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**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF  
WOMEN”  
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT  
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2017**

<p align="center"><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal</li> <li>• MPTF Office Project Reference Number:<sup>1</sup> 92005</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</b></p> <p>Nepal: Four Municipalities and nine Rural Municipalities from three local units Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat<sup>2</sup> (Hill and Terai region) Direct beneficiaries: 3,622 rural women farmers Indirect beneficiaries : 19,196 family members<sup>3</sup> and 165 community members and district level stakeholders who participated in events<sup>4</sup> 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"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),</li> <li>• International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD),</li> <li>• World Food Programme (WFP), and</li> <li>• United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <p><b>Government:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) in close coordination with District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) and Women and Children Office (WCO)</li> </ul> <p><b>Civil society:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Access</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p><b>Total budget as per project document: USD 1,577,774</b></p> <p><b>MPTF Contribution: USD 1,577,774</b> First tranche: USD 1,177,774 Second tranche: USD 0 Third tranche: USD 400,000</p> <p>Government Contribution: Not applicable Other Contributions (donors): Not applicable</p> <p><b>TOTAL: USD 1,577,774</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration 5 YEARS</p> <p>Start Date: 15 October 2012 End Date (Original): 31 October 2017 End Date (Extended): 31 December 2018</p>
<p align="center"><b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></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></p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation Report – <i>if applicable please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>Report Submitted By</b></p> <p>Name: Ms. Mio Yokota Title: Programme Specialist, Economic Empowerment Unit Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women Email address: <a href="mailto:mio.yokota@unwomen.org">mio.yokota@unwomen.org</a></p>

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

<sup>2</sup> On 10 March 2017, the Government of Nepal adopted 744 local body systems fulfilling the requirement of the new Constitution of Nepal 2015. All of the old municipalities and Village Development Committees (which were more than 3,900 in number) were restructured into a total of 744 new Municipalities and Rural Municipalities.

<sup>3</sup> The average size of a household in Nepal is 5.3 persons per house hold. The number of indirect beneficiaries was calculated by multiplying 3,622 direct beneficiaries by 5.3 and subtracting 3,622.

<sup>4</sup> Community members included 43 women and girls and 122 men and boys who participated in events. These figures also include district level government officials and civil society organization members.

## **Abbreviations**

ADS	Agriculture Development Strategy
CAESC	Community Agriculture Extension Service Center
DADO	District Agriculture Development Office/Officer
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
JP RWEE	Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal
MoAD	Ministry of Agricultural Development
MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund
mt.	Metric Ton
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPR	Nepali Rupee
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
VDC	Village Development Committee
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 Contributing to Implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) in Nepal (JP RWEE)” aims to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights. The programme is being implemented in the three local units of Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat in Provinces 1 and 2<sup>5</sup> under the leadership of the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) of the Government of Nepal.

The second phase of the JP RWEE in Nepal started in May 2017 after the approval of the third tranche of the funding from the Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF). The field implementation of the second phase will be completed in the end of April 2018 and its results will be reported in the following months. There was a funding gap from January to April 2017, as the previous funding from the MPTF was almost fully disbursed by the end of 2016. This four-month period was utilized in planning and internal coordination by the participating UN agencies. During this time, the work plan was prepared and submitted to the MPTF for the third tranche of the funding. Respective country offices of the participating agencies received the fund in May 2017.

During the first phase, out of the four outcome areas of the JP RWEE, the implementation of **Outcome 3: Enhanced leadership and participation of rural women** remained at a limited scale due to the prioritization of initial programme interventions within the given short timeframe. In consideration of the analysis of the results that were achieved/not achieved during the first phase, the second phase of the JP RWEE focuses on the following:

- Prioritized intervention for Outcome 3 by providing combined support to rural women farmers for continued learning, advocacy, networking and leadership development;
- Selected support to internalize and sustain results achieved under Outcome 1: Improved food and nutrition security and Outcome 2: Increased income for sustainable livelihoods;
- Policy advocacy to facilitate the endorsement of the gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) strategy and ensure the continuous attention and support from the Government to issues of rural women farmers; and
- Awareness raising of families and community to address social norms and to create a more supportive environment for rural women’s economic empowerment.

To address this implementation gap, the work plan of the second phase incorporated a new intervention, “advocacy campaign combined with leadership development and increased representation of rural women farmers,” under Outcome 3.

During the reporting period, the JP RWEE was implemented from May to December 2017 in four Municipalities and nine Rural Municipalities (recently-formed local structures by the Government of Nepal) of the three local units Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat (Hill and Terai regions). In total, 3,622 rural women benefitted from the JP and 158 rural women’s groups (one added in 2017) were formed in 2017.

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

The key progress include: 3,622 rural women have been benefitting from kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production; 93 rural women's groups have been registered at the District Agriculture Development Offices (DADO) and now have opportunities to access the Government's support programmes on agricultural development; 155 rural women's groups (out of 158 formed) accumulated Nepali Rupee (NPR) 2,936,655<sup>6</sup> from group saving schemes; 2,792 rural women earned a total of NPR 15,015,000<sup>7</sup> from selling of vegetables in the market for their livelihoods; and 3,622 rural women from 158 rural women's groups were equipped with knowledge and skills on nursery establishment and crop cultivation practices for vegetable crop. In addition, the GESI strategy of the ADS was endorsed by the MoAD during the reporting period. Details of the results are reported in the following section on key milestones of the JP.

A joint mission by members of the Executive Boards of UN Women, WFP, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) took place from 14 to 22 April 2017 in Nepal. The mission members visited the JP RWEE programme district in Sindhuli on 18 April and had intensive interactions with the RWEE beneficiaries regarding the positive changes that the JP was able to bring in their lives. The Board Members were impressed by the confidence and the voice and agency demonstrated by the rural women through sharing of their stories of resilience and leadership and how well the four UN partnering agencies were demonstrating a coherent UN approach.

### **Key milestones of the JP**

The achievements and progress<sup>8</sup> of the JP RWEE during the reporting period are described below.

#### **Outcome 1: Improved food and nutrition security**

- 3,622 rural women benefitted from kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production with enhanced knowledge, skills and technologies for improved food and nutrition security;
- Out of 158 women farmers' groups formed, 155 groups (3,544 members) accumulated NPR 2,936,655 by group saving;
- 158 additional seasonal community nurseries were established for kitchen garden and commercial vegetable production;
- 3,622 rural women from 158 rural women's groups were equipped with knowledge and skills on improved crop cultivation practices for vegetable production including nursery establishment technology; and
- A draft Operational Guideline for the Community Agriculture Extension Service Center (CAESC), was developed and shared with the local bodies.

#### **Outcome 2: Increased income to secure livelihoods**

- 2,792 rural women earned a total of NPR 15,015,000 (USD 147,466.11) in a year from selling of vegetables in the market for their livelihoods

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<sup>6</sup> USD 28,841.63 with the UN exchange rate for February 2018, NPR 101.82/USD.

<sup>7</sup> USD 147,466.11 with the UN exchange rate for February 2018 NPR 101.82/USD

<sup>8</sup> Unless stated otherwise, the achievements and progress reported are additional results made during the reporting period.

**Outcome 3: Enhanced leadership and participation in communities, rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes**

- 93 rural women's groups registered themselves at the DADO and as a result received material support such as seed and sapling, and technical advices from DADO to improve agriculture production; and
- 21 rural women from three rural women's groups joined cooperatives as members and actively participated in cooperative meetings.

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

- The GESI strategy of the ADS was endorsed by the MoAD; and
- A translation of GESI strategy in Nepali language was completed and submitted to the MoAD

## I. Purpose

The JP RWEE in Nepal is aligned with the RWEE global joint programme. In Nepal, the JP RWEE is being implemented as a pilot initiative for the gender responsive implementation of the ADS, a 20-year agricultural strategy of the Government of Nepal. The following four outcome areas of the programme were identified based on specific challenges and opportunities in the context of Nepal:

- Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security;
- Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods;
- Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes; and
- 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 a narrative report on the outcomes and outputs from May-December 2017 where progress has been made during the reporting period.

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

The improvement in food and nutrition security of 3,622 rural women (38.49 per cent *Janajati*, 26.65 per cent Madhesi, 22.19 per cent Brahmin/Chhetri, 7.70 per cent Dalit and 4.97 per cent Muslim) in the three local units was further sustained through the continuous increase in vegetable production by 40 per cent during the reporting period with the support of the JP RWEE in agricultural production.

As of 31 December 2017, a total of 3,622 rural women have participated in and benefitted from kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production (3,333 women in kitchen gardening and 289 in commercial vegetable production) in the three local units. The technical and material support provided during the first phase of the JP RWEE laid a strong foundation for rural women farmers to continuously develop their agricultural productions in 2017, and thus, helped them sustain the improved food and nutrition security in their livelihoods. The follow-up support provided to rural women by the JP RWEE during the reporting period included training on new agriculture production skills and provision of material support such as vermin composts, plastic sheets to cover nurseries, small-scale agricultural machinery (e.g. trailed reapers, paddy threshers, etc.) for drudgery reduction among others. This led to the establishment of additional 158 new seasonal community nurseries for kitchen garden and commercial vegetable production. Field monitoring reports of District Technical Officers indicate the community nurseries largely contributed to increase in the agricultural production of 3,622 rural women farmers. Before the JP RWEE, knowledge and skills of many rural women on establishing and managing of nurseries were limited. During field monitoring visits, rural women farmers shared their experience that, after the implementation of the JP, they learned about the latest agricultural techniques required for nurseries and were able to familiarize themselves with the plantation process. This led to

better agricultural production in their fields, which supported their livelihoods through selling of vegetables in the market.

**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 158 rural women's groups increased their access to agricultural resources, assets and services that are critical to their food and nutrition security. Out of 158 rural women's groups that were formed, 155 groups (98%) have accumulated NPR 2,936,655 (USD 28,841.63) through group saving schemes and were able to borrow money as a loan from the group saving. The JP RWEE taught the rural women on the importance of group saving. During the beginning of the implementation of the JP RWEE, only five groups were engaged in group saving schemes. However, after understanding the benefits of group saving, additional 150 groups with 3,424 rural women members also initiated the similar group saving scheme in this reporting period. The women mostly spent their loan to purchase agricultural inputs (such as seeds and fertilizers), obtain health care services and buy other essential household supplies. In an effort to ensure regular access to agricultural extension and other relevant services with rural women's groups, an operational guideline of CAESCs was drafted. The CAESC is a service hub which will benefit rural women farmers and their families by facilitating access to agriculture and livestock related information and extension services once the Centres are fully operational. The operational guideline contains the elements of the CAESC such as objectives; working areas; economic resources; formation of working committee; transparency; and the roles, duties and responsibilities of rural women. The document will serve as a basis to further the institutionalization of CAESC in the current restructuring process at the local level.

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

The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this output.

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

Rural women in the three districts have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth through the support of the JP RWEE. A total of 2,792 rural women (1,061 Sindhuli, 956 Sarlahi and 775 Rautahat) earned NPR 15,015,000 (USD 147,466.11) by selling of 546 Metric Ton (mt.) vegetables produced from both kitchen garden and commercial fresh vegetable production in the market. Increase in their vegetable production by 40 per cent compared to 2016<sup>9</sup> was an effort of a series of trainings to rural women on improved production techniques in agriculture. These trainings resulted in enhancement of their technical capacity. In total 1,396 mt. vegetables were produced from both kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable producer

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<sup>9</sup>In the year 2016 the vegetable production was 997 mt. , and, in 2017 the vegetable production was 1, 396 mt.. In total, the production is increased by 40 per cent in 2017.

farmers in 2017, which was an increase from 997 mt. in 2016. Out of total production (1,396 mt.), 690 mt vegetable were consumed by rural women and their families, 546 mt. were sold in the market and 160 mt. were distributed to neighbors.

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

Provision of agriculture machinery and equipment has contributed to reduce drudgery of rural women and supported them to access markets for their products since the first phase in 2016. In 2017, the following machinery and equipment were additionally purchased to further support drudgery reduction of rural women: corn shellers-5 sets, paddy thresher-2 sets, weighing balance-12 sets, propel reaper with power tiller and trailer-3 sets and plastic crate-289 pieces

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

The JP RWEE in Nepal will report the progress against these indicators in the next Programme Report in June 2018.

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

The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this output during the second phase.

**Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organisational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions**

In total, 20 rural women's groups with 230 members joined agriculture or savings and credits cooperatives in their community, including 17 groups with 209 members who had joined in 2016. , and actively participated in cooperative meetings. They have also benefitted from access to the saving and credit schemes of their cooperatives. The JP RWEE, through District Technical Officers based in the three districts, disseminated the information on cooperatives to rural women farmers and supported them to establish linkages with cooperatives.

During the reporting period, additional 81 rural women's groups with 2,005 members registered at the DADO. The JP RWEE supported these rural women in filling up the forms and conducting all the necessary processes required for the registration at the DADO. The registration provided them with opportunities to access the Government's support programmes on agriculture and livelihoods. In total, 93 rural women's groups with 2,293 members are currently registered at the DADO (12 registered in the first phase and 81 in this reporting period) through the JP RWEE. They receive material and advisory support from DADO.

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

The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this output during the second phase.

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

Perspectives of rural women and community members on empowerment of women in agriculture were captured by a service provider as part of a formative research to prepare for a comprehensive advocacy campaign. They were reflected to shape the scope and strategies of the advocacy campaign. The activities under the campaign accomplished in 2017 included: kick-off meetings on the campaign in the three districts, orientation on the campaign to the district level stakeholders, development of communications strategy and implementation of a formative research to identify key advocacy opportunities and actors. The campaign will directly engage with an estimated 1,492 people out of which 30 per cent are women and girls at the national and local levels. Thousands of community members will also be reached through campaign messages on radio and television. This advocacy campaign directly contributes to the larger overarching advocacy campaign on women's economic empowerment by UN Women, aiming at the creation of a more conducive and inclusive local environment for women, while bringing men and boys in the loop. The advocacy campaign will be launched in Kathmandu and in the JP districts in January 2018. The campaign launch was initially planned for December 2018, but delayed as it required time to review and finalize the campaign concept and strategy including a logo, branding and key message with a wide range of stakeholders, practitioners and technical experts. The JP RWEE in Nepal will report the progress against these indicators in the next Programme Report.

The advocacy campaign has been branded as Sahi Ho! Which can be translated in English as "that is correct" or "I agree". A formative research was conducted with the objective of informing the campaign strategies. Three major methods employed for the research were: (a) desk review, (b) interviews with stakeholders, and (c) survey with community members in the JP RWEE districts and other UN Women's programme districts to be covered by the overarching campaign. The desk review focused on drawing out significant findings from the existing literature on women in agriculture, while interviews with a total of nine stakeholders were aimed at assessing the present situation of policies and programmes in practice. These interviews were conducted through dialogues with personnel from relevant development organizations and government offices, and the Ministry of Agricultural Development. The survey with community members were largely focused on understanding the perspective of the community on priority areas.

A Communications Strategy (Annex 1) with a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, key messages and a campaign logo has been finalized by the end of December 2017. Further, social media channels including Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/SahiHoAbhiyan/>), Twitter (<https://twitter.com/SahiHoAbhiyan/>) and a You Tube Channel

([https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8lCrAmi54d5k-83Iz3low?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8lCrAmi54d5k-83Iz3low?view_as=subscriber)) have been launched in anticipation of the launch of the campaign. An email address has also been dedicated to the campaign ([sahihoabhiyan@gmail.com](mailto:sahihoabhiyan@gmail.com)).

Further, strengthening of an enabling environment to enhance the awareness of rural women, including young women in context to their rights has been planned both at the local and national level. Local level activities will work through community engagement, social media campaigns and traditional media to raise awareness and promote positive gender attitudes and norms. At the national level, activities have been planned to support the momentum for the campaign in building support from the public and policy makers through public hearings and policy dialogues and reviews, which will engage government and relevant stakeholders, identify gaps and advocate for positive policy changes. The results of the planned local and national level initiatives will be reported in the Programme Completion Report.

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

The MoAD endorsed the first-ever GESI strategy on 20 June 2017 for gender-responsive implementation of the ADS. This is expected to result in more gender-responsive plans and programmes in agriculture development through local units. The GESI strategy was developed through the support of the JP RWEE during its first phase. The JP RWEE provided technical and coordination support through two consultant experts to the MoAD, which enabled the timely endorsement of the GESI strategy. The GESI strategy highlights visions, goals, objectives, strengths, opportunities, gaps and challenges, theory of change, and strategic framework and approaches to the implementation of the ADS (Please refer to Annex 2 for a copy of the endorsed GESI strategy). The strategy also recognizes the roles of marginalized rural women in the agriculture sector. It highlights marginalized rural women's increased access and control over agricultural resources and services, enhancement of their technical and leadership capacity, and engagement in value chain management among others. The strategy was also translated into official Nepali language and submitted to the MoAD in the last quarter of 2017.

**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 MoAD to integrate gender equality perspectives in the policy implementation enabled the timely endorsement of the GESI strategy of the ADS during the reporting period. The formulation of the GESI strategy was accomplished under the JP during the first phase. The provision of technical and coordination support to the MoAD by the JP RWEE continued in 2017 to achieve this result.

**Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women**

The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this output during the second phase.

**Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional and global policy processes.**

In an effort to promote an enabling environment for the advocacy of rural women’s priorities in regional and global policy processes, a series of national and local level policy dialogues has been planned as part of the comprehensive advocacy campaign (please refer the progress update provided under Output 3.4). Preparatory activities under the advocacy campaign completed in 2017 were: kick-off meetings on the campaign in the three districts, orientation on the campaign to the district level stakeholders, development of communication strategy and implementation of formative research to identify key advocacy opportunities and actors. The first policy dialogue is scheduled for January 2018. The outcomes will be reported in the next Programme Report.

**Challenges and interventions for mitigating challenges:**

Changes in the local government structures

In 2017, the Government of Nepal adopted a new local government structure following the Constitutional requirements. This restructuring has caused new challenges in the coordination of the RWEE JP implementation at the field. It has been 19 years since the last local-level election was held in Nepal. The 2015 Constitution of Nepal has stipulated that the Government should have conducted local, provincial as well as federal elections by 21 January 2018. Accordingly, the Government decided to hold the local elections in three phases. The first and second phases of elections took place in May, June and September 2017 respectively. In preparation for the local elections, the Government established 744 new local government units on March 10, 2017. Categorized as municipalities and rural municipalities, their establishment aimed to restructure old local government structures, namely Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Municipalities. As a result of the local elections, newly-elected representatives are in place at the local government bodies. The Government has delegated full decision-making authorities to the local government bodies.

During the first phase, the field implementation of the RWEE JP had been discussed, coordinated and agreed with VDCs in all three districts under the old local government structures. With the new local government bodies in place, there is an emerging need to review and reconfirm with new local government bodies the arrangements and support previously agreed with then VDCs, especially on community assets and infrastructures that were constructed under the leadership of rural women with the support of the RWEE JP.

For example, three CAESCs were constructed within the premises of local government bodies with the agreement of the previous VDCs. After the local election in Sindhuli district, the newly-elected Ward Chairperson informally requested rural women’s groups to allow him to use one room of the CAESC because there was space shortage in his office and the building is located within a local government property. On the other hand, rural women’s groups had understood that their groups hold the ownership of the CAESC as they were fully engaged in the construction of the building. After receiving a strong rejection from rural women’s groups to let the new government body use one room of the CAESC, the newly-elected Chairperson

unilaterally decided to take over the entire building, as part of his office, without formally consulting rural women's groups. Rural women filed a complaint against the Chairperson in the District Administration Office. This situation presents a serious challenge because the adversarial dynamics between the rural women's groups and the newly-elected Chairperson could severely undermine possibilities for future cooperative and productive engagement among the concerned parties.

#### Follow-up and mitigation measures

On 20 July, right after the above incident, the RWEE JP team held a meeting with the Secretary of the MoAD, who is the Chairperson of the RWEE JP Programme Steering Committee (PSC), to brief the Secretary about the issue and propose a joint field mission to facilitate the settlement. The Secretary shared that the MoAD started receiving similar complaints where newly-elected local government bodies took or tried to take properties and facilities, which were originally built for the use of their communities, and use them as their own offices or for different purposes. With the new local government structures, local government bodies now have full authority to decide on the use of properties/facilities located in government land. However, the formal procedures should be duly followed and consent of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development (MoFALD) on the takeover needs to be sought. During the meeting, it was also agreed that one Under-secretary level official of the MoAD would be assigned to participate in the joint monitoring mission to Sindhuli and request the District Agriculture Development Officer (DADO) in Sindhuli to facilitate a meeting between the women's group and the Ward Chairperson.

Following the decision, the RWEE JP team visited Sindhuli on 26-27 July and held a meeting with the relevant stakeholders, including the Mayor, DADO, women's groups and the Ward Chair. The meeting did not come up with an agreed conclusion. The mission team, comprised of participating UN agencies and the MoAD, met with the Chief District Officer (CDO) of Sindhuli to seek his coordination and support. The CDO assured the team that he will further discuss the matter with the Mayor and requested him to negotiate with the Ward Chairman and women's groups to come to an agreement, amicably and peacefully. To mitigate further disputes, it was recommended that the follow-up actions by the mission team should include documentation of the final arrangement, ideally in the form of an agreement between the parties in conflict (Ward Chairman and Women's Groups), which will be agreed to and witnessed by the participating UN agencies.

#### Lessons learned

Regular and close coordination and communication with the MoAD helped the RWEE JP team inform the MoAD on the emerging risk in Sindhuli in a timely manner. In order to address this issue, the MoAD mobilized an official at the Under-Secretary level for the joint field visit to Sindhuli. This was considered as a demonstration of MoAD's commitment and ownership to the successful implementation of the RWEE JP. The election of new local decision makers could be expected to spur further difficulties for the JP initiatives of rural women. The new decision makers do not necessarily feel ownership of the JP initiatives.

Since this is a pilot initiative and it is likely that the same difficulties would be faced by other localities in the future, it would help to devise a preemptive solution as part of the risk and mitigation strategy of the JP. Examples of mitigating options are: (a) orientations with to elected representatives at the local level; (b) dialogues among provincial and federal candidates on how they will support the programme if they will win the election; (c) obtaining a signed pledge of

commitment from candidates to fully support the rural women's initiatives; (d) holding of a briefing for elected officials, immediately after they are proclaimed as winners, or inviting them as high-profile guests in ceremonial events to gain their ownership and sponsorship of rural women's initiatives; and (e) adoption of a municipal ordinance stating that local officials have the obligation to ensure the continuity of existing initiatives for/by marginalized groups by providing them with sponsorship and needed resources and services.

The JP RWEE also ensured that JP RWEE District Technical Officers conduct the field monitoring and close follow-ups with rural women farmers' groups and other key stakeholders during the election period to maintain regular contact with the rural women and monitor the emerging risks.

### **Best practices:**

The above mentioned joint visit by the JP RWEE team and MoAD helped women's groups and Ward Chair come in one place and make an effort to resolve their issues at the local level. This was considered as a good practice to engage the local elected bodies in the field-level coordination for the smooth, accountable and sustainable implementation of the JP. The JP RWEE Team also submitted a joint mission report to the Secretary.

### **Qualitative assessment:**

Nepal retains its centuries-old caste system. Dalits, the discriminated people under this system, suffer from restriction on the use of public amenities, deprivation of economic opportunities and general neglect by the state and society. Dalits are discriminated against the basis of caste and "untouchability." They are not only discriminated by the so-called higher caste people in the Hindu system, but also by people within the same caste. Dalit women suffer much more than Dalit men as a result of gender discrimination within that community.

In 2017 a joint mission by members of the Executive Boards of UN Women, WFP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNDP and UNICEF visited a JP RWEE site. A Dalit rural woman in Ranichuri, Kamalamai Municipality told the joint mission that, before the intervention of the JP RWEE, she was not allowed to enter the home of upper caste women. However, after the JP's interventions, she can easily visit upper caste women's homes and eat food together with them. She shared that this was a result of sensitization training and an inclusive and non-discriminatory approach which the JP RWEE had ensured in conducting field activities. The JP RWEE provided rural women farmers and community members with a sensitization training on GESI and human rights in 2016. All field interventions of the JP RWEE took an inclusive approach and encouraged women from all caste and ethnic groups to work together throughout the joint programme. This supported community members to decrease the caste-based discrimination in their families and communities. This is a transformative shift the JP RWEE has been bringing in the lives of rural women, their families and communities.

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, utilizing the different competencies of the respective participating UN agencies.

**ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

	<u>Achieved Indicator Targets</u>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>Outcome 1: Improved food and nutrition security</b>				
<p><b>Indicator:</b> % of increase in agriculture production of women farmers</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Food crops 1,337 kg/HH</li> <li>- Vegetables 234 kg/HH</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 145% increase in food production</p>	<p><b><u>Increase in production</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetable 642 kg/HH (174% increase in production )</li> </ul>	Target exceeded	Field reports	<p><b><u>The initial target was fully achieved in 2016.</u></b></p> <p>The JP RWEE in Nepal continued to support agriculture production in 2017 with the updated target (cumulative from the baseline)</p>
<p><b>Indicator 1.2:</b> Women’s dietary diversity or HHs food consumption patterns (% increase over baseline)</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 62.2% of HHs (with kitchen gardening) surveyed with sufficient quantity and frequency of vegetable consumption</li> <li>- 72.4% of HHs surveyed have minimum acceptable diet (MAD)</li> <li>- Food Consumption Score of HHs surveyed is 6.73%</li> <li>- Coping Strategy Index (CSI)</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned Target:</b></p>	<p><b><u>Vegetable consumption</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 690 mt fresh vegetable consumed by 3,622 HH (100 % increase by quantity and frequency in vegetable production)</li> </ul> <p>Note: JP RWEE will report only under the first bullet target in 2017</p>	Target exceeded	Field reports	<p><b><u>The initial targets were achieved except for HH Food Consumption Score (85% by 2016).</u></b></p> <p>In 2017, no direct activity was planned for this indicator. However, the JP RWEE in Nepal will continue to work with rural women farmers to sustain and further improve food consumption patterns with their HHs through advocacy</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 50% increase by quantity and frequency in vegetable consumption of kitchen garden (2017)</li> <li>- At least 85% of the total HHs supported have minimum acceptable diet (MAD) (5,610 HHs in five years, and 2,890 HHs as of December 2016,)</li> <li>- 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,)</li> </ul>				
<b>Output 1.1 Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security</b>				
<p><b>Indicator 1.1.1:</b> Number of rural women's groups/cooperatives accessing credit</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 30 women's groups have access to credit within their own groups and from cooperatives outside</p> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 157 rural women's groups have access to credits within their own groups Note: the target is cumulative</p>	<p><b><u>Access to credit</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 155 rural women's groups accessed credit</li> </ul>	<p>99 % of the target has been achieved</p>	<p>Field reports</p>	<p><b>The initial targets were achieved in 2016.</b></p> <p>The JP RWEE in Nepal continued the support in 2017 to make access to credit available within all 157 rural women farmers' groups which were formed with the support of the programme (the target is cumulative from the baseline)</p>
<p><b>Indicator 1.1.2:</b> Number of rural women accessing integrated agriculture nutrition</p>	<p><b><u>Community assets</u></b></p>	<p>Target partially achieved</p>	<p>A draft Operational</p>	<p><b><u>Out of the six initial indicators, five targets were more than 95 %</u></b></p>

<p>services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.1.2a nutritious food</li> <li>- 1.1.2 b tonnage of super cereal distribution</li> <li>- 1.1.2c number of community assets created</li> <li>- 1.1.2d amount of cash distributed</li> <li>- 1.1.2e areas of land irrigated</li> <li>- 1.1.2 f number of rural women access to the assets</li> </ul> <p><b>Baseline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1.1.2 a nutritious food: N/A</li> <li>- 1.1.2b tonnage of super cereal distribution: N/A</li> <li>- 1.1.2c number of community assets created: N/A</li> <li>- 1.1.2d amount of cash distributed: N/A</li> <li>- 1.1.2 e areas of land irrigated: 0.8430 ha</li> <li>- 1.1.2f number of rural women access to the assets: 134 HHs (12.2%)</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 3 fully functional CAESC in the three districts</p>	<p><b><u>1.1.2c Community assets</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A draft Operational Guideline for the CAESC developed and shared with the Federal and local Governments.</li> </ul>		<p>Guideline</p>	<p><b><u>achieved in 2016. The remaining one indicator (Indicator 1.1.2f) was not achieved as the construction of assets (especially CAESCs) was just completed at the time of reporting.</u></b></p> <p>In 2017, the JP RWEE aimed to complete the full set-up and operationalization of the 3 CAESCs to increase rural women’s access to the Centres. Out of three CAESCs, two have been technically fully operational in partnership between rural women’s groups and local governments. Operationalization of the Centre in Sindhuli was yet to take place because of the change in the local government. The JP RWEE will collect the total number of rural women with access to community assets in the next Programme Report.</p>
<p><b>Indicator 1.1.3:</b> Number of rural women utilizing improved production techniques</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 287 HHs with 574 rural women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JP RWEE does not have particular activities for this indicator in 2017 and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			<p><b><u>The initial target was fully achieved in 2016.</u></b></p> <p>In 2017, the JP RWEE will follow up on rural women’s agricultural production</p>

farmers  <b>Target (2016):</b> 3,400 rural women utilizing improved production techniques				techniques through agricultural production support
<b>Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production</b>				
<b>Indicator 1.2.1:</b> Number of women-led and managed local food security reserves  <b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator
<b>Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.</b>				
<b>Indicator 2.1:</b> Variation of women/women groups/cooperatives income generated from their sales markets  <b>Baseline:</b> 49 rural women farmers  <b>Planned Target:</b> 1,320 rural women generated income from their sales market	<u><b>Income generation of rural women from sales of vegetables</b></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2,792 rural women (1,061 Sindhuli, 956 Sarlahi and 775 Rautahat) generated NPR 15,015,000 (USD 147,466.11) income by selling of 546 mt.of vegetables in the market</li> </ul>	Target exceeded	Field reports	<u><b>The initial target was fully achieved in 2016.</b></u>  In 2017, no direct activity was planned to aim at higher targets. However, the generation of the certain level of income is expected as a result of the continues support on agricultural production (Outcome 1)
<b>Indicator 2.2:</b> Proportion of rural women with empowerment in the income domain of the “women’s empowerment agriculture index” WEAI (control over use of income)  <b>Baseline:</b> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator

<b>Planned Target:</b> N/A				
<b>Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products</b>				
<b>Indicator 2.1.1:</b> Number of rural women's cooperatives procuring agricultural products and home grown school meals through WFP programmes  <b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator
<b>Indicator 2.1.2:</b> Number of rural women accessing mechanization schemes  <b>Baseline:</b> 21 women  <b>Planned Target (2016):</b> 1,320 rural women accessing mechanization schemes	<b>2016:</b> 2,006 rural women (Sindhuli 670, Sarlahi 696 and Rautahat 640) accessed women's friendly drudgery reduction mechanization schemes (955% increase)  <b>2017:</b> Not applicable (Achieved results to be sustained)	Target achieved in 2016		<b><u>The target was achieved in 2016.</u></b>  In 2017, no activity is planned to aim at higher targets for this indicator. However, the JP RWEE will continue its support to rural women to access and utilize mechanization schemes with the continued support on agriculture production (Outcome 1)
<b>Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities</b>				
<b>Indicator 2.2.1:</b> Number of women employed who entered the formal labour market or initiated self-employment activities  <b>Baseline:</b> 922 rural women  <b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 3,576 rural women initiated self-employment activities through	<b><u>Self-employment with better market access</u></b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3,622 (Sindhuli 1,292, Sarlahi 1,145 and Rautahat 1,185) rural women initiated self-employment activities with better market (292.84%)</li> </ul>	Target fully achieved	Field reports	The JP RWEE in Nepal continued the support to engage rural women farmers in agro-based self-employment activities with selected support packages combined with agriculture production (Outcome 1).

selling of vegetables with better market access (287.85% increase)				
<b>Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.</b>				
<p><b>Indicator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of rural women elected as representatives at the local level committees</li> <li>• % of rural women who are members of land committees</li> <li>• % of Producers organizations led by women</li> </ul> <p><b>Baseline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19% of rural women selected as representatives of local level committees</li> <li>• 0.9% of rural women who are members of land committees</li> <li>• 2.9% of Producers Organizations led by women</li> </ul> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5% increase (against the baseline) of rural women's representation in local committees.</li> <li>• 10% increase (against the baseline) in the participation of rural women in land committees</li> <li>• 5% increase (against the baseline) in rural women's</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rural women's representation in local level committees, land committees and Producers' Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JP RWEE in Nepal will report the progress against these indicators in the Programme Completion Report.</li> </ul>	<p>Target not yet achieved. JP RWEE in Nepal is gathering necessary data and information from the field. The final progress against these indicators will be reported in the Programme Completion Report</p>		<p>In 2016, there was no contribution /progress measured against the Outcome-level indicators as field-level interventions in 2016 were mainly focused on food and nutrition security and sustainable livelihoods.</p>

leadership in Producers Organization				
<b>Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</b>				
<b>Indicator 3.1.1:</b> Proportion of girls enrolled in secondary education  <b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator
<b>Indicator 3.1.2:</b> Number of women candidates in rural council elections  <b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator
<b>Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions</b>				
<b>Indicator 3.2.1:</b> Number of rural women's groups who join formally registered cooperatives  <b>Baseline:</b> 14 Women's Groups (WGs) joined cooperatives in the three districts  <b>Planned Target (2016):</b> 3 more rural women's groups which joined or formally registered as cooperatives	Three additional rural women's groups including 21 rural women joined cooperatives.	Target fully achieved	Field reports	<u><b>The initial target was fully achieved in 2016</b></u>  In 2017, no direct activity is planned to aim at higher target for this indicator. However, through advocacy and opportunity for shared learnings, the JP RWEE in Nepal will encourage registration of other rural women groups
<b>Indicator 3.2.2:</b> Number of cooperatives that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not</li> </ul>			The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator

<p><b>Baseline:</b> 14 cooperatives have adopted gender policy in the three districts</p> <p><b>Planned Target:</b> 5 more women groups/cooperatives adopted a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board</p>	<p>report against this indicator</p>			
<p><b>Indicator 3.2.3:</b> Registration of rural women's group in relevant government offices</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0</p> <p><b>Target (2017):</b> Registration of at least 100 in total rural women's group in the DADO</p>	<p><b>Registration of rural women's group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Out of total 158 rural women's groups formed, 93 rural women's group registered at the DADO. In total, 93 rural women's groups registered at the DADO (12 in the first phase, 81 in the second phase of the JP RWEE)</li> </ul> <p>Note: This is a cumulative result of the JP RWEE</p>	<p>93 % of the target has been achieved (Target not fulfilled due to change in new structure and policy of local government). JP RWEE in Nepal will update the final progress against these indicators in the Programme Completion Report</p>	<p>Field reports</p>	
<p><b>Output 3.3: Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels</b></p>				
<p><b>Indicator 3.3.1:</b> % of rural women's coalitions adopt common positions to influence national and regional policy forums on the new SDGs and Rio+20</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			<p>The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator</p>

<p>0</p> <p><b>Planned Target:</b> 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><b>Indicator 3.3.2:</b> Number of POs, cooperatives and unions that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women’s quota for their board</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			<p>The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator</p>
<p><b>Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.</b></p>				
<p><b>Indicator 3.4.1:</b> % of rural women are aware of women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 0.54% of the surveyed</p> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 80% of 3,597 rural women supported through the JP RWEE enhanced their awareness</p>	<p><b>Enhancement of awareness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehensive advocacy campaign is being implemented in the JP districts. JP RWEE in Nepal will report the progress against these indicators in the next Programme Report.</li> </ul>			<p><b><u>The initial target (15%) was achieved in 2016</u></b></p> <p>However, as the scale of awareness raising in 2016 was small, the JP RWEE will prioritize its efforts in further awareness raising and advocacy for women’s rights, leadership and economic empowerment. These efforts will create an enabling environment in the community. The Nepal-specific indicator was added as an alternative indicator to measure the level of</p>

				awareness.
<b>Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women</b>				
<p><b>Indicator:</b> % of government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programme benefitting rural women</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 5%</p> <p><b>Planned Target (2019):</b> 20% of government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programmes benefitting rural women</p>	<p><b>Allocation of the government budget and donor funding to rural women's empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>37 % of the Government budget for the fiscal year 2016/2017 was allocated for women's empowerment<sup>10</sup></li> </ul>			<p>In 2017, no direct activity is planned for this indicator and no annual target was set. However, the JP RWEE in Nepal will contribute to the further improvement through a large-scale advocacy campaign which includes mobilization and engagement of policy makers and government officials and advocacy for compliance of the gender responsive budget principles by the Ministry of Finance</p>
<p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of countries including special measures to guarantee women's equal rights to land ownership and control</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities under this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			<p>The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activity for this indicator</p>
<b>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.</b>				
<p><b>Indicator 4.1.1:</b> Extent to which national land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<p><b>Endorsement of GESI strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GESI strategy of the ADS has been endorsed by the MoAD on 20 June 2017</li> <li>The Nepali translation of the</li> </ul>	Target fully achieved	Endorsed GESI strategy	

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Finance, Budget Speech for the Fiscal Year 2017/2018 delivered on 29 May 2017

<p><b>Baseline:</b> 61 land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p><b>Planned Target:</b> The GESI strategy of the ADS endorsed by the MoAD by 2017</p>	<p>GESI strategy completed and submitted to the MoAD</p>			
<p><b>Indicator 4.1.2:</b> Number of knowledge products, evidence base and policy briefs on rural women's economic empowerment produced</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> No</p> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> Collection of at least 8 success cases of rural women farmers for advocacy and awareness raising on norm change also linking it with the engagement of men and boys</p>	<p><b>Collection of eight success cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JP RWEE in Nepal will report the progress against these indicators in the Programme Completion Report</li> </ul>	<p>Target not yet achieved. JP RWEE in Nepal is gathering necessary information from the field to document success cases. The final progress against this indicator will be reported in the Programme Completion Report</p>		
<p><b>Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women</b></p>				
<p><b>Indicator 4.2.1:</b> Number of countries where the "women's empowerment agriculture index" (WEAI) is piloted or mainstreamed in national statistics</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JP RWEE in Nepal does not have particular activities for this indicator and will not report against this indicator</li> </ul>			<p>The JP RWEE in Nepal does not have specific activities for this indicator</p>

<b>Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.</b>			
<p><b>Indicator 4.3.1:</b> Number of national/regional/global dialogues mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups (change over baseline)</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 26 (including women’s networks and socio-political associations)</p> <p><b>Planned Target (2017):</b> 2 more national-level dialogues held on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups</p>	<p><b>National-level dialogues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The first policy dialogue is scheduled for January 2018. The outcomes will be reported in the Programme Completion Report.</li> </ul>	<p>Target not yet achieved. One policy dialogue among relevant government officials, CSOs and development partners and one public hearing event with wider stakeholders have been planned for 2018. JP RWEE in Nepal will report the final progress against this indicators in the Programme Completion Report</p>	

### iii) A Specific Story

#### Problems/challenges faced:

Ram Kali Mahato belongs to a marginalized *Madhesi* community in Chandra Nagar Rural Municipality ward number eight in Sarlahi district. She is the Chairperson of the Laxmi Women Farmers' Group formed under the JP RWEE. Ram Kali is 34 years old and lives with her husband, one daughter and two sons. *Madhesi* communities live mainly in the southern plains of Nepal close to the border with India. Madhesis have long felt marginalized by the country's northern hill people. Like hill people, *Madhesis* are predominantly Hindus, though some are Muslims or Christians. The status of women within the *Madhesi* community is particularly backward. They often suffer from multiple forms of discrimination and experience the negative impacts of harmful cultural practices such as dowry and child marriage among others.

Before the intervention of the JP RWEE, Ram Kali was not familiar with modern agricultural techniques, although she was working hard and eager to learn. She and her family were dependent on subsistence agriculture. Their farming was limited to their small piece of land. Despite her contribution to the work, Ram Kali never received any recognition of her work on the farm by her family members. "I was doing all farming work but was never recognized as a farmer. JP RWEE helped me establish my identity as a rural woman farmer and I feel proud of it."

#### Programme Interventions/Results:

Through the JP RWEE activities, Ram Kali learned new agricultural techniques for commercial farming including nursery establishment, transplanting, harvesting and marketing, among others. The JP RWEE also provided her seeds and fertilizers, along with other essential resources. Ram Kali owns 0.5 hectares of land in her village. After her engagement in a series of trainings provided under the JP RWEE, she was encouraged to lease the land jointly with other rural women in her community for commercial farming. Ram Kali leased 1.33 hectares of land where she grows chili, tomato, cucumber, brinjal and bitter gourd. When she started her commercial vegetable farming, she only had NPR 30,000 (USD 294). However, the training and guidance she received from the JP RWEE, helped her to produce more vegetables in her farm. During the summer, she earned USD 2,455 after selling about 25 metric tons of vegetables. "I had only expected to earn USD 1,000. This was a miracle and I thank the JP RWEE for providing me knowledge, skills and confidence for commercial farming." Ram Kali has also been able to establish regular communication with the District Agriculture Development Office and District Livestock Services Office through the support of the JP RWEE from where she also receives useful guidance to improve the quality of her produce.

Ram Kali spends her earned income on various activities such as paying her children's school fees, paying her lease loans and fulfilling her household necessities. She says that the earnings she made were also made possible by the collaborative effort of her group members through collective farming and marketing, which they learned through the JP. "JP RWEE changed my life, I was a person who was detached from the external world. JP RWEE gave me an opportunity to interact with my community women and people to earn a livelihood. This has changed my relationship, both at home and in my community, as my voice is more heard these days. I am now confident that I can live my life without being dependent on my husband or any

other family members”.

### **III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable)**

No assessments/evaluations were carried out between May-December 2017.

### **IV. Programmatic Revisions (if applicable)**

N/A

### **V. Implementation and Coordination mechanisms**

#### **Implementation mechanism**

At the national level, the PSC was formed by the Government of Nepal during the first phase of the JP RWEE. The same PSC is being continued in the second phase of the programme. The PSC is chaired by the Secretary of the MoAD and includes representation of the joint secretaries of the MoAD, as well as other relevant sectoral ministries and departments (director generals), such as the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, MoFALD, National Planning Commission, Department of Livestock Services and Department of Agriculture.

The engagement of high level authorities in the PSC reveals that ownership has been taken by the government for the successful piloting of the ADS. The PSC includes women farmers' representation from the National Peasant Coalition in an effort to ensure inclusive participation. The role of the PSC is to provide strategic guidance for the implementation of the programme and monitor the effective programme implementation. The PSC meets once a year. The fifth PSC meeting was held on 30 October 2017 at the MoAD. This meeting approved the no-cost extension of the JP RWEE until December 2018.

The established Working Group (WG) of four UN agencies holds meeting regularly to provide guidance on programme implementation and to support the PSC. The WG is led by UN Women and meets regularly every month to discuss the progress of the JP RWEE and address emerging issues and challenges. The WG meetings were often conducted in less than a period of one month, based on the need and priority issues.

In 2017, WFP continued to provide technical inputs to programme implementation as well as contributed to the joint coordination, communication and monitoring of related activities. IFAD remained an institutional and technical partner of the JP RWEE in Nepal, but it did not take part in implementation and management of activities as agreed and proposed in the work plan for 2017.

#### **Coordination mechanism**

The JP RWEE participating agencies have been working closely with relevant local bodies and line agencies at the district level, such as DADO and Women and Children Office. The joint mission by the participating agencies in the three local units facilitated the development of

common understanding among the district-level stakeholders of the JP RWEE and enabled them to extend their support for the effective implementation of the programme.

## **VI. Resources**

A total of USD 400,000 was additionally received as the third tranche from the MPTF in May 2017. As of 31 December, 92.57 per cent (UN Women: USD 257,722 FAO: USD 112,592) of this amount has been disbursed.