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**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN”
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2016**

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p>	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p> <p>Nepal, 30 Village Development Committees (VDCs) from three districts: Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat (Hill and Terai region)</p> <p>Direct beneficiaries: 3,597 rural women in the three districts</p>
<p>Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and World Food Programme (WFP) 	<p>The strategic result is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</p> <p>Implementing Partners</p> <p>Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of Nepal (GoN), Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) Close coordination with District Agriculture Development Office (DADO), District Livestock Support Office (DLSO), Women and Children Office (WCO), District Health Office (DHO) <p>Civil Society Organizations and consultancies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum for Rural Welfare and Agricultural Reform and Development (FORWARD) Nepal Full Bright Consultancy (FBC) Pvt. Ltd. DidiBahini
<p align="center">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p><u>Total approved budget as per project document:</u> USD 1,177,774 MPTF Contribution: US \$ 1,177,774 <i>by Agency (if applicable)</i></p> <p><u>Agency Contribution:</u> UN Women: US \$ 10,000 from the Core Budget <i>by Agency (if applicable)</i></p> <p><u>Government Contribution:</u> <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p><u>Other Contributions (donors):</u> <i>(if applicable)</i></p> <p>TOTAL: US \$ 1,177,774 (from MPTF) and US \$ 10,000 (from UN Women’s core fund)</p>	<p align="center">Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration 5 YEARS</p> <p>Start Date (15 10 2012)</p> <p>Original End Date (31 10 2017)</p>
<p align="center">Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</p> <p>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></p>	<p align="center">Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Ms. Mio Yokota Title: Programme Specialist, Economic Empowerment Unit Participating Organization: UN Women (Lead Agency) Email address: mio.yokota@unwomen.org

¹ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number are as follows: ETHIOPIA: 00092000; GUATEMALA: 00092001; KYRGYZSTAN: 00092002; LIBERIA: 00092003; NEPAL: 00092004; NIGER: 00092005; RWANDA: 00092006

ACRONYMS

ADS	Agriculture Development Strategy
CAESC	Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations Against Women
CSI	Coping Strategy Index
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DADO	District Agriculture Development Office
DHO	District Health Office
DLSO	District Livestock Support Office
DoLS	Department of Livestock Services
DTOs	District Technical Officers
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCS	Food Consumption Score
FY	Fiscal Year
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
HHs	Households
HQ	Headquarters
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
MAD	Minimum Acceptable Diet
MoAD	Ministry of Agricultural Development
MoFALD	Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development
MoWCSW	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
Mt.	Metric ton
NARC	Nepal Agricultural Research Council
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPR	Nepali Rupees
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
RWEE JP	Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal, Joint Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UN	United Nations
USD	United States Dollars
VAHWs	Village Animal Health Workers
VAW	Violence Against Women
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCO	Women and Children Office
WFP	World Food Programme
WG	Working Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Programme “Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal: A Joint Pilot Support Contributing to Implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) in Nepal (RWEE JP)” aims to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights, ensuring sustainable development in the post-conflict context of Nepal. The programme is being piloted in the three districts (Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat) of the Central Development Region under the leadership of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD), Government of Nepal.

The full-fledged implementation of the RWEE JP in Nepal began from the end of February 2016. During a one-year reporting period, the RWEE JP was implemented in 25 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of the three districts (10 in Sindhuli, 7 in Sarlahi and 8 in Rautahat). In total, 3,597 rural women benefitted from the RWEE JP and 157 rural women’s groups were formed (62 in Sindhuli, 48 in Sarlahi and 47 in Rautahat) in the three districts.

The RWEE JP provided rural women farmers with technical, material and awareness raising support to improve their food and nutrition security and to increase opportunities for livelihoods. It also strengthened rural women’s capacity for local level leadership and representation. The key achievements in 2016 include: 3,597² rural women improved their food and nutrition security through kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production; 12 rural women groups (out of 157 formed) registered at District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) and are directly benefitting from the government’s programme on agriculture development; 2,068 rural women earned USD 50,468 from selling vegetables in the market; 2,006 rural women benefitted from drudgery reduction farm implements; 1,837 rural women were provided with short term employment through various cash for assets activities particularly focused on the infrastructures contributing to improve productivity such as community irrigation; over 3,500 rural women are going to benefit from the Community Agriculture Extension Service Centers (CAESC) constructed under the RWEE JP; 602 rural women enhanced their knowledge and understanding on women’s rights and **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive approaches and able to raise their voice against the gender based discrimination in their communities and a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy was drafted for the gender responsive implementation of the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**. Detail results are reported in the following section on key milestones of the JP.

A joint mission to Nepal by the RWEE JP Global Coordinator and a focal person at the UN Women headquarters (HQ) took place on 2-6 May in close coordination with the RWEE JP Country Team. The mission was organized following a recommendation by the RWEE Technical Advisory Committee to provide the monitoring and guidance support to the RWEE JP in Nepal, in order to address the perceived slow performance reported in the 2015 Annual Report in relation to RWEE’s overall implementation. The mission team held meetings with the RWEE JP country team especially the RWEE JP Working Group (WG), **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** and other relevant stakeholders and conducted a monitoring visit to Sindhuli district (Please refer to Annex 1 for a detailed Mission Report).

² This is the total number of rural women supported through the RWEE JP. However many rural women participated in more than two support components (e.g. cereal production, kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production) , the total number of rural women benefitted is 5,869 rural women.. The breakdown of the 5,869 rural women benefitted is as follows: 2,277 (1,092 in Sarlahi and 1,185 in Rautahat) from cereal production, 3,328 (1,181 in Sindhuli, 1,042 in Sarlahi and 1,105 in Rautahat) from kitchen gardening and 264 (111 in Sindhuli, 78 in Sarlahi and 75 in Rautahat) from commercial fresh vegetable production. The cereal production support was provided in only two districts based on climate and geographical conditions.

The representatives from the Embassy of Sweden based in New Delhi, India visited Nepal on 5-7 December 2016. The mission included the Deputy Head of Mission and the First Secretary. The mission team held meetings with the Joint Secretary of the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)**, UN Resident Coordinator, representatives of UN Women, WFP, FAO in Nepal and the Working Group of four participating agencies. They also visited Ranichuri **Village Development Committee (VDC)** in Sindhuli district, and participated in inauguration of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre (CAESC)** in Sindhuli district in the presence of the representative from the Government and also interacted with rural women beneficiaries. The feedback from the mission highlighted that they were both pleased and impressed by the RWEE JP work and the impact it was having on women in the field.

Key milestones of the JP

During the reporting period (January-December 2016), the achievements and progress of the RWEE JP include the following:

Food and nutrition security

Food security

- 3,597 rural women were well equipped and benefitted from cereal production, kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production;
- 1,384 rural women benefitted from a set of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools (insect traps) for commercial fresh vegetable production and kitchen garden fields to avoid use of pesticides on their crops;
- 12 (out of 157 formed) rural women groups registered at **District Agriculture Development Offices (DADO)** and are directly benefitting from the government's programme on agriculture development related to food and nutrition security;
- 155 rural women's groups (out of 157 formed) saved USD 9,744.12 from group saving schemes and were able to borrow money as a loan as per the prevailing interest rate;
- 222 seasonal nurseries (126 in two seasons in Sindhuli, 48 in one season in Sarlahi and 48 in one season in Rautahat) benefitted 3,597 rural women farmers for vegetable production in the three districts;

Nutrition security

- 3,534 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children under 2 years old benefitted from nutrition support provided through supplementary feeding and nutrition counselling;
- 155 rural women (62 in Sindhuli, 46 in Sarlahi and 47 in Rautahat) benefitted from backyard poultry production;
- 24 (10 in Sindhuli, 6 in Sarlahi and 8 in Rautahat) buck distributed for breeding purpose benefitting 3,000 rural women to improve goat breeds;
- 34 rural women (20 in Sindhuli, 6 in Sarlahi and 8 in Rautahat) benefitted from goat rearing training for improved nutrition security;

Cash for Assets

- The first three **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESC)** (out of 4,000 planned for construction in the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**) were constructed in the programme districts;
- 1,837 rural women were provided with short term employment through various cash for assets activities;
- More than 490 hectares of land for commercial fresh vegetable production and kitchen gardening irrigated through the cash for assets activities;

- 74 irrigation schemes and 17 fish ponds were constructed to support the livelihood and agriculture services benefitting 3,597 rural women;

Livelihood

- 2,068 rural women earned a total of USD 50,468 from selling of vegetables for their livelihoods;
- 2,006 rural women benefitted from women’s friendly drudgery reduction mechanization schemes (corn shellers and wheat/paddy harvesters; and were able to spend quality time engaging in community meetings and taking their produce to markets;
- 7,150 rural women households (HHs) benefitted from 16 animal health camps treating 36,139 animals;
- 24 rural women were appointed as Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs) after a 35-day training;
- 50 field group facilitators (45 women and 5 men) received part-time employment to support the District Technical Officers (DTOs)³ to implement the programme;

Representation, participation and leadership

- 602 rural women enhanced their knowledge and understanding on women’s rights and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive approaches;
- 5 District Technical Officers (DTOs) were equipped with knowledge and skills on GESI responsive programme management and monitoring through training for trainers (ToT) workshops;

Gender responsive policy environment

- A Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) under the leadership of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) with active engagement of the relevant ministries, Development Partners, civil society organizations and Peasant Association was drafted to ensure gender responsive implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS);
- 14 staff members of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) and Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) capacitated on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics in relation to the implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS); and
- Three desk reviews on “women’s role in decision-making in farm operations”, “drudgery reduction of women in the agriculture sector” and “work load distribution between men and women in the agriculture sector” were completed in coordination with the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) and Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC).

I. Purpose

The RWEE JP in Nepal is aligned with the RWEE global joint programme. In Nepal, the RWEE JP started in January 2015 as a pilot initiative for the gender responsive implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), a 20-year strategy of the Government of Nepal. The following four outcome areas were identified based on context specific issues and opportunities:

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

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

³ DTOs are district-level programme personnel recruited under the RWEE JP by FAO. DTOs are based in the three districts and are responsible for the day to day programme implementation and monitoring in the districts. Currently, five DTOs are all men. There was one female DTO in the beginning, but she resigned due to a family reason.

- Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes
- Outcome 4: More gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women

II. Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

This section provides narrative reporting on the outcomes and outputs where progress has been made during the reporting period.

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

Food and nutrition security of 3,597 rural women in the three districts (Janajati 37.95 per cent; Madhesi 26.88 per cent; Brahmin/Chhetri 21.85 per cent; Dalit 8.39 per cent and Muslim 4.93 per cent) has been improved with the support of the RWEE JP in agriculture production, livestock and nutrition support.

Agriculture production of rural women farmers on paddy and vegetable production increased by 129 per cent on an average against the baseline in the three districts. This significant increase in their vegetable production was a result of the modern agricultural tools and technology support, including irrigation schemes, provided under the RWEE JP. Before the implementation of the RWEE JP, rural women were engaged in the subsistence farming and had limited knowledge and understanding on commercial farming. The JP enhanced their capacity on the commercial farming by providing them technical support through a series of practical trainings in their fields. Rural women's dietary diversity or households (HHs) food consumption patterns was improved through the support of the RWEE JP. 93 per cent of 3,534 households (HHs) supported have the minimum level of acceptable diet⁴, 60 per cent of the households (HHs) have an improved food consumption score⁵ and 80 per cent of the households (HHs) have an improved coping strategy⁶. Rural women were provided with kitchen gardening, commercial fresh vegetable production, livestock and nutrition support through technical training, seeds, as well as other materials and equipment. The training to rural women also included demonstration of field cultivation for two consecutive seasons (summer and winter).

The RWEE JP, contributed to a total of 3,597⁷ rural women benefitting from cereal production (2,277 rural women), kitchen gardening (3,328 rural women) and commercial fresh vegetable production (264 rural women). Out of 3,592 benefitting from kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production, 3,423 rural women produced in total of 997 metric tons (mt.) of vegetables. 1,384 rural women were equipped with a set of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) tools (insect traps) for commercial fresh vegetable production and kitchen garden fields to avoid use of pesticides on their crops.

The nutrition support benefitting 155 rural women (62 in Sindhuli, 46 in Sarlahi and 47 in Rautahat) from backyard poultry production and a total of 3,534 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children under 2 years old from supplementary feeding and nutrition counselling.

⁴ Minimum acceptable diet is the indicator widely used in health and nutrition surveys to identify the proportion of children (between 6-23 months) who consumed minimum acceptable diet (outside of the consumption of breast milk). The target for this indicator is 70 per cent

⁵ Food consumption score is designed to reflect the quantity and quality of people's diet. It is the measure of dietary diversity, food frequency, and relative nutritional importance of the food consumed.

⁶ Coping strategy index is an indicator used to compare the hardship faced by HHs. It measures the frequency and severity of the behaviors they engage in when faced shortage of food.

⁷ This is the total net number of rural women supported through the RWEE JP. As many rural women participated in more than two support components, the sum of the number of rural women who participated in respective support schemes (5,869 rural women) - cereal production, kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production - exceeds the net total number of rural women.

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

A total of 3,597 rural women increased their access and control over agricultural resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security. With the support of the RWEE JP, these rural women were actively engaged in producing vegetables, selling them in the market and spending earned money in meeting family needs such as health care, school fees, purchase of school stationery among others. They also took over the overall management of the construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)** in the three districts, demonstrating their leadership role. This will benefit rural women farmers and their families in receiving agriculture and livestock related information and services once the Centres are fully operational in the near future. These women carried out non-traditional roles as masons during the construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)**.

Out of 157 rural women's groups formed with the support of the RWEE JP, 155 groups composed of **3,537 rural women farmers**, have established group saving schemes and now can borrow from the pooled funds. In 2016, the groups saved USD 9,744.12 (USD 62.86 each group on an average). One rural woman saved USD 0.18 in each month and had access to loan at the prevailing interest rate of 2 per cent per month. The interest rate is slightly higher than the commercial rate at cooperatives/banks⁸, however, it is **easily accessible any time and no collateral is needed**. The loan is spent to purchase agriculture inputs (seeds, fertilizers etc.), receive health care services and buy other essential household supplies.

With the leadership of rural women who were engaged as masons for the construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)**, the first three **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)**, out of 4,000 planned under the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), were constructed in the three districts. The operational guideline for the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)** is being finalized in consultation with the Department of Agriculture, under the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)**. A total of 1,837 short term employment were created with rural women through various Cash for Assets initiatives such as construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centres (CAESCs)**, irrigation facilities and fish ponds. In total, 74 irrigation facilities and 17 fish ponds were constructed to support livelihood and agriculture services benefitting 3,597 rural women. Rural women received equal wages for their labour during the construction of community assets. With their hard work, more than 490 hectares of land for commercial fresh vegetable production and kitchen gardening was irrigated under the RWEE JP.

Women's status in communities, including women's engagement in decision-making and confidence to speak up in public meetings has **been enhanced by earning income through the selling of vegetables in the market**. Their voices in their families were heard after they started earning incomes. They started receiving respect in their families and communities. **This has been expressed by rural women in the group interactions during the joint monitoring visits**. Receipt of equal wages as men and cash earnings have enhanced rural women's confidence. After the intervention of the RWEE JP, almost majority of the rural women farmers reported that decisions were jointly made by male and female members of **households (HHs)** over the use of cash earned by the RWEE JP beneficiaries.

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

⁸ Around 20 per cent annually, depending on the specific category of loan the interest rate may go high.

Rural women in the three districts now have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth in the three districts through the support of the RWEE JP.

Rural women's groups' income generated from their sales in the market with the support of the RWEE JP has increased in 2016. A total of 3,423 rural women (1,292 in Sindhuli, 1,042 in Sarlahi and 1,089 in Rautahat) produced 997 mt. vegetables from both kitchen garden and commercial fresh vegetable production. Out of 997 mt. of the total production, 684 mt. were consumed by rural women and their families, and 194 mt. sold by 2,068 rural women in the market and generated an income equivalent to USD 50,468. The remaining 119 mt. were distributed among neighbors in their communities. Increase in their food production was an effort of a series of trainings to rural women on improved production techniques in agriculture.

A total of 24 rural women now work as **Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs)** in the three districts and earn their livelihoods. Out of these 24, two have established veterinary shops in Sindhuli district and the rest provide services from their homes. They earn between USD 50-80, depending on the nature of the case, after treating each livestock. This is a result of a 35-day residential training for **Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs)** provided by the RWEE JP in July 2016.

In total, **7,150 rural women households (HHs)**⁹ (1,547 in Sindhuli, 2,030 in Sarlahi and 3,573 in Rautahat) benefitted from 16 animal health camps where 36,139 animals were treated in the three districts (11,958 in Sindhuli, 10,123 in Sarlahi and 14,058 in Rautahat).

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

Drudgery in farm work was reduced with 2,006 rural women (670 in Sindhuli, 696 in Sarlahi and 640 in Rautahat) with the support of the RWEE JP, and rural women are now expected to **spend quality time in entrepreneurship development such as vegetable and poultry productions for improved livelihoods.** 76 drudgery reduction machines (corn shellers and wheat/paddy harvesters) were distributed in 76 rural women's groups. Rural women were trained by the RWEE JP on the use of the drudgery reduction machines. They are also well equipped on the maintenance of the drudgery reduction machines.

Output 2.2: Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities

A total of 3,645 rural women increased their access to decent wage employment and self-employment opportunities for livelihood through services provided as **Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs)** (24), vegetables and poultry productions (3,576) and group facilitators (45). During monitoring visits to the districts, rural women shared that they feel more self-confident after earning their livelihoods through the support of the RWEE JP.

A total of 3,576 rural women are utilizing improved production techniques in agriculture and livestock production learnt. 45 rural women are employed as part-time field facilitator to support **District Technical Officers (DTOs)** for the implementation of the RWEE JP after receiving the training through the RWEE JP. 24 rural women **Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs)** are equipped with field kits **which contain a set of essential equipment to provide livestock related services at the local level,** and started their livestock treatment services in the communities and earning income after completion of a five-week course organized by the RWEE JP.

⁹ The number of women benefitted from this support exceeded the total number of direct beneficiaries (3,597 rural women farmers) as there animal health camps were open to all community members and were 3,553 additional rural women who were not a part of the RWEE JP but came to receive services.

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

Rural women have enhanced their leadership and participation in their community activities through capacity development trainings on **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive concepts and approaches and women's leadership and representation. These initiatives supported them to speak up against discrimination in their communities and actively participate in community level development activities such as community planning meetings.

The RWEE JP provided an opportunity to rural women to take a lead in the implementation of all major initiatives under the programme. The support such as kitchen gardening, commercial fresh vegetable production, construction of community assets and capacity development support through the leadership training have helped rural women build their confidence. Their active engagement in these initiatives have demonstrated that women can strongly lead community level development initiatives. In addition, under the RWEE JP rural women's engagement in various initiatives such as selling of vegetables in the market, construction of community assets has also challenged stereotypical thinking that have confined women to perform limited roles in the family and society.

With this enhanced capacity, rural women were able to participate in cooperatives in the three districts.

Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organisational capacities to form, sustain and participate into Producer Organisations (POs), cooperatives and unions

Out of 157 rural women's groups which were formed with the support of the RWEE JP, 17 rural women's groups (5 in Sindhuli, 7 in Sarlahi and 5 in Rautahat) with a total of 209 rural women are now members of cooperatives in their districts. They have been actively participating in cooperative meetings and also benefitted from saving credit schemes of the cooperatives. The RWEE JP supported these rural women by sharing information on cooperatives and supported them to establish linkages with cooperatives.

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

602 rural women farmers including young women in 12 **Village Development Committees (VDCs)** of the three districts have enhanced awareness on their rights with the support of the RWEE JP. They are now able to speak up in their communities about their rights and against existing gender-based discrimination. It is expected that rural women united by their groups will be able to lead advocacy efforts on violence against women (VAW) in their communities.

As part of an effort to raise awareness among rural women on their rights, a total number of 602 rural women farmers (242 Janajati, 130 Madhesi, 130 Brahmin/Chettri, 73 Dalit and 27 Muslim) enhanced their awareness on **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive concepts and approaches through capacity development trainings between July and August 2016. The training covered the following key topics: women's leadership and participation in the agriculture sector at the local level, **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** approach in the context of the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)** implementation, Gender Responsive Budgeting, Right to Information, importance to engage men and boys in community-level programme activities to mobilize support and understanding at home and in the community.

The pre-training assessment showed that rural women farmers did not have any knowledge on **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive concepts and approaches. 90

per cent of training participants answered they had never been to any Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) training previously. However, after the training all of them learnt about the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) concepts including the legislative provisions of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI), GESI policy and plans at the local levels. The post-training assessment showed that 100 per cent of participants gained knowledge and understanding of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive concepts and approaches such as gender equality, social inclusion and exclusion, violence against women, women's leadership and representation, and integration of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in the context of local level planning and programming process. During the training, they also expressed that this training encouraged them to take a lead role in their community development for gender equality and women's empowerment.

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

The importance to ensure rural women farmers' access and control over agricultural resource and services are now strongly present in the draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy of the 20-year Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) to secure gender responsive policy environment for the economic empowerment of rural women.

A draft strategy to ensure gender sensitive implementation of the 20-year Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), developed with key support from the RWEE JP, is undergoing a process of approval within the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD). The importance of ensuring rural women farmers' access and control over agricultural resources and services are now robustly presented in the draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS).

In 2016, women's economic empowerment continued to be a key priority in high level policy making processes of the Government. Expert services and coordination support were provided by the RWEE JP to the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) in formulating the draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy. The strategy recognizes the role of marginalized rural women in the agriculture sector. It highlights marginalized rural women's increased access and control over agricultural resource and services, enhancement of their technical and leadership capacity, engagement in value chain management among others. The Government of Nepal is piloting the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) through the RWEE JP.

To identify an area for gender responsive agricultural research as mentioned in the ADS, three desk reviews on "workload distribution between men and women in the agriculture sector", "women's role in decision making in the farm operations" and "drudgery reduction for women in the agriculture sector" were carried in coordination with the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) and Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD). The desk reviews highlighted women's increasing contribution in the agriculture sector with the increasing trend of male out-migration. However, with the limited access to relevant technologies, services and information for drudgery reduction and mechanization schemes, women are overburdened with the work load of both households and farm related activities. The findings of the desk reviews will support the Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) and Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) to identify research areas under the gender responsive agricultural research as mentioned in the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS).

The key recommendations of the three reviews include: women's leadership in the agriculture sector need to be promoted and agencies and organizations responsible for the agriculture sector should ensure women friendly policy for enhancing their leadership in the agriculture; the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) should consider measures related to gender issues, such as addressing the

issues of tenancy, land leasing, cooperative farming, access to quality and timely inputs to subsistence farmers and access to microfinance and agricultural insurance; and the Government needs to prioritize workload-related research through academic institutions in different areas of agriculture, especially farming and livestock rearing respectively.

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

Enhanced capacity of the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** to integrate gender equality provisions in agriculture policies was demonstrated throughout the formulation of the **Gender Equality Social Inclusion (GESI)** strategy which is now undergoing approval process.

To ensure gender responsive implementation of the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**, the RWEE JP provided technical assistance and expert consultancy service to the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** to enhance their capacity to develop a draft **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** strategy for the implementation of the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**.

The first draft of the strategy was submitted to the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** in July, however, after a request from the Ministry to further refine the strategy, two experts on agriculture and **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** were brought on board to support the Ministry. The experts worked closely with the thematic experts which constituted the relevant senior Government Officials at the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)**. The Ministry held three consultation meetings with the relevant Government Officials from the relevant ministries, Development Partners, civil society organizations (CSOs) and representatives from Peasant Association. Inputs were provided to request and encourage the Government to come up with concrete actions to address existing needs of rural women farmers, and were incorporated. The revised draft was submitted to the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** in December 2016.

The revised draft strategy highlights providing marginalized rural women farmers: access and control over agricultural resource and services, enhancement of technical and leadership capacity, engagement in value chain management among others. The strategy also highlights the **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** awareness commitments of the Government.

Output 4.3 An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women's priorities in regional and global policy processes

The **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)** has mandated the **Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)** to generate data, such as agricultural and livestock census for the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**. In order to improve availability of tools and data to track progress on the economic empowerment of rural women, 14 staff members (7 males and 7 females) of the **Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)** and **Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW)** were capacitated on **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive statistics in relation to the implementation of the **Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS)**. A five-day capacity strengthening training on **Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)** responsive statistics for relevant officials of **Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)** and statistics sections of the **Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)** and **Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW)** was organized from 5 to 9 June. The training aimed to support the **Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)** to work in close coordination with the **Ministry of Agricultural**

Development (MoAD) and lay a foundation to generate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics for the implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) and enhance the Government accountability in monitoring and reporting of the progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The five-day training curricula included the following content: concepts of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics; Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and legal provisions on women's rights such as Domestic Violence Crime and Punishment Act 2009, Sexual Harassment at Work Place Act 2015; the Government's current policy and programmes on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and available Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive data and existing data gaps; the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and existing data gaps; Gender Responsive Budgeting; mapping of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics; tools and techniques to generate Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics; and present trends in Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive statistics generation and utilization .

Challenges and interventions for mitigating challenges:

- The local political leaders in Sarlahi enquired about the Village Development Committee (VDC) selection process, and the implementation in Sarlahi was interrupted for two weeks. The Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) played a crucial role to support the programme implementation, requesting the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) to coordinate with leaders of local political parties and resolved the problem. In order to facilitate timely guidance and decision-making on potential risks, the RWEE JP WG held regular meetings with the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) to update him with any critical issues related to the programme implementation.
- During the joint mission by the RWEE Global Coordinator and UN Women Headquarters (HQ) focal person in May 2016, it was observed that integration of a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach throughout the JP implementation was yet to be strengthened, particularly in the food and nutrition security and livelihood support components at the field level. After the finding, the RWEE JP provided the capacity development training on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive programme management and monitoring to five District Technical Officers (DTOs) in order to ensure and enhance a gender and inclusion perspective in the field level implementation. The five District Technical Officers (DTOs) are also in direct contact with a UN Women Programme Officer/National Coordinator to ensure smooth coordination and progress updates across all the RWEE JP components. As recommended by the joint mission team, a joint monitoring and evaluation tools (Indicator-based Assessment and Performance Management Framework) were prepared by the Working Group and regularly updated.

Lesson learned:

- Regular and close communication with the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) at the decision-making level helped the RWEE JP provide updates on critical issues with the government counterparts and seek strategic guidance in a timely manner. This also helped the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) develop a sense of responsibility and ownership over the RWEE JP implementation and, as a result, the RWEE JP successfully managed to mobilize the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) in several key programme activities such as a roundtable discussion with development partners.
- It was found essential to ensure the inclusion and reflection of a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach in the field level activities across all of the components from the planning stage. Particularly, provision of reviews and relevant inputs to terms of references

and work plans of District Technical Officers (DTOs) and local partners will help integration of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) perspectives in implementing, monitoring and reporting field activities.

Best practices:

- The formation of the rural women farmers' groups as an entry point to intervene at the Village Development Committee (VDC) level for the targeted one-window approach by participating UN agencies was considered as a key lesson learnt in terms of achieving joint results through the programme implementation in the districts. Focusing on the common beneficiaries and utilizing the comparative advantages of the four participating UN agencies have made the RWEE JP effective at the local level.
- There were 10 joint monitoring visits in 2016 by participating UN agencies in order to ensure the results of the RWEE JP and confirm that messages in the communities are disseminated as one UN. Out of 10 visits, three were attended by representatives of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD). Three visits by the Government in a year are considered a good indication of the Government's involvement as the Government officials generally visit maximum once or twice in a year project sites in districts. In one of these Government's visits, the former Secretary of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) who was a Chair of the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) and the Deputy Director General of the Department of Agriculture also accompanied the team. They expressed their positive views regarding the results of the RWEE JP contributing to the economic empowerment of rural women within its four result areas in a very short time period.
- The RWEE JP participating agencies maintained close coordination and information sharing with relevant ministries, departments and districts offices during field interventions to avoid any overlaps and duplication particularly in the target Village Development Committees (VDCs). This was done through the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and joint field visit of the RWEE JP districts with the relevant Government officials. This effort was acknowledged by the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) members of the RWEE JP.

Qualitative assessment:

The close coordination and joint approach demonstrated by participating UN agencies highlighted that results can be delivered within a short period of time if beneficiaries are supported with a holistic approach to development by utilizing the different competencies of the respective participating UN agencies. This joint approach was also acknowledged by the Government. They appreciated the implementation modality of the RWEE JP and the harmonized integrated approach demonstrating best value for money.

During the joint monitoring visit of the RWEE JP team in the districts, rural women beneficiaries during group interactions and discussions have openly expressed their views regarding the transformative changes the RWEE JP has been able to bring in their lives. The RWEE JP has been able to unite them by forming farmers' groups with provision of nutrition support, livelihood opportunities and leadership skills. These have built their confidence which rural women have also expressed by saying "*Before the implementation of the RWEE JP, we used to think that we are less competent than men however, the knowledge and skills we received under this programme through its different components such as kitchen gardening, construction of assets and leadership training, we now feel that women are equally competent as men. Most importantly, the RWEE JP provided us an opportunity to take the lead role in all its activities. In other words, it kept us in the driving seat. After seeing these changes in us, male members in our family and society have also started behaving and talking to us in a more respectful manner. They acknowledge our leadership and contribution both inside and outside homes.*"

The RWEE JP is considered relevant in the current context of Nepal. In Nepal, more than 67 per cent of women are in the agriculture labour force. Due to an increasing trend of male out-migration, women are now more engaged in farm activities, shouldering the burden of both household and farm related work. In 2013/14, over 520,000 Nepalese left the country for overseas employment, women constitutes 5.6 per cent of the overall number (Department of Foreign Employment 2013/2014). In this context, the RWEE JP as a pilot initiative for the implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), has supported rural women by introducing modern farming techniques and the mechanization schemes for drudgery reduction. The overall programme was designed in such a way to support on one hand food and nutrition security and sustainable livelihoods of rural women farmers, linking the empowerment with voice, agency and influence at the local level. On the other hand, the programme integrated the issues of rural women in the draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) ensuring that policy frameworks are informed by voices of rural women and operational realities on the ground. This was achieved through a series of follow up meetings with the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) and engagement of representatives from the Peasant Association to include the issues of rural women during the development of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy. This unique and holistic package of the programme makes the RWEE JP different from other programmes of the Government, civil society organizations (CSOs), Development Partners and UN agencies implemented in the past.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 Improved food and nutrition security			
<p>Indicator: % of increase in agriculture production of women farmers</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Food crops 1,337 kg/HH - Vegetables 234 kg/HH <p>Planned Target: 10% increase in food production</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food crops (Paddy); 2,872 kg/HH (increased by 114%) • Vegetable 574 kg/HH (increased by 145%) <p>In an average, 129% increase in food production</p>	Targets achieved (annual).	Production data of targeted beneficiaries and field observation reports
<p>Indicator 1.2: Women’s dietary diversity or HHs food consumption patterns (% increase over baseline)</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 62.2% of HHs (with kitchen gardening) surveyed with sufficient quantity and frequency of vegetable consumption - 72.4% of HHs surveyed have minimum acceptable diet (MAD) - Food Consumption Score of HHs surveyed is 6.73% - Coping Strategy Index (CSI) <p>Planned Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 50% increase by quantity and frequency in vegetable consumption of kitchen garden - At least 85% of the total HHs supported have minimum acceptable diet (MAD) (5,610 HHs in five years, and 2,890 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 99% HHs with kitchen gardening have sufficient quantity and frequency of vegetable consumption • 93 % of the total HHs supported have minimum acceptable diet. • 60% of the total HHs have Improved Food Consumption Score. • 80% of the total HHs have improved Coping Strategy. 	Targets achieved except for the Food Consumption Score.	Field reports

<p>HHs as of December 2016)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of the total HHs supported improve Food Consumption Score (FCS), CSI (5,280 HHs in five years and 2,720 HHs as of December 2016) 			
<p>Output 1.1 Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.1.1: Number of rural women’s groups/cooperatives accessing credit</p> <p>Baseline: 30 women’s groups have access to credit within their own groups and from cooperatives outside</p> <p>Planned Target: 23 women’s groups additionally have access to credits (At least 10% increase)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 155 rural women’s groups (Sindhuli 62, Sarlahi 48 and Rautahat 45) have access to group saving schemes and can borrow from the saved pool of money within their own groups 	<p>Targets achieved.</p>	<p>Field reports</p>
<p>Indicator 1.1.2: Number of rural women accessing integrated agriculture nutrition services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1.2a nutritious food - 1.1.2 b tonnage of super cereal distribution - 1.1.2c number of community assets created - 1.1.2d amount of cash distributed - 1.1.2e areas of land irrigated - 1.1.2 f number of rural women access to the assets <p>Baseline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1.2 a nutritious food: N/A - 1.1.2b tonnage of super cereal distribution: N/A - 1.1.2c number of community 	<p>1.1.2a: Nutritious food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,534 rural women accessed and benefitted from integrated agriculture nutrition services <p>1.1.2b: Super cereal distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,534 rural women benefitted from super cereal distribution <p>1.1.2c: Community assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74 irrigation facilities, 17 fish ponds; and 3 CAESCs constructed <p>1.1.2d: Amount of cash distribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of Nepali Rupee (NPR) 8,227,734.00 has been distributed as a cash transfer through various Cash for Assets activities (1,837 rural women 	<p>Targets partially achieved.</p>	<p>Field report</p>

<p>assets created: N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1.2d amount of cash distributed: N/A - 1.1.2 e areas of land irrigated: 0.8430 ha - 1.1.2f number of rural women access to the assets: 134 HHs (12.2%) <p>Planned Target (As of December 2016):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.1.2a 1,500 HHs - 1.1.2b 1,500 HHs - 1.1.2c 75 irrigation 3 community extension service centres - 1.1.2 d 1,500 HHs get 30 workdays of employment - 1.1.2e 491 hectares of land - 1.1.2f 3,750 HHs 	<p>received 30 workdays of employment).</p> <p>1.1.2e: Land irrigated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 490 hectares of lands of both kitchen garden and commercial fresh vegetable production irrigated <p>1.1.2f: Access to community assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,837 rural women have access to community assets 		
<p>Indicator 1.1.3: Number of rural women utilizing improved production techniques Baseline: 287 HHs with 574 rural women farmers Target: 3,400 rural women utilizing improved production techniques</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,576 rural women (Sindhuli 1,292, Sarlahi 1,120 and Rautahat 1,164) utilizing improved production techniques in agriculture and livestock production learnt through orientation and trainings on agricultural production 	Targets achieved	Training reports and training follow up reports
<p>Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.2.1: Number of women-led and managed local food security reserves Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal does not include activities for Output 1.2 and will not report against this indicator	

Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.			
<p>Indicator 2.1: Variation of women/women groups/cooperatives income generated from their sales markets</p> <p>Baseline: 49 rural women farmers</p> <p>Planned Target: 1,320 rural women generated income from their sales market</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,068 rural women (Sindhuli 861, Sarlahi 756 and Rautahat 451) generated income from their sales market (1,957 from kitchen garden, 111 from commercial fresh vegetable production, sold 194 mt. and generated income equivalent to USD 50,468 	Targets achieved.	Sales record reports of rural women
<p>Indicator 2.2: Proportion of rural women with empowerment in the income domain of the “women’s empowerment agriculture index” WEAI (control over use of income)</p> <p>Baseline: N/A</p> <p>Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for indicator 2.2 at this funding phase and will not report against this indicator	
Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products			
<p>Indicator 2.1.1: Number of rural women’s cooperatives procuring agricultural products and home grown school meals through WFP programmes</p> <p>Baseline: N/A</p> <p>Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator	
<p>Indicator 2.1.2: Number of rural women accessing mechanization schemes</p> <p>Baseline: 21 women</p> <p>Planned Target: 1,320 rural women accessing mechanization schemes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2,006 rural women (Sindhuli 670, Sarlahi 696 and Rautahat 640) accessing women’s friendly drudgery reduction mechanization schemes 	Targets achieved.	Field reports
Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities			

<p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of women employed who entered the formal labour market or initiated self-employment activities</p> <p>Baseline: 922 rural women</p> <p>Planned Target: 1,650 rural women employed who entered the formal labour market or initiated self-employment activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-employment opportunities were created with 3,645 rural women who engaged in vegetable selling, poultry production, livestock treatment services as Village Animal Health Workers (VAHWs). • There was no woman who went into formal wage employment with the support of the RWEE JP during the reporting period. 	<p>The full fledged programme implementation started in February 2016. The duration of the support was too short to create opportunities for formal wage employment.</p>	<p>Field reports</p>
<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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of rural women elected as representatives at the local level committees • % of rural women who are members of land committees • % of Producers organizations led by women <p>Baseline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19% of rural women selected as representatives of local level committees • 0.9% of rural women who are members of land committees • 2.9% of Producers Organizations led by women <p>Planned Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% increase (against the baseline) of rural women's representation in local committees. • 10% increase (against the 		<p>RWEE JP in Nepal will report the progress against this indicator in the second phase when the funding is secured. This will be determined based on the amount of the funding received for the second phase.</p>	

<p>baseline) in the participation of rural women in land committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% increase (against the baseline) in rural women's leadership in Producers Organization 			
Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance			
<p>Indicator 3.1.1: Proportion of girls enrolled in secondary education Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for Output 3.1 and will not report	
<p>Indicator 3.1.2: Number of women candidates in rural council elections Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for Output 3.1 and will not report	
Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions			
<p>Indicator 3.2.1: Number of rural women's group who join formally registered cooperatives Baseline: 14 Women's Groups (WG) joined cooperatives in the three districts Planned Target: 3 more rural women's groups which joined or formally registered as cooperatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 209 rural women of 17 rural women's groups (Sindhuli 5, Rautahat 5 and Sarlahi 7) joined cooperatives 	Targets achieved.	Field reports
<p>Indicator 3.2.2: Number of cooperatives that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board Baseline: 14 cooperatives have adopted gender policy in the three districts Planned Target: 5 more women groups/cooperatives adopted a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal will report the progress against this indicator in the second phase when the funding is secured. This will be determined based on the amount of the funding received for the second phase.	

Output 3.3: Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels			
<p>Indicator 3.3.1: % of rural women’s coalitions adopt common positions to influence national and regional policy forums on the new SDGs and Rio+20</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Planned Target: 5% of rural women’s coalitions adopt common positions to influence national and regional policy forums on the new SDGs and Rio+20</p>		<p>RWEE JP in Nepal will report the progress against this indicator in the second phase when the funding is secured. This will be determined based on the amount of the funding received for the second phase.</p>	
<p>Indicator 3.3.2: Number of POs, cooperatives and unions that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women’s quota for their board</p> <p>Baseline: N/A</p> <p>Planned Target: N/A</p>		<p>RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</p>	
Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.			
<p>Indicator 3.4.1: % of rural women are aware of women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches</p> <p>Baseline: 6 rural women (0.54% of the surveyed)</p> <p>Planned Target: 15% of rural women supported are aware of women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches (1,980 rural women in five years and 510 rural women as of December 2016)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 602 rural women (17% of the rural women supported) enhanced their knowledge and understanding on women’s human rights and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) responsive approaches 	<p>Targets achieved.</p>	<p>Training reports</p>
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
<p>Indicator: % of government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programme benefitting rural women</p> <p>Baseline: 5%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13.4 % (82 billion) out of the total government budgets 612 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016/17 is allocated to programmes benefitting rural women’s economic development. Out of the 82 	<p>Targets partially achieved.</p>	<p>Annual Progress of the Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, Part 1, FY 2016/17</p>

<p>Planned Target: 20% of government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programmes benefitting rural women</p>	<p>billion (13.4 %) allocated budgets, 76.8 % is from the government's fund and 23.3 % from external funding¹⁰</p>		
<p>Indicator: Number of countries including special measures to guarantee women's equal rights to land ownership and control Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A</p>		<p>RWEE JP in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</p>	
<p>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.</p>			
<p>Indicator 4.1.1: Extent to which national land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment Baseline: 61 land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment Planned Target: 3 new policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy for the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) was developed 	<p>A target is set for five years. By the end of 2016, one policy has been supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy • Promotion of Mechanization of Agriculture Policy of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) (2014/15) • National Seed Vision Policy (2013-2025).
<p>Indicator 4.1.2: Number of knowledge products, evidence base and policy briefs on rural women's economic empowerment produced Baseline: No Planned Target: 5 knowledge products evidence base and policy briefs on rural</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 desk reviews on "women's role in decision-making in farm operation", "drudgery reduction of women in the agriculture sector" and "work load distribution between men and women in the agriculture sector" completed 	<p>A target is set for five years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three desk review reports

¹⁰ Source: Annual Progress of the GoN, National Planning Commission, Part 1, FY 2016/17. The budget allocation for rural women's economic development was made in line with the Agricultural Development Strategy. While this is not the direct result of the RWEE JP, the programme contributed to this trend by piloting the implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy.

women's economic empowerment produced			
Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women			
<p>Indicator 4.2.1: Number of countries where the “women’s empowerment agriculture index” (WEAI) is piloted or mainstreamed in national statistics</p> <p>Baseline: N/A</p> <p>Planned Target: N/A</p>		RWEE JP in Nepal will report the progress against this indicator in the second phase when the funding is secured. This will be determined based on the amount of the funding received for the second phase.	
Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.			
<p>Indicator 4.3.1: Number of national/regional/global dialogues mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups (change over baseline)</p> <p>Baseline: 26 (including women’s networks and socio-political associations)</p> <p>Planned Target: 10 more national/regional/global dialogues mechanism on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 national level consultations were organized to discuss the draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) 	The target is set for five years.	A revised draft Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy

iii) A Specific Story

Problems/challenges faced:

Although rural women in Nepal contribute significantly to agriculture, they are often not viewed as farmers. Rural women farmers have limited access to markets, resources and agriculture inputs, and for the same work they are often paid less than men. Such stereotypical and discriminatory gender attitudes, prevalent in Nepali society, are leading to socially imposed limitations on women's potential to harness their productivity. But in Pratappur Paltuwa village from Rautahat district, another narrative is unfolding.

Chanda Devi, a mother of three, is from a marginalized Madhesi community. She is one of the 175 rural women farmers who worked on a recent RWEE JP supported irrigation support to bring fresh water closer to their homes.

With temperatures hovering around +40°C for up to seven months a year, the flat terrain of Paltuwa village is often parched and dry due to scarce rainfall. Prior to the RWEE JP, Chanda's village relied mainly on a nearby river to get water for cooking and feeding the cattle, which forced rural women farmers to walk for hours to bring water home. "Before, there was a severe scarcity of water in our village. The source was far away, and due to the scorching heat, our little buckets could not carry enough water for our crops. As a result, we suffered huge losses during every crop cycle," recalls Chanda, who worked on the irrigation support under the RWEE JP as a Site Coordinator.

Programme Interventions/Results:

"One of the notable aspects of the RWEE JP is Cash for Assets initiatives, including the construction of the irrigation support to water crop and vegetables and the establishment of the Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre (CAESC)," says Chanda Devi.

Chanda was one of 130 women earning an average wage of USD 120 from her engagement in the construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre (CAESC)** building, which will provide agriculture service to the entire village and will be fully owned and managed by the community mainly under the leadership of rural women farmers.

"We are very motivated by the construction of the **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre (CAESC)**, we as women feel we are making a difference- we can now support our family by earning money and buying supplies and medicines." says Chanda.

Chanda was also part of the construction of a channel for an irrigation site that involved 175 women, who received USD 3.88 per day and received additional USD 600 from under Cash for Assets initiative and finished the construction in 26 days. The availability of adequate water has helped Chanda and other villagers grow more vegetables, a part of which they consume and the rest they sell off at the local market. "Before, my children used to have dry wheat for breakfast, now I feed them rice, lentils and vegetables that I have grown myself" says Chanda. "I sometimes sell these vegetables in the market and with the money I can also feed them chicken and goat meat."

Under the support of the RWEE JP, farmers' groups of rural women are formed with 25-30 farmers in each group. The formation of these groups has supported rural women farmers to become more active in the community. "This group has a lot of us running from one place to the other, getting work done or solving

problems such as getting our **Community Agriculture Extension Service Centre (CAESC)** registered and signing up new members. It has been keeping a lot of us on our toes”, says Chanda. Most importantly, the comparative advantages of the four UN agencies are blended to provide a consolidated package of economic empowerment to the targeted rural women under the leadership of the **Government of Nepal**.

Overall, the RWEE JP is bringing rural women together by strengthening their leadership role at the local level. At the same time, it has also helped shift attitudes of their male counterparts. “We were not allowed to step out of our homes for even a short period of time. Things are changing. These days the male members are supporting and even encouraging us to spend quality time outside, earn a livelihood and become independent. It is very positive and I am especially happy for my daughter” explains Chanda.

Lesson learned:

Chanda Devi says she has noticed a tremendous change in herself and her friends due to the RWEE JP initiative. “Not only has the programme economically empowered us through support through kitchen gardening, commercial fresh vegetable production, construction of assets and strengthened leadership skills, it has also raised our confidence level and enabled us to speak up on issues related to decision making in our **households and** communities.

“I often share my learnings about women and empowerment with children from a primary school. I am so happy that I am helping them learn about important gender concepts from an early age,” Chanda Devi adds with a smile.

III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable)

- Three desk reviews on “women’s role in decision-making in farm operation”, “drudgery reduction of women in the agriculture sector” and “work load distribution between men and women in the agriculture sector” completed in 2016 in close collaboration with the **Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) and Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD)**

IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable)

The PSC meeting, chaired by the Secretary of the MoAD, took place on 12 December approved the No Cost Extension (NCE) request of the RWEE JP until 31 December 2017. **The initial date of the programme completion was 31 December 2016.**

V. Implementation and Coordination mechanisms

Implementation mechanism

At the national level, the **Programme Steering Committee (PSC)** was formed under the leadership of the Government of Nepal. The role of the PSC is to provide strategic guidance and monitor the implementation of the RWEE JP. The PSC is chaired by the Secretary of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) and includes representation of the joint secretaries of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) as well as other relevant sectoral ministries and departments (director generals) such as the Ministry of Women,

Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW), Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD), National Planning Commission (NPC), Department of Livestock Services (DoLS) and Department of Agriculture.

There were two Programme Steering Committee (PSC) meetings (third and fourth) taken place in 2016. The fourth PSC meeting took place on 12 December 2016 where RWEE JP's WG¹¹ presented the six-month progress of the RWEE JP to the PSC members. The PSC meeting approved the extension of the RWEE JP until December 2017.

During this reporting period, WG meetings were held on a regular basis to plan joint monitoring visits to ensure the effective implementation of the RWEE JP in the three districts.

Coordination mechanism

The RWEE JP participating agencies worked closely with the district-level relevant local bodies and line agencies such as District Agriculture Development Committee (DADC), District Livestock Support Office (DLSO), District Agriculture Development Office (DADO), Women and Children Office (WCO) and District Health Office (DHO). They were regularly consulted during the programme implementation and joint monitoring visits.

VI. Resources

A total of USD 1,177,774 was received from the Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) in 2015. As of 31 December 2016, a total of 1,145,815 (97.28 per cent) was disbursed. The core resources are planned to be utilized in the first quarter of 2017 in order to continue activities at the programme districts.

¹¹ The RWEE JP Working Group is a working level group that represents the members from four participating UN agencies.