint Programme. The monitoring activities and evaluations of the Joint Programme follow UNDAF procedures and form part of the UNDAF M&E plan as aligned to the national AFT M&E plan. As is adopted in other Joint Programmes, participating UN organizations undertake joint field visits when possible, while remaining cognizant of the demands on key government officials. The Programme Manager produces annual reports to the JPSC on progress towards each of the indicators and outputs. Special reviews and assessments are undertaken as required by the JPSC.

The individual project implementing agencies are responsible for data collection and reporting from the activity level. Reports and updates of activity-level implementation are provided at bi-monthly Technical Committee meetings. The Programme Manager has the overall responsibility for M&E reporting to the JPSC, including the overall tracking of key outcomes and output indicators.

The Programme Manager ensures that the Technical Committee addresses implementation challenges, promotes coordination and identifies lessons learned across the various activities and outputs on a regular basis. These lessons are shared with the Joint Programme Steering Committee, as well as with other Liberia Joint Programmes.

VI. Resources

In late 2014, US\$ 245,482.00 (Two Hundred Forty Five Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Two United States Dollars) was transferred from the MPTF as initial funding to UN Women, FAO, and WFP for the implementation of programme activities as follows:

UN Women: \$ 197,308.00
 WFP: \$ 48,174.00
 FAO: \$ 0.00

In early 2015, additional funding was received in the amount of US\$ 1,042,773, bringing the total global amount received to US\$ 1,288,255.

Implementation of these funds followed the 2014/2015 work plans and budgets, pre-approved by the Government of Norway and Sweden including the Steering Committee in 2014 and 2015 respectively. There has been no additional funding mobilized under RWEE at country level. However, UN WOMEN has contributed financial resources to certain activities as stated in the contributions section.

Human Resources:

Two United Nations staff members have received financial support since the start of 2015 through the 2015 Joint Programme funding. The Joint Programme's implementation is also supported by multiple other programme, operations, and administrative staff within the participating agencies (although these personnel are not supported by Joint Programme funds).

JP RWEE-supported staff are:

- National Staff:
 - National Program Manager, UN Women
 - National Program Officer, WFP
- International Staff:
 - None

Financial Resources:

Total approved budget: \$ 1,288,255 <i>Norway & Sweden</i>	Budget by Agency	Expenditure by Agency Est.	Balance

MPTF Contribution ⁵ :			
• <i>UN Women Liberia</i>	\$ 899,763	\$ 868,763.00	\$31,000
• <i>WFP Liberia</i>	\$ 283,574	\$ 283,562.00	\$ 12,000
• <i>FAO Liberia</i>	\$ 104,918	\$ 94,218.00	\$11,500
Agency Contribution			
<i>UN Women Liberia</i> - \$ 21,787.75			

Procurement:

- The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection received a Toyota Pickup Truck to support its monitoring of the RWEE programme at county level;
- The Ministry of Agriculture received 5 Honda motorcycles to support its Agriculture County Coordinators in the monitoring of agricultural activities at the county level; and
- RWEE's implementing partners THINK and EduCARE received 3 motorcycles each to monitor the 40 targeted communities under RWEE.

⁵ The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the global amount (sum of Norway's and Sweden's contributions) transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)