



**ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF
RURAL WOMEN
BI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 30 JUNE 2019**

<p>Programme Title & Project Number</p> <p>Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal</p> <p>MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00092004</p>	<p>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p> <p>Nepal: Five Municipalities and five Rural Municipalities from two local units Sarlahi and Rautahat</p> <p>Sarlahi: Rural Municipalities: Chandranagar, Brahmpuri, Basawariya, and Dhankaul Municipalities: Bagmati and Barahathwa</p> <p>Rautahat: Rural Municipalities: Yamuna Mai Municipalities: Gujara, Brindaban, and Rajpur</p> <p>Direct beneficiaries: 2,333 rural women farmers Indirect beneficiaries: In this reporting period, 10,031 family members (estimated)¹ of the 2,333 rural women and 38 local elected representatives were reached.</p> <p>The strategic result is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</p>
<p>Participating Organization(s)</p> <p>FAO, IFAD, UN WOMEN, WFP</p>	<p>Implementing Partners</p> <p>Government: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) in close coordination with municipality and rural municipality at the local level</p> <p>Civil Society: Equal Access International (EAI), Support Activities for Poor Producers of Nepal (Sappros Nepal)</p>
<p>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total budget as per project document: USD 2,377,774</p> <p>MPTF Contribution: USD 2,377,774</p> <p>Government Contribution: Not applicable Other Contributions (donors): Not applicable</p>	<p>Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration: Five years (initial period)</p> <p>Start Date: 15 October 2012 (This is a starting date of the global JP. The JP RWEE in Nepal started in March 2015)</p> <p>End Date (Original): 31 October 2017 End Date (Extended): 31 December 2019</p>
<p>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</p> <p>Assessment/Review - if applicable please attach <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy</p>	<p>Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Name: Mio Yokota <input type="radio"/> Title: Programme Specialist/Unit Head <input type="radio"/> Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women <input type="radio"/> Email address: mio.yokota@unwomen.org

¹ The average size of a household in Nepal is 5.3 persons per household. The number of indirect beneficiaries was calculated by multiplying 2,333 direct beneficiaries by 5.3 and subtracting 2,333 (representing the number of JP’s direct beneficiaries)

Abbreviations

DTO	District Technical Officer
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JP RWEE	Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal: A Joint Pilot Contributing to Implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy in Nepal (JP RWEE)
MoALD	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)
Mt.	Metric Tons
NPR	Nepali Rupee
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Programme “Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Nepal: A Joint Pilot Contributing to Implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy in Nepal (JP RWEE)” aims to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights. The programme is currently being implemented in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts of Province 2 under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) of the Government of Nepal.

The JP RWEE implementation in Nepal started since 2015 in three districts (Sindhuli, Sarlahi and Rautahat) with 3,622 rural women farmers. Due to financial constraint, the geographic coverage was narrowed down to two districts (Sarlahi and Rautahat) in July 2018 with the approval of the work plan for 2018/2019. Currently, the programme is being implemented in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts covering 2,333 rural women farmers as beneficiaries. This biannual report summarizes key progress and achievements of the JP RWEE from 1 January to 30 June 2019.

Out of the total 11 programme output indicators, nine have either been achieved or are on track. Out of nine, three of the indicators have significantly exceeded their respective targets. Progress on the remaining two output indicators will be reported in the Annual Report of 2019. Out of seven outcome indicators, four indicators are either been achieved or are on progress. Out of four, one has exceeded the target. The remaining three indicators where the progress is not reported in this reporting period, will be reported in the Annual Report of 2019.

The key progress during this reporting period (January – June 2019) is as follows:

Key milestones of the JP by outcome:

Outcome 1: Improved food and nutrition security

- As of June 2019, 2,333 rural women farmers in two districts (1,142 in Sarlahi 1,191 in Rautahat) benefitted from JP’s technical and material support on kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production, which resulted in the improvement of the food and nutrition security of themselves and their family. The main results include:
 - The household vegetable production of 2,333 rural women farmers increased by 153 per cent per household, compared to the baseline (from 234 kg. in 2015) to 591 kg. per household in June 2019). The total harvest from January to June 2019 was 1,378 metric tons (mt.); and
 - The 2,333 rural women were able to improve the nutrition security at home by consuming more vegetables, which were home-grown with the support of the JP RWEE or purchased with income generated through the JP RWEE. In this reporting period, 413 mt. of vegetables were consumed by the 2,333 JP RWEE participants and their family members.
- During the reporting period, 93 rural women’s groups (97 per cent of 96 groups established) accumulated a total of Nepali Rupee (NPR) 4,214,120 (USD 37,642)² under

² USD 176,597 with the UN exchange rate for June 2019, NPR 111.95/USD

a group revolving fund scheme after facilitated role played by the JP RWEE team on the importance on the revolving fund scheme in a group. The fund is strategic intervention of JP to secure accessible fund for the improvement of the women farmers' agricultural production.

Outcome 2: Increased income to secure livelihoods

- A total of NPR 19,770,138 (USD 176,597) was earned by 1,805 JP RWEE women (77 per cent of the 2,333 women supported) in this reporting period. This was the consolidated sales income from a total of 965 mt. fresh vegetables produced by rural women farmers with the support of the JP RWEE. The remaining 528 rural women opted to use their harvests for family consumption.
- A short-term wage employment opportunity was created for 300 rural women farmers who are the members of cooperatives in the two districts with their participation in the construction of two market outlets. The JP coordinated with the local decision-makers at the construction sites for this initiative. Each woman will earn a daily wage of NPR 400 (USD 3.53) for 30 days of construction work. Their total earning will be reported once the construction work is completed.

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

- A total of 305 rural women and men learned about gender responsive patterns of behaviors during the reporting period. This is evidenced by 190 JP RWEE women farmers as change catalysts and 111 family members (49 women, 62 men) of those women. They include four volunteers (three JP RWEE women and one male family member) who also serve as field coordination volunteers. The 305 people reported during monthly monitoring and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) that they felt positive changes in their behaviors after learning methodologies and tools for the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) through a GALS Change Catalyst Workshops organized with technical support of the JP in two districts, respectively. Urmila Sah, a rural woman farmer from Laxmi Rural Women Farmer's Group in Babargunj, Sarlahi district mentioned that "I had heard from my elders that we have to be successful in our lives, however, did not know I have to plan certain things to achieve my goal to be successful. This is what I learnt from GALS workshop which I found useful."

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

- A total of 38 (22 women, 16 men) locally-elected leaders from Rautahat and Sarlahi districts enhanced their knowledge and understanding of the concept of the seven steps of local planning process and the importance of ensuring meaningful participation of women and other marginalized groups in the process during three-days workshops organized under the JP RWEE. They also acquired knowledge on the concept of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and the rationale and application of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in local level participatory planning processes.

I. Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

This section provides a narrative report on the outcomes and relevant outputs from January-June 2019 where progress was made during the reporting period.

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

As of June 2019, a total of 2,333 rural women farmers (Janajatis 27.65 per cent, Dalits 9.39 per cent, Muslims 7.37 per cent, Madhesis 45 per cent and Brahmins and Chhetris 10.59 per cent) in 2,333 households were able to increase their vegetable production by 153 per cent in Rautahat and Sarlahi districts. From a baseline of 234 kg. per household in 2015 the current vegetable production has now reached 591 kg. per household). During the reporting period, the JP RWEE continued to support rural women farmers to enhance their agriculture production capacity by providing on-farm spot trainings, and guidance to apply their acquired knowledge, skills and agricultural technologies into practice. The training covered relevant subjects, such as nursery establishment and soil and crop management. Exposure visits to vegetable production farms in Chitwan and Parsa districts were organized in May 2019 with 34 selected JP RWEE women to introduce women-friendly technologies and extend learning and sharing opportunities for them. The continued technical support and exposure visits were meant to help JP RWEE women farmers internalize their learnings and engage in vegetable production through their own initiative. An increase in agricultural production is expected to contribute to improved food and nutrition security of JP RWEE women and their family members as it also helps increase the consumption of vegetables by family members. Women themselves have expressed improved nutrition in-take before and after the implementation of the JP RWEE during the group discussions with them.

A total of 93 rural women's groups (97 per cent of 96 groups formed through the JP RWEE) in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts, established a group revolving fund scheme in their respective groups, securing group members' access to financial resources. During this reporting period, a total of NPR 4,214,120 (USD 37,642) was made available/accessible to a total of 2,258 (97 per cent of all direct beneficiaries) JP RWEE women farmers through the revolving fund scheme. The group finance scheme has enabled group members to buy agricultural inputs (e.g. seeds, chemical fertilizer, pesticides and agriculture tools) on time and other essential goods and services during the time of urgency. Having access to their own financial resource (a group revolving fund) enabled group members to avoid taking loans from local money lenders and financial institutions, which usually charge high interest rate, require lengthy and complicated application processes, and impose requisites that are usually difficult for women to comply with.

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

Since the start of the programme in 2015, a total of 2,333 rural women in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts, continued to benefit from increased access to resources and services, which are critical to the improvement of their agricultural production. These include vegetable seeds, irrigation schemes (motor-operating shallow tube wells with a pump set), agricultural machinery and equipment, and introduction of useful agricultural technologies. During this reporting period, 20 shallow tube-wells were installed in two districts (Rautahat 10, Sarlahi 10) with the technical and financial support from the JP RWEE. Around 60

hectares of land of approximately 20 rural women's groups (covering 200 rural women's households) will have easy access to agricultural water through the 20 tube wells.

In addition, 200 rural women in two districts are currently (end of June) participating in an intensive nutrition education training programme with the support of the JP RWEE focused on diversified food consumption patterns and dietary practices in households, and development of a nutritive profile of local foods. With technical and funding support from the joint programme, a training manual on nutrition of children and pregnant and lactating women was developed for the use of community facilitators/resource persons. The social behavior change communication (nutrition information, education and communication) materials have been developed/printed and are being distributed at the community level. Additional 200 rural women in two districts are receiving training on disaster preparedness and response planning, household level disaster preparedness and general awareness on saving lives in the event of disasters, including floods, cold wave and windstorm.

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

As of June 2019, 1,805 rural women farmers, or 77 per cent of the 2,333 women supported, earned a total of NPR 19,770,138 (USD 176,597) by selling vegetables in the market. The increased agricultural production, which was attained through the support of the JP, enabled the women to sell more vegetables in the nearby markets.

The remaining 528 rural women (23 per cent of the 2,333 direct beneficiaries) consumed the produced vegetables by themselves and their family members. In addition, the JP RWEE applied a "cash assistance for assets" scheme to construct a market/selling outlet in each of the two districts. A total of 300 rural women farmers have been employed for the construction of the two market outlets and each one will earn NPR 400 (USD 3.53) per day for a period of 30 days each. This daily wage rate is aligned with the wage standard determined by the local governments. The payment will be made to the 300 women once the construction work is completed in September. While this is a wage employment opportunity with limited number of women for a short-term, the JP RWEE's past experience in construction of community assets has shown that it can set a positive precedent in the community to demonstrate women's capacity in the construction work and, also, a practice of equal pay for women and men for the same work.

Rural women spend their earnings on different activities, such as house repair, lending money to friends and neighbors who are in need, expenses during festivals, and children's education. The rural women expressed that they feel more empowered and respected by family and community members when they are able to earn their own money.

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

Out of the 96 women farmers' groups established under the JP RWEE since 2015, 55 are now engaged in commercial vegetable production as of June 2019. Out of the 55 groups, 40 were supported by JP with marketing equipment, such as weighing machine and plastic crate, to handle and carry fresh vegetables safely to the market. The JP organized an interaction workshop in June 2019 in the JP districts to facilitate the establishment of vegetable marketing linkages among the 40 women farmers' groups, local wholesalers/vendors/collectors and retailers. During the exposure visit to Chitwan and Parsa districts, 34 rural women farmers (out of 55 commercial farming groups) were also able to

visit vegetable market centers and sell their surplus production to wholesalers and traders in the aforementioned districts.

In addition, the engineering design of two market outlets was completed during this reporting period. Two market outlets (one in each district) are currently being constructed under a “cash assistance for assets” scheme, which provides 300 rural women with wage employment opportunity for a period of 30 days per person. Market outlets will enable rural women farmers to conveniently collect and bring their surplus produce for sale. Two market outlets management committees (with 11 members each, all women) were formed in coordination with the respective municipalities. Pre-construction training were provided to the 22 members (all rural women) of the two market outlets’ management committees.

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

As mentioned above, a total of 300 rural women are now engaged in a short-term wage employment (around 30 days per person) through the “cash assistance for assets” scheme, for the construction of the market outlets in Rautahat and Sarlahi districts. In addition, in order to increase off-farm wage employment opportunities of rural women farmers, 24 selected JP RWEE women were able to enhance their capacity as pesticides retailers and took an examination to secure a license. The license will enable them to legitimately initiate agro-vet business through the establishment of agro-vet shop. The examination was administered by the Plant Quarantine and Pesticide Management Center under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Government of Nepal.³ The JP RWEE played a role in coordinating with the Government for this training and selecting women participants as per the required criteria of the training.

In addition to the JP RWEE women, two male family members of JP RWEE women were added to the training to satisfy the minimum quota required to hold the training. The Government’s training location was far and not convenient for the majority of the JP RWEE’s women farmers. Due to deeply-rooted traditional social norms, not all of JP RWEE candidates for the training were not allowed to travel by their family members. The two men were included in the training with a condition that they would utilize their knowledge and skills with their families and rural women’s groups in their respective districts.

Out of 26 farmers who took the licensure examination, nine (women 7 and men 2) passed the examination and received a license. They are in the process of opening an agro-vet shop in both districts. A lesson learned from this experience indicates that the selection of occupations and skills development for wage employment opportunities must be gender responsive. In the future, JP RWEE will take into account the current condition, status and challenges, which JP RWEE women may face when accessing those opportunities, including education levels, skills, understanding and mobility restrictions.

³ For more details, visit to: <http://www.npponepal.gov.np/>

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

Building on the results, achievements and lessons learned from Sahi Ho! advocacy campaign,⁴ follow-up interventions for community engagement in the two JP RWEE districts have been designed and the implementation is in progress. In response to an identified need to take a holistic and comprehensive approach to working with rural women farmers, the follow-up interventions focus specifically on women's leadership and participation in the agricultural sector. This intervention also engages rural women's families and aim to empower rural women farmers in the context of federalism. By focusing on the families and communities, as well as the women farmer themselves, the follow-up interventions aim to utilize women's economic empowerment as an entry point for building a more gender responsive environment for rural women farmers at home and communities in these two districts. The implementation of the follow-up interventions started on 1 April 2019 and progress will be reported in the Annual Report 2019.

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

A total of 13 women (Rautahat 5, and Sarlahi 8), out of 18 trained (Rautahat 9, Sarlahi 9), are now demonstrating capability to support, organize and facilitate weekly group discussions in their respective communities. They expressed their commitment to serve as active leaders throughout and beyond the joint programme. Their commitment has been evident in their active participation throughout the training period.

This initiative aims to support the implementation of follow up interventions to enhance the leadership skills of JP RWEE women and build social cohesion among them. They use participatory tools, such as discussions, role-plays, quiz and reflective dialogues. Out of the 18 women trained, five are yet to achieve full confidence in performing their community facilitation roles. While further encouragement will be extended to them through the JP, the remaining 13 trained field facilitators will continue to reach a total of 54 rural women farmers' groups, with 1,294 JP RWEE women members, in their respective districts.

The 18 women were selected from JP RWEE women farmers' groups and received a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) from 14 to 18 June. They were trained on group facilitation and mobilization skills and other useful tools, which would help them ensure quality and consistency of weekly sessions. Out of the 18 women who participated in the training, 12 participants belong to Janajati, four belong to Madhesi and two belong to Brahmin/Chhetri groups. The five-day training focused on facilitation skills, managing a group, life skills, gender equality, social cohesion, gender responsive budgets, local level planning process, local level advocacy and coalition building. Presentation, discussions, group work, role-play, games, and micro-teaching were used during the training to increase effectiveness and engagement among participants. All of the 18 participants who attended the training were enthusiastic and demonstrated a positive learning attitude.

⁴ UN Women launched a one-year action-oriented communication and advocacy campaign, Sahi Ho!, in 2018 to raise public awareness, increase political will, and encourage allocation of increased resources to support women's leadership roles and economic empowerment in Nepal. The campaign directly contributed to UN Women's three ongoing women's economic empowerment programmes namely the JP RWEE, Advancing Women's Economic Empowerment Programme and The Future We Want Project. The campaign was successfully completed on 31 March 2019, and was able to directly engage 11,629 people through the community-based activities and reached approximately 11 million individuals through the campaign activities and mass media/social media outreach.

To assess the progress of women on leadership and decision-making role in both private and public lives, a formative study was conducted by Equal Access International, a service provider under the JP RWEE in May and June 2019 to inform the design and implementation. Research questionnaires for the formative study was mainly based on a desk review of available literature on women's empowerment, women and agriculture, local level planning process and other related issues. Four group discussions (two in each district) with 45 rural women (Rautahat 29 and Sarlahi 16) were also conducted to get information about the existing condition, barriers and challenges faced by the rural women farmers in accessing services and resources available at the local level. In addition, information on budget allocation for women and/or agriculture related programme was collected from municipalities and ward offices in both districts. These discussions and information informed the design of the baseline study questionnaire.

A baseline study was separately conducted in June 2019. A total of eight enumerators (women four and men six) were mobilized for the study. They participated in a one-day training about tools of data collection, research ethics and a field plan. Each enumerator covered 12 rural women's groups and conducted a survey on the provided questionnaire. In each district, two focused group discussions were conducted with family members of the rural women in the JP intervention areas. The baseline study was completed on 30 June 2019. The outcomes of the baseline study will be shared in the next report.

Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into Producer Organizations, cooperatives and unions

One multipurpose cooperative was formed and registered in Sarlahi district in May 2019. Around 200 interested members of eight rural women farmer groups under the JP RWEE joined together and registered themselves as members of the cooperative. Through this registered cooperative, the women can now approach banks or financial institutions and avail of other incentive packages declared by the Government. This will support rural women to enhance their leadership role and increase their income for sustainable livelihood. The JP RWEE facilitated in bringing these women together and sensitizing them on the importance of the cooperative and how it will support them for enhanced leadership and sustainable livelihood.

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

A total of 1,294 rural women farmers and their families have been reached through weekly discussion sessions in their community. Participatory tools, such as reflective dialogues, discussions and role plays, are being used to enhance their life and leadership skills, including advocacy and coalition building skills. The group discussions cover information on GESI issues, local level planning process, allocation of resources for women farmers at local levels and how to tap such resources. The details of the group sessions will be included in the next report.

A total of 42 rural women from eight rural women's groups from two districts (four from each) and four community volunteers who were recruited under the JP RWEE (two from each district) enhanced their capacity on the GALS methodology and tools after attending a GALS Change Catalyst Workshop organized in February and May 2019, respectively in the two districts. As of this reporting period, a total of 305 rural women and men, comprising of 190 JP RWEE's rural women farmers as change catalysts and 111 family members (49

women, 62 men) of these women farmers were trained to apply the GALS methodology through a training workshop organized with technical support of the JP in two districts. They include four volunteers (three JP RWEE women and one male family member) who also serve as field coordination volunteers.

These 305 people shared that they are initiating positive qualitative changes in their behavior at the household level. Participants of the JP RWEE who were trained on the GALS methodology have started using the GALS methodology and its tools for behavior changes in the household, and shared what they learned with peers and their family members. The knowledge sharing have been also expanded to neighboring women's group members. This shows that an interest of women to learn the GALS methodology has increased and positive qualitative changes in their lives are beginning to occur. This was shared by rural women during the focus group discussions conducted by the JP RWEE team in both districts. Although significant changes are yet to be realized, the qualitative positive changes noticed at the initial level can be summarized as:

a) Individual behavior changes:

- 156 JP RWEE women have enhanced their level of confidence and started listening to each other on challenges women face in respective communities and do self-reflection.
- 165 JP RWEE women are bringing changes in their way of thinking and actions with increased understanding of their own roles. For example: envisioning about happy life, identifying appropriate actions to achieving visions and goals, identifying both opportunities available and challenges to be faced on the way to achieve vision; reducing expenses, which women and men see can be minimized; and involving in more income generation activities with increased role of men in unpaid household work.

b) Family dynamics:

- Trust among husband, wife and other members of the family has been strengthened in 10 families.
- Discussion and sharing among husband and wife increased and the voices of women were heard in 42 first generation GALS participants' families.
- Five rural women reported that traditional socio-cultural norms have started to change i.e., Muslim and Madhesi women, especially young daughters-in-law who were never out from their houses, have started to be exposed to other communities and initiated self-earning (by few non-JP RWEE's women) activities.
- Incidences of domestic violence in five families are reported to have decreased. Rural women reported that women started sharing about domestic violence experiences after they were engaged in the GALS process. Men who used to be violent with their wives started listening to their wives' voices at home.

c) Group dynamics:

- Number of meeting attendance and meaningful and quality of time provided to the meeting increased among all participants.
- Practice of mentoring of group members is being increased in all eight rural women's groups.

d) Economic changes:

- 17 rural women have opened bank account and increased their savings. Their accounts were opened in more than one bank on their own name and they deposited their savings.
- 143 rural women have increased income either initiating new economic activities or increasing the amount of income through more effort from ongoing economic activities like wage labor, growing vegetable, raising chickens, goat rearing, growing maize and others.

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

Outcome 4 focuses on developing a better understanding and adherence to GESI and GRB in the context of the current state restructuring process and supporting a process of creating a more gender responsive environment for rural women farmers. A gender responsive policy environment can be promoted through enhancing the knowledge and understanding of local elected leaders. The JP RWEE will orient these leaders on GESI and GRB. They will also discuss the importance of social inclusion and participation of rural women in the planning and implementation of local level programmes.

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

A total of 38 locally elected leaders (22 women, 16 men) in Rautahat and Sarlahi districts enhanced their knowledge on GESI and the application of GRB in local level participatory planning processes. In the post-assessment of the workshop, the participants shared that they have become knowledgeable on the local level planning process and they are convinced about the importance of women's participation in those processes. They participated in a three-day workshop conducted by JP from 18 to 20 June 2019. The objective of the workshop was to promote dialogues and sensitize local leaders to become champions of positive changes to address issues and challenges faced by rural women farmers. During the workshop, the participating local leaders discussed the need for gender-friendly policies and environment at the local level to support rural women farmers.

The training focused on developing better understanding of local leaders and their adherence to GESI and the application of GRB in the context of the current state restructuring process. It supported a process of creating a more gender responsive environment for rural women farmers, such as ensuring easy access to information; encouraging legal and social position of women through measures such as joint or individual title to land; informing women of their legal status and rights; and offering better mechanisms for education and vocational training opportunities. In addition, the participants were also informed about the seven steps of the planning process, significance of representation of women and minorities in the planning process, gender responsive budgeting and its importance, right to information, agriculture and women development services, as well as provisions of the local government.

The majority of the training participants shared that the training was very helpful for their day-to-day work. They recommended that the duration of the training be made longer in the future provide enough time for in-depth discussion the issues. The training was held while the local level planning process was already ongoing. Thus, some of the participants shared that the learning from the training could not be immediately utilized for this year's annual planning process. Nevertheless, everyone agreed to use their acquired knowledge to monitor the allocated budgets and programmes for this year to ensure the mainstreaming of GESI in

implementation. Follow-up meetings will be conducted with local leaders to capture the outcomes of the workshop.

Meanwhile, four local working groups (two in each district) were established to support the local level policy advocacy on priority issues of rural women farmers in Sarlahi and Rautahat. The rural women farmers' priority issues, which were identified during the Sahi Ho! Campaign were the allocation of public land for agriculture cooperatives to establish a selling stall and the provision of irrigation facilities among others. Members of the working groups are local leaders, JP RWEE women group members, group facilitators, representatives of civil society organizations, and other stakeholders. They will meet regularly to discuss priority issues on the empowerment of rural women farmers and the ways to address them.

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

With the submission to MPTF of the new workplan covering October 2019-June 2020 in this reporting period, the timing of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) endline survey was shifted to 2020.

II. Describe any delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned & best practices

Challenge:

The JP RWEE programme districts are highly flood-prone districts. In June 2019, many parts of programme intervention areas were inundated with flood during the monsoon season which adversely affected the smooth implementation of the programme.

The transfer of government officials particularly the relevant Joint Secretary and Under Secretary at the MoALD, affected scheduling a meeting of the Programme Steering Committee on time. The JP RWEE team is coordinating with the Ministry to schedule this meeting as early as possible.

Mitigation measure:

The JP RWEE provided the training to rural women farmers on disaster preparedness and response planning; household level disaster preparedness; and general awareness on saving lives during the event of disasters, including floods, cold wave and windstorm. This training will enable rural women to effectively handle prevention and response measures in case of future disasters.

Good practice under "delivering as one"

During this reporting period, all four UN agencies were actively engaged in the implementation of activities in the two districts. The GALS implementation was new for the three agencies. Thus, the identification of the participants and group was conducted in close coordination with the District Technical Officer (DTO) based in Rautahat district. Close consultation, sharing of detailed information (on group and individual initiatives, progress and changes) with the service providers of four participating agencies made coordination effective. In addition, regular coordination with mayors and deputy mayors in the municipalities where GALS were implemented were conducted as UN working as one. Progress on the implementation of initiatives were also shared among stakeholders as often as necessary.

The DTO, field-based facilitators and service providers of the JP RWEE worked closely in the planning and implementation of the activities to avoid duplication and maximize the effectiveness of joint activities in the field. They also observed and monitored each other's activities. The nutrition education training was implemented jointly by WFP and FAO in coordination with two other participating agencies (UN Women and IFAD), to ensuring that the JP UN participants are "delivering as one". There is strong buy-in and support of the local government to the implementation of the programme activities.

In the continuous efforts to carry out the resource mobilization at the country level, the JP RWEE team in Nepal submitted a proposal to the Government of Finland, through its embassy in Kathmandu, for the funding of Euro 3,000,000 on 24 May 2019. The submission the proposal was coordinated by the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office as part of the joint programming and resource mobilization initiative, which also demonstrated the positive recognition by the Resident Coordinator of the results achieved by the JP RWEE in Nepal. The JP RWEE team is yet to hear a result from the Government of Finland.

III. Qualitative assessment

No updates in this reporting period, will be added on the annual report 2019.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

	Achievement of Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 Improved food and nutrition security			
<p>Indicator 1.1: % 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 (2018 and 2019): 200 % increase in food production</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1:</p> <p>Total of 153 per cent increase in vegetable production (591 kg. per household) in Sarlahi and Rautahat districts by June 2019.</p> <p>The achievement is yet 47 per cent short of target. However, as of report submission, the JP RWEE has provided additional resources for the procurement of high-yielding seedlings, which will be planted in the next cropping season.</p>		Production data of targeted beneficiaries and field observation
<p>Indicator 1.2: Women’s dietary diversity or variety of households food consumption pattern</p> <p>Baseline:</p> <p>1.2.1 62.2% of HHs (with kitchen gardening) surveyed with sufficient quantity and frequency of vegetable consumption</p>	<p>Indicator 1.2.1 – 1.2.4:</p> <p>1.2.1: 413 mt. vegetable consumed by 2,333 household as of June 2019</p> <p>Note: The relevant data under 1.2.2, 1.2.3 and 1.2.4 was not collected during the reporting period. The data will be updated during the</p>		Vegetable consumption data of targeted beneficiaries and final evaluation report of the JP RWEE

<p>1.2.2 72.4% of HHs surveyed have minimum acceptable diet (MAD)</p> <p>1.2.3 Food Consumption Score of HHs surveyed is 6.73%</p> <p>1.2.4 Coping Strategy Index (CSI)</p> <p>Planned Target:</p> <p>1.2.1 50% increase by quantity and frequency in vegetable consumption of kitchen garden (2017)</p> <p>1.2.2 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,)</p> <p>1.2.3 80% of the total HHs supported improve Food Consumption Score (FCS)</p> <p>1.2.4 CSI (5,280 HHs in five years and 2,720 HHs as of December 2016)</p>	<p>final evaluation of the JP RWEE.</p>		
<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 farmers who have access to integrated agri0063culture/nutrition services Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,333 rural women farmers</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2: Number of rural women farmers who utilize improved agriculture production techniques Baseline: 287 households with 574 rural women farmers Planned Target: 2,333 women farmers</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.3: Number of rural women accessing community assets and agriculture infrastructure (including shored equipment and machineries) Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 700 rural women</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1.1: 2,333 rural women farmers have access to integrated agriculture/nutrition services through kitchen gardening and commercial vegetable production. (Target achieved)</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2: 2,333 rural women farmers have been utilizing improved agriculture production techniques (Target achieved)</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.3: 800 rural women in two districts have access to shared equipment and agricultural machineries such as power tillers, corn shellers, paddy/wheat harvesters and shallow tube well (Achieved and exceeded target)</p> <p>Note: 800 rural women of 40 groups have received, the marketing equipment, such as, plastic crate and weighing machine</p>		Field monitoring report
Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production			

Not applicable for reporting as the JP RWEE in Nepal does not target this output.			
Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.			
Indicator 2.1: Variation of women/women groups/cooperatives income generated from their sales markets Baseline: 49 rural women farmers Planned Target: 1,320 rural women generated income from their sales market	Indicator 2.1: 1,805 rural women earned a total of NPR 19,770,138 (USD 176,597) by selling vegetables (Achieved and exceeded target)		Fresh vegetable sales data of targeted rural women and field report
Indicator 2.2: Proportion of rural women with empowerment in the income domain of the “women’s empowerment agriculture index” WEAI (control over income) Baseline: IFAD to set the baseline Target: IFAD to set the target	Indicator 2.2: Not available. Note: Activities for this indicator will start in 2020. Note: This will initiate in the first quarter of 2020.		
Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products			
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of rural women farmers trained on entrepreneurial and /or vocational skills to have increased access to markets Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 50 rural women farmers	Indicator 2.1.1: No activity conducted during this reporting period. The progress will be updated in the Annual report 2019. However, out of 96 rural women farmers groups, 55 rural women farmers groups were supported to enhance their market linkages through an interaction workshop with local vendors/retailers/wholesalers.		Data of vegetable linkages development interaction workshop and exposure visit

Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities			
Indicator 2.2.1: Number of rural women farmers who entered wage employment with the support of the JP RWEE Baseline: 922 rural women Planned Target: 1,500 rural women	Indicator 2.2.1: A total of 300 rural women are earning NPR 400 (USD 3.53) per day (for a period of 30 days each) in both districts as a result of short-term wage employment in the construction of two market outlets.		Field monitoring report
Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.			
Indicator 3.1: % of women elected as representative at local level/community level committees Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 10 (2018-2019)	Indicator 3.1: Not available. Note: Data could not be collected due to heavy flood in June in both the districts. The progress will be reported in the Annual Report of 2019		
Indicator 3.2: % of producer’s organizations led by women	Indicator 3.2: Not available.		

<p>Baseline: 2.9 % of producers organizations led by women Planned Target: 5% increase (against the baseline) in rural women leadership in producer’s organizations (2018-2019)</p>	<p>Note: Data could not be collected due to heavy flood in June in both the districts. The progress will be reported in the Annual Report of 2019</p>		
<p>Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.1.1: Number of rural women farmers who participated in the local policy discussions and/or formal decision-making processes Baseline:0 Planned Target: 20 (2018-2019)</p>	<p>Indicator 3.1.1: No activity conducted during this reporting period. The progress will be updated in the Annual report 2019.</p>		
<p>Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.1.2: Number of rural women’s groups who join formally registered cooperatives or registered themselves in relevant local government offices Baseline: 14 rural women’s groups joined cooperatives Planned Target: 2 additional cooperatives joined by rural women (2018-2019)</p>	<p>Indicator 3.1.2: Eight women’s groups formed one cooperative and registered it.</p>		<p>Field monitoring report</p>
<p>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>			

Not applicable for reporting as the JP RWEE in Nepal does not target this output.			
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: Number of rural women who are aware of women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches Baseline: 5 rural women Planned Target: 1,500 rural women</p>	<p>Indicator 3.4.1: A total of 1,312 rural women (18 female facilitators and 1,294 rural women farmers) reached through weekly discussion sessions on women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches</p>		<p>Equal Access International’s report</p>
<p>Indicator 3.4.2: Number of families/households mobilized and increased their awareness and support rural women’s economic empowerment Baseline: 0 Target: 500 families/households of rural women farmers</p>	<p>Indicator 3.4.2: 190 households mobilized and increased their awareness and support for rural women’s economic empowerment</p>		<p>Field monitoring report</p>
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
<p>Indicator 4.1: % of government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programme benefitting rural women Baseline: 5% Planned Target: 20 % of Government budgets and donor funding (on budget) allocated to programme benefitting rural women</p>	<p>Indicator 4.1: 38.65 % for the fiscal year 2018/2019 (Achieved and exceeded target)</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.			
Indicator 4.1.1: Number of local government representatives/officials who enhanced their knowledge on issues of rural women farmers Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 30 (2018-2019)	Indicator 4.1.1: A total of 38 locally elected leaders (22 women, 16 men) from Rautahat and Sarlahi districts enhanced their knowledge on GESI and GRB in local level participatory planning processes (Achieved and exceeded target)		Equal Access International's report
Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women			
Indicator 4.2.1: Number of countries where the “women empowerment agriculture index” is piloted Baseline: IFAD to set the baseline Planned Target: IFAD to set the target	Indicator 4.2.1: Not available. Note: Activities for this indicator will start in the first quarter of 2020.		
Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.			
Not applicable for reporting as the JP RWEE in Nepal does not target this output.			