

**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN”  
ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT  
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2019**

<p align="center"><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Programme Title:</b> Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Liberia</li> <li>• <b>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:</b> 00092003</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</b></p> <p><i>Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Maryland, River Gee, and Sinoe Counties Republic of Liberia</i></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><b><u>2019 Beneficiaries:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct (5,777 beneficiaries; 5,657 women &amp; men: 120)</li> <li>- Indirect (10,200 beneficiaries; women: 9,690 &amp; men: 510)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Total Beneficiaries:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct (10,743 beneficiaries; women: 9,273 &amp; men: 1,470)</li> <li>- Indirect (42,600 beneficiaries; women: 38,245 &amp; men: 4,445)</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAO, IFAD, UNWOMEN, WFP</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Gender Children, and Social Protection</li> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture</li> <li>• Liberia Land Authority</li> <li>• National Rural Women’s Structure</li> <li>• Rights and Rice Foundation</li> <li>• National Adult Education Association of Liberia</li> <li>• Association of Women in Cross Border Trade</li> <li>• THINK Liberia</li> <li>• Farmers Assistance Programme</li> <li>• Liberia Marketing Association</li> <li>• EduCARE Liberia</li> <li>• Agro-Machinery Company</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: US\$ 800,000</p> <p>MPTF Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>by Agency (if applicable)</i></li> </ul> <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women (US\$ 300,000)</li> <li>• FAO (US\$ 250,000)</li> <li>• WFP (US\$ 250,000)</li> </ul> <p>Government Contribution (None)</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors)</p>	<p align="center"><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration 8 years</p> <p>Start Date: 15 10 2012</p> <p>End Date: 31 December 2021, subject to subsequent signing the Addendum</p>

(None)
<b>TOTAL: <u>US\$ 800,000</u></b>
<b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b>
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>

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## List of Acronyms

AfT	-	Agenda for Transformation
AWICBT	-	Association of Women in Cross Border Trade
BDS	-	Business Development Skills
CACs	-	County Agriculture Coordinators
CGRs	-	Community Grain Reserves
CSR	-	Corporate Social Responsibility
DAOs	-	District Agriculture Officers
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization
FGD	-	Focus Group's Discussions
FSN	-	Food Security and Nutrition
GEWE	-	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GCCs	-	Gender County Coordinators
GRB	-	Gender Responsive Budgeting
GRP	-	Gender Responsive Planning
JP	-	Joint Program
KII	-	Key Informants Interviews
MoA	-	Ministry of Agriculture
MoCI	-	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MoE	-	Ministry of Education
MoGCSP	-	Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection
MOU	-	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	-	Metric Tone
LD	-	Liberian Dollar
LMA	-	Liberia Marketing Association
LNRWS	-	Liberia Nation Rural Women Structure
JPRWEE	-	Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment
PAPD	-	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
SAA	-	Standard Administrative Arrangement
SGBV	-	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SRH	-	Sexual and Reproductive Health
UNCT	-	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF	-	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population
UN-Women	-	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
VOSIEDA	-	Volunteers to Support International Effort in Developing Africa
VSLA	-	Village Savings and Loan Association
WFP	-	World Food Programme

# NARRATIVE REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2019 annual progress report under the JP RWEE ‘Accelerating Progress toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women’ in Liberia (JP RWEE) covers the period from January to December 2019. This progress report represents a consolidation of information collected from participating UN agencies, namely UN Women, FAO and WFP; the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); and a host of implementing partners from Civil Society submitted to the JP RWEE National Coordinator based in the UN Women Liberia Country Office.

The National Technical Advisory Committee represented by technicians from participating UN agencies, Government Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs) and Civil Society has been providing the National Joint Steering Committee (Co-chaired by MGCSP and the United Nations Resident Coordinator) with a complete summary of key achievements and challenges associated with the implementation of the country programme for the period under programmatic review.

The JP RWEE is unique in that each UN agency in Liberia brings a distinct comparative advantage to programming. In this context, there is FAO’s specialist technical knowledge and policy assistance on agriculture and food security; WFP’s food assistance innovations and resilience building for food insecure populations and groups affected by shocks; and UN Women’s technical knowledge on women’s economic empowerment, its strong linkage with the women’s movement, and its leadership for gender equality and women’s empowerment within the UN System. By bringing together their know-how, resources, experiences and constituencies, the three UN agencies are greatly enhancing the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of their work in delivering as one UN in the context of rural women economic empowerment.

### **Key results include:**

636 new beneficiaries (576 women and 60 men) and their households have improved food and nutrition security having invested in 19.06 hectares of farmland for producing rice and cassava. These beneficiaries are transforming rice and cassava into high quality products. Overall, 3,186 women beneficiaries have a better presentation of their produced products as a result of access to labor-saving technologies. 2,141 of these women beneficiaries are engaged in nutrition-sensitive agriculture at the community level.

Over 3,756 women beneficiaries are accessing grain reserves that are better organized and managing loan issuance and repayment for food commodities provided. A total of 5,657 women beneficiaries have increased income in the management of their businesses through access to 10 newly established Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and 140 existing VSLA groups.

500 young women beneficiaries are participating in decision-making processes at the household and community levels and are contributing financially to their households. The retention rate of 379 of these 500 young women beneficiaries has increased by over 85% in 13 rural public schools.

Over 749 women beneficiaries are investing in mobile banking as an innovative and safe way of saving their money. Of this number, 10 new women are accessing employment opportunities with Orange Liberia as mobile money agents that are facilitating financial transaction.

12 key Liberian civil society networks are now playing a major advocacy role for the implementation of the Land Rights Act. In addition, 2,247 rural women have increased knowledge on their land rights and are demanding respect of their rights in community management of land and other natural resources. Women and youth are raising massive awareness about land tenure and land use rights and engaging other CSOs and the Liberia Land Authority to protect their customary land rights to promote women’s equal access to and ownership of land. Five local media institutions are engaged in gender-sensitive awareness raising for local communities on the new Land Law.

Over 5,657 rural women and adolescent girls are practicing safe sex in order to prevent HIV and AIDS, STIs and unwanted pregnancies.

## I. Purpose

The JP RWEE continues to provide strategic support to the Government of Liberia through the MoA and the MoGCSP in furtherance of the Government's finalization and implementation of its poverty reduction strategy, the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD 2019 - 2023) for achieving meaningful economic growth for empowering the lives of women and girls in rural areas through food and nutrition security, access to increased income to sustain livelihoods, better participation and leadership with rural women and adolescent girls and lastly a vibrant gender-responsive policy environment for the social and economic empowerment of rural women and girls.

The JP RWEE outcomes and outputs remain fully aligned with the current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2020 - 2024), with particular reference to Outcome II: By 2024, "Liberia has sustained, diversified and inclusive economic growth driven by investments in agriculture, food security and job creation and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters"; and Outcome IV: "By 2024, people in Liberia especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, benefit from strengthened institutions that are more effective, accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender responsive in the delivery of essential services at the national and sub-national levels"; the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD 2019 - 2023), with reference to related national priorities and goals which include: 'Inclusive, diversified economic growth, livelihoods, agricultural productivity, food security, building resilience against shocks and disasters'; and "A reformed public sector exhibiting improved fiscal discipline and inclusive service delivery, and a rebalance in the concentration of economic and political activities'.

The JP RWEE in Liberia has considered at least eleven (11) strategic global outputs under the global JP RWEE 's implementation framework for ensuring compliance. These prioritized outputs include:

- 1) **Output 1.1:** *Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security.*
- 2) **Output 1.2:** *Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production.*
- 3) **Output 2.1:** *Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products.*
- 4) **Output 2.2:** *Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities.*
- 5) **Output 3.1:** *Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to take an active part in local governance systems.*
- 6) **Output 3.2:** *Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions.*
- 7) **Output 3.3:** *Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels.*
- 8) **Output 3.4:** *Rural women, including young women, have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.*
- 9) **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.*
- 10) **Output 4.2:** *Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women.*
- 11) **Output 4.3:** *An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women's priorities in regional and global policy processes.*

The JP RWEE continues to work to support Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) priorities and commitments that have been identified and led by national government under its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD 2019 – 2023) implementation. It continues to ensure that all relevant and key stakeholders and partners from national government, the UN System, public and private sectors are involved in strategic planning and decision-making processes for strengthening implementation and maximizing results. The JP RWEE is continuing to build on existing development frameworks (e.g. National Agriculture Policy, National Gender Policy, National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, National Trade Policy, National Land Rights Policy, the Land Rights Act, etc.) and strategies for ensuring that women and girls in rural areas are economically and socially empowered.

The JP RWEE remains committed to strengthening the effectiveness of financial support through coordination and harmonization of cross-cutting Gender interventions (e.g. Liberia Flagship Programme on Climate-smart Agriculture, and UN

Women's BuyFromWomen Initiative.<sup>1</sup> These programmes and projects are closely aligned with the JP RWEE's national priorities and will buttress ongoing efforts for the economic empowerment of rural women under the oversight of the JP RWEE National Joint Steering Committee (JSC). This ensures that the JP RWEE's funding, operations and implementation modalities provide for full transparency and accountability, that it involves an active National JSC and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) including for the timely submission of reports to that committee and other relevant stakeholders and partners (e.g. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, etc.) In this context, there has been a reinforcement of the gains and results of the JP RWEE's implementation. Moreover, the JP RWEE's framework and lessons learnt have assisted in making informed decision in the drafting and finalization of the UNSDCF 2020 – 2024 which aligns closely with national government's PAPD 2019 - 2023. The JP RWEE has been identified as one of the flagships of the UNSDCF 2020 – 2024.

The JP RWEE National TAC members from UN Women, FAO and WFP continue to be active in UNSDCF and PAPD sector meetings (e.g. education, agriculture, infrastructure/ICT, etc.)

## **II. Results**

From 1 January to 31 December 2019, the JP RWEE delivered on the following results:

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

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

- The JP RWEE has 636 beneficiaries (women 576 and men 60) who are benefitting from the use of high-quality seeds, tools and machineries for investing in agriculture. As a result, there has been increased productivity with these women as they and their households now have at least 24 MT of rice that is sufficient for both consumption and sale, with the latter ensuring adequate income through their respective agri-businesses and investment of proceeds from sale into their respective Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). Access to rice for consumption, during the farming season, has been adequate in terms of its contribution to dietary intake for better nutrition.
- At least 150 beneficiaries (women 128 and men 22) are practicing improved techniques in cassava production for increased yield. In addition, over 60 women beneficiaries in two rural communities in Margibi are reporting increased income through investing in cassava value addition (e.g. fufu, farina and gari); and 12 satellite communities with over 300 inhabitants have preferential access to purchase and consume varieties of these products being made from cassava.
- The construction of five poultry units (processing and storing) are being concluded for women's access to protein and dietary diversification for improved nutrition security. In addition, a five-hectare model garden farm is producing high-valued vegetables, fish, meat and eggs units for sale at local markets. The garden contains a borehole well for solar pumped irrigation system.
- Women beneficiaries are also producing staple food crops which include rice and cassava as a result of investing in 19.06 hectares of the planned 22 hectares (86.6%) of farmland. In addition, approximately 1.82 MT out of the planned 60 MT (3.03%) of food commodities were distributed as labor incentives to targeted farming communities involved in lowland rice cultivation in Grand Bassa and Maryland Counties.<sup>2</sup>

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

- Over 50 women leaders are serving as community-based facilitators providing trainings to other women farmers on both cassava and rice value chains development. Women beneficiaries have increased knowledge and skills in

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/3/buy-from-women-platform-brochure>

<sup>2</sup> Other communities in Margibi County have not yet received food commodities as incentive for their labor due to a delay in the registration process for beneficiaries via WFP's use of its SCOPE online platform for monitoring and tracking under the programme.

agricultural value chains development (e.g. quality cassava flour, gari, cassava chips, cassava pasta, cassava soap, rice flour, puffed rice, gluten free icing sugar).

- A supply of manufacturing equipment has been provided to facilitate the production of cassava and rice products as well as a better presentation of these products. These include: five rice mills, five Cassava Processors, five winnowers, one de-stoner, and five generators for equipment; and for labor-saving technologies: two power tillers, and assorted hand tools. Oretha Quito, a cross border trader and member of the National Rural Women Structure said, *“The programme has given us the knowledge and skills to use cassava and banana slicers, oil separators, fryers with auto-control burner, and flavoring machines to produce chips from cassava and plantain for sale in local markets. This is bringing in money that we can use to strengthen or savings in the VSLAs”*
- Five Community Grain Reserves (CGRs) in Margibi, Grand Bassa, Maryland, Sinoe and River Gee Counties have continued to be used in protecting women farmers to fill their lean season food gap (e.g. rice) and as a mitigation against the abrupt rise in the price of rice at the national and sub-national levels. Women beneficiaries accessing the CGRs are contributing 7% of their income to the management of the reserve and the maintenance of processing equipment. This also includes the use of their Social Fund, under their respective VSLAs, to finance maintenance and repair costs. Thus, the CGR remain strategic to strengthening the resilience of poor female-headed households to seasonal food insecurity especially during this lean season. To further strengthen the capacity of CGRs, the JP RWEE invested in the installation of additional rice milling machines in two CGRs in Grand Bassa and Maryland Counties.
- Over 3,186 rural women have the capacity and knowledge to utilize and manage labor-saving technologies (such as power tiller and assorted hand tools) in the CGRs. In addition, over 2,141 of these rural women are engaged in nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Women are growing food products that contribute to Carbohydrates (e.g. cassava, corn, potatoes, etc.); Protein (e.g. beans, etc.); and Vegetables (e.g. eggplant, Bitterballs, okra, cabbage, watermelons, etc.)
- In total, more than 3,756 rural women and men are accessing CGRs and agro processing machineries for improved food security and nutrition across the intervention counties.

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

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

- Over 5,657 rural women have experience increased income-generation as a result of accessing business development support, basic financial record keeping, trading of excesses from both cassava and rice value chains development and/or production.
- The management committees of the five CGRS are better organized and are effectively managing loan issuance and repayment for food commodities provided as revolving stock. This has been achieved by providing the five CGR Management Committees with capacity building in organizational development and loan management trainings supported by the JP RWEE.
- Farming groups comprising of approximately 273 rural women are better organizing and managing their respective agri-businesses (e.g. rice and cassava farm-to-market initiatives, as food producers, etc.) for increased income and improved livelihood. These women have access to sustainable rural credit through 10 newly established agriculture based VSLAs. In addition, 140 VSLA groups (comprising 420 rural women entrepreneurs) were formed with women entrepreneurs who are trading agriculture produce at local level. These are groups of 20 - 30 women who are saving together and are taking out from those savings. These VSLAs have proven to be self-sustaining and self-managed groups. They have been provided with skills training in business development and financial literacy including the provision of start-up capital during their establishment.

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

- Ten rural women are accessing employment opportunities in the private sector (with companies such as Orange) as mobile money agents, providing mobile money services in 10 local markets across Montserrado county. These

agents are reaching over 3,000 registered customers. In addition, these mobile money agents have expanded their investment in ICT (e.g. purchase of smartphones for facilitating SIM card registration, mobile money transactions, etc.) as a result of having received over LD\$ 100,000 (US\$ 500) each in financial support from the JP RWEE in collaboration with Orange. Moreover, 749 women entrepreneurs from 35 communities across Montserrado and Margibi counties have increased capacity and skills to operate mobile money on their phones due to the provision of trainings in Orange Money supported by Orange Liberia and mentorship from women mobile money agents. 749 new market women and 19 men who are market superintendents with the Liberia marketing Association are investing in mobile banking as an innovative and safe way of saving money. This includes also for their use in making purchases from vendors for sale in local markets.

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

***Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance.***

- With 500 young women from Margibi, Bassa, Sinoe, River Gee and Maryland Counties gaining new skills, competences and organizational capacities through adult literacy, vocational skills training, and awareness raising on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Menstrual Hygiene Management, there has been an increased participation of women in socio-economic activities. Young women and adolescent girls' access to new skills has also enhanced their decision-making skills and have allow them to earn increased respect within and outside their households and communities.
- The retention rate of over 379 young women accessing secondary education in 13 rural public schools in Margibi, Bassa, Sinoe, River Gee and Maryland Counties has increased by over 85% as a result of beneficiaries having accessed to school supplies (e.g. calculators, copybooks, book bags, pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, rules, etc.) provided by the programme.
- Over 367 new targeted rural women gained membership with land committees and are actively participating in decision-making on community management of land and other natural resources at local level. This can be attributed to the JP RWEE's increased awareness raising on women's land rights, strengthened leadership and literacy skills through access to skills building activities.

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

- Over 2,247 rural women in targeted communities have gained the knowledge and capacity to demand respect of their rights in community management of land and other natural resources. Communities including women and youth are empowered, raising massive awareness on land tenure and land use rights for women, and engaging other CSOs and the Liberia Land Authority to protect their customary land rights to promote women's equal access to and ownership of land. This has been achieved through innovative outreach and sensitization methods including the reactivation of the Land Desk within the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection which also linked closely with women's peace building forums to deliver tailored sensitization materials to community women on specific natural resource, environment and land issues that affect their livelihoods and the future of their communities.
- 75 national leaders of the National Rural Women Structure and 45 women national leaders of the Liberia Marketing Association have increased knowledge about the new Land Law and the gender commitments therein as it relates to land ownership. These women leaders are also raising awareness at district and community level with other rural women on the new Land Law. A factsheet that was developed along with key basic messages for dissemination of the new Land Law are two knowledge products that have used for awareness raising on women's land rights.
- Five local media institutions from Margibi, Grand Bassa, Maryland, Sinoe and River Gee Counties are engaged in gender-sensitive awareness raising for local communities and trainings for other local journalists on the new Land Law. The programme has brought together 25 persons (12 men, 13 women) from both print and electronic media in this endeavor.

- Over 5,657 rural women have increased awareness on practical skills to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS and other STIs. This has been achieved as a result of the strategic partnership with the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), where it over 15,000 pieces of condoms were distributed during HIV/AIDS prevention awareness raising across Montserrado, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties.
- More than 43 community-based facilitators (17 women and 26 men) are building the capacity of S/GBV survivors, women with disability, women home-keepers, and community leaders to prevent and respond to cases of HIV/AIDS including other STIs at the community level.

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

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

- 12 key Liberian civil society networks are now playing a major advocacy role for the implementation of the Land Rights Act. The latter protects and promotes women's equal rights to land, and equal participation in governance.
- Major actors such as the House Committee on Land, the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) and other Government and non-governmental bodies are collaborating and promoting women's land ownership. The JP RWEE was able to establish clear linkages with actors in the land sector working on gender and women land rights. Actors here include OXFAM, the Swedish NGO Forum Syd, WONGOSOL, Land Registration Authority amongst others. In addition, major policy issues around women land rights have been raised and advocated for by policy makers in government. This has been achieved through strategic dialogues on women's land rights within the context of the Land Rights Act with support from the CSOs Working Group on Land.

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

- A national conference on the Land Rights Act (Law) was organized under the banner: 'One Law, One Message.' The purpose of the conference was to jointly review existing gender-sensitive key messages that were developed by the different actors including the LLA for nation-wide awareness with rural women on the new Land Law.
- A national dialogue on women's land rights and the national policy dialogue on the Land Rights Act were convened in Liberia. Findings from a mapping of existing gender sensitive instruments and policies that support women land rights provided useful information that helped inform the discussion points of both dialogues. Both forums were aimed at advocating with government and its partners for enforcing the gender responsive implementation of the Liberia's Land Rights Act.

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

***Challenges***

The most difficult aspect of joint programming was establishing clear targeting and delivering as one in the same communities. The three UN agencies could not agree in certain instances (due to bad road networks as some participating agencies could not send their vehicles in affected areas due to high maintenance and repair costs with vehicles traveling to such areas) but later agreed to in support of the harmonization of the programme's approach for ensuring increased impact of interventions in the lives of women and youth at all levels.

It should also be noted here that early rainfall served as an impediment for timely preparation of land; the fields were flooded as a result of the heavy down pour, beneficiaries' willingness to work under the rain was also a serious challenge. The challenge with flooding was mitigated through proper water management as requested by the programme agriculture technicians from FAO and WFP.

Another key challenge was access to land for agriculture production. For example, in Juah Town, Siahn and Gbarzegiah in Grand Bassa County, beneficiaries were deprived of land access. UN Women worked with the Liberia Land Authority and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to ensure that women were fully exercising their land rights for agriculture as provisioned in the Land Rights Act that is now law.

Internal processes within the participating UN agencies proved challenging at times. For example, the bureaucracy with procurement and contracting were two key issues causing delays with programme implementation. However, the UN Resident Coordinator intervened on accelerating delivery and pushed the Heads of Agencies from FAO, WFP and UN Women to deliver as planned. The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection also played a role in urging the participating UN agencies to accelerate implementation processes.

Inaccessibility to project sites due to very bad road conditions affected monitoring and technical assistance field missions. However, the local JP RWEE TAC agreed to utilize the local Ministry of Agriculture Extension Workers and the Gender County Coordinators to support monitoring and supervision efforts at the district and community levels, through a participatory approach, that easily resolved the issue of inaccessibility.

### ***Lessons Learned***

Working with rural women on their land rights has proven to be successful as a result of the new land law that is being implemented in Liberia. Women are increasingly exercising their land rights at the community level. A practical example is the fact that rural women are requesting that their spouses have their names included on land deeds or land certificates to show joint ownership.

Collaboration with Government, UN system, civil society and private sector amongst others has been at the core of the programme. The programme's collaboration with the LLA and the CSOs Working Group on Land Rights intensified in the wake of partner's technical assistance in developing a standardized message for nationwide dissemination of the new Land Law. This has resulted in a harmonized approach to promoting women's land rights at the national and sub-national levels.

The programme is breaking new grounds by bringing women into the digital space which hitherto appeared to be reserved for men in Liberia. Women are becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of the digital world for their economic and social empowerment and are expanding their investments in this sector with mobile money.

2019 stand-alone and joint monitoring of the programme's interventions provided a great insight in understanding the processes surrounding the programme's status in terms of delivery. The programme utilized careful observation, interviews and focus group discussions during monitoring missions during the reporting period. Thus, the knowledge acquired assisted the programme in making informed decisions about the rollout of activities (e.g. skills building, advocacy and awareness raising, rural credit, etc.) at all levels. In addition, the knowledge gained from the programme has accelerated efforts in advancing the development of key knowledge products (e.g. factsheet on land rights, simplified key messages on women land rights; training curriculum on ICT - mobile money for use by women, etc.)

The successful engagement with men as gender advocates has assisted in achieving transformative changes against stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination and inequality in Liberia. For examples, two strategic approaches here have been through awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns (e.g. UN Women's HeForShe and that of participatory community dialogues facilitated by WFP in collaboration with FAO and UN Women). In addition, building synergies with other programmes are ensuring the increased participation of men and boys as agents of change in support of women's empowerment at the local level.

### ***Good Practices***

One good practice identified that made coordination work better was the fact that the JP RWEE country programme continued to utilize the strategy of building synergies with other similar ongoing programmes (e.g. UN Women's Buy from Women Initiative, JP on SGBV, Spotlight Initiative, etc.) for delivering results. These programmes and projects are being implemented in several JP RWEE targeted areas.

The JP RWEE remains flexible in its approach to programming as it is also supporting awareness raising on S/GBV prevention, management and response; HIV and AIDS prevention and management; Sexual and Reproductive Health education and services; and curricula development, etc.

There has been and continues to be a participatory approach to community mobilization, recruitment and implementation of gender-sensitive interventions which have played and continues to play a key role in guaranteeing increased ownership of the programme at the community level.

Mentoring rural women has been a good practice in terms of helping them implement what is being taught in the literacy and business skills training sessions. It provides the community-based facilitators the opportunity to engage the beneficiaries on a one-on-one basis, giving them the opportunity to ask specific questions related to their business investments.

The programme is continuing to expand its work on digital literacy by ensuring that innovation and ICTs offer exciting opportunities to unlock the business potential of traditionally marginalized and isolated women farmers. This will be achieved by:

- Providing easy, mobile-enabled access to climate-smart agricultural information and services.
- Building a digital track record and credit profile to increase access to finance.
- Connecting women farmers to national supply chains to improve access to markets.

The programme continues to focus on ensuring joint delivery of a comprehensive, sequenced ‘package’ of core interventions (e.g. access to productive assets, new technologies, education, information and services, employment and market opportunities including leadership and decision-making skills) for addressing the state of women’s economic and social disempowerment. In this context, rural women’s increased access to economic empowerment interventions has resulted in decreased instances of S/GBV in targeted communities at the household and community levels. These women have been economically and socially empowered and are no longer in a vulnerable state as they now have economic security, thus, giving them increased self-confidence to speak out.

- **Qualitative assessment:**

Monitoring and assessment field missions were instrumental in gathering information on the impact of the JP RWEE on women, their families and the target communities. In addition, stakeholders’ consultations also played a key part in ascertaining the level of impact experienced at national and sub-national levels. As of December 2019, the JP RWEE was able to document the following:

- In 2019, a new strategic partnership was forged with Orange Liberia on connecting women small-holder farmers to information, finance and markets via the use of ICT (e.g. the integration of Orange SMS Messaging Service and Orange Money with the Buy from Women Enterprise Platform). This is expected to facilitate over 700 women small-holder farmers’ access to climate-smart agricultural information and services; a digital track record and credit profile to increase access to finance; and connection of women farmers to supply chains to improve access to markets in 2020 and beyond.
- Rural women, their families and the target communities have acknowledged and recognized how the JP RWEE is attempting to address inequalities in ownership of, access to and control of livelihoods assets negatively affecting their food production and food security at the community level. For example, women beneficiaries have increased knowledge on their land rights for agricultural production and are exercising those rights for improving their food and nutrition security. This information was obtained from observations, interviews and focus groups discussions that were held with women, men and their communities at large.
- In rural communities, women beneficiaries are preparing foods that are crucial to the increase of dietary diversity of their households. They are ensuring that access to food within the household is no longer determined by their cultural practices nor the power relationships within the family. Women now state that they maintain nutritional intake equally as men do at the household level.
- Men have also recognized the importance of serving as male champions and role models in advocating for Ending Violence Against Women and Women’s Economic Empowerment at the household and community levels. Men are standing by women during times of crisis (e.g. poor harvest) wherein they are jointly working with the women in targeted communities to address the issue of poor harvest or crop failure during the harvest season regardless of cultural traditions that in some instances have made it easier for men to leave their farms in search of employment especially concession areas, thus neglecting their families and communities.
- Rural women, their families and communities have also appreciated the value of CGRs and have taken ownership of all five structures and their facilities built for protecting farmers from grain (e.g. rice) production shortfalls and for

strengthening the resilience of poor households to seasonal food insecurity, economic shocks and natural disasters in Liberia. Women farmers are managing, maintaining and repairing labor-saving technologies situated in storage facilities for increasing production and access to markets.

- Rural women are in possession of bank books and VSLA booklets which indicates they are accessing financial services from banks and VSLAs. These also include for women who are utilizing Orange Money (mobile money) for mobile banking and other financial transactions.
- There are better organized businesses being run by women at the community level. These businesses are registered and recognized by communities and local authorities and have in some instances created employment opportunities for other women.
- The number of women entrepreneurs using mobile phones to transact business has increased with the use of Orange Money (i.e. mobile money). As of December 31, 2019, 749 new women beneficiaries and 19 men market superintendents who own feature phones and/or smartphones were actively utilizing mobile banking as an innovative and safe approach to saving money where there are no commercial banks (e.g. parts of Sinoe, Maryland and River Gee counties).
- Local Land Committees at the county level have women members who have increased knowledge and the capacity to demand respect of their rights in community management of land and other natural resources. These women are actively participating and making decisions as it relates to women's land rights in these committees.
- Young women are vocal about HIV/AIDS at the community level and are speaking about the danger of the infection and how it can be prevented. In addition, young women and adolescent girls are accessing SRH services and are practicing family planning for preventing unwanted pregnancies. The communities have recognized the JP RWEE's efforts in creating a more supportive community for women and adolescent girls to exercise their rights.

In Liberia, the JP RWEE has three of the four participating UN agencies executing Programme implementation, namely FAO, WFP and UN Women since IFAD does not have a country office in Liberia. UN Women serves as the lead UN agency while FAO and WFP serve as participating UN agencies. UN Women chairs the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC), also serving a secretariat. There is a National Joint Steering Committee (NJSC), co-chaired by the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the United Nations through the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office. Hence, the Minister of Gender and the UN Resident Coordinator both co-chair the NJSC for ensuring that the JP RWEE is 'Delivering as One.' The latter is also represented by the Heads of Agencies from FAO, WFP and UN Women including for heads of government ministries, agencies and commissions. This has sustained institutional memory and enhanced coordination and collaboration between the participating UN agencies and the GoL for delivering on key results.

In addition, the JP RWEE interventions have built in coherent and consistent organizational development framework to ensure that rural women groups (e.g. Liberia National Rural Women Structure, Association of Women in Cross Border Trade, Liberia Marketing Association, etc.) benefiting from the JP RWEE are supported to strengthen and institutionalize their structures. It is hoped that at the end of the JP RWEE implementation women would have accumulated enough organizational and human capital as well as savings and access to sustainable micro-finance services to sustain their operation on a profitable basis. Interventions to strengthen the Government of Liberia (GoL) policy formulation systems and coordination mechanisms are all happening within the broader context of the different ongoing reform processes (i.e. civil service, decentralization, labour, etc.) and shall help to ensure the sustainability of the achievements made within the public service reforms particularly with regards to ensuring gender mainstreaming capacity within the GoL public service as a whole and the capacity of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to lead government's efforts in addressing gender inequalities throughout government action.

The programme has selected interventions in strategic sectors (e.g. agriculture, trade, education, etc.) where both rural women and men have already a comparative advantage and where there is potential for growth and value addition through better marketing, quality services, improved standards and access to sustainable financing. The employment opportunities to be created should be a win-win situation. Overall, the JP RWEE Steering Committee (JPSC) will be responsible to monitor and adapt interventions and strategies to respond to any changes that may affect the sustainability of interventions.

The JP RWEE is focused on ‘Delivering as One’ for ensuring a swift and more effective development operations and to accelerate progress to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as a UN development system that delivers more and better for the poorest and most disadvantaged Liberians. The JP RWEE continues to serve as model for other UN agencies in implementing and promoting the objectives of ‘Delivering as One’ UN in conjunction with Liberia’s PAPD 2019 - 2023. It is committed to the ‘One UN’ process in close partnership with national government, civil society, private sector and the donor community.

### **Recommendations based on feedback from interviews and group discussions**

The JP RWEE needs to invest more in:

- The installation of solar systems for CGRs’ access to sustainable energy as the fuel is expensive and women can no longer sustain this approach for electricity in the five grain reserves.
- Strengthening the capacity of rural women technicians in CGRs to undertake major repairs to equipment and labour-saving technologies.
- The use of ICT mobile platforms (e.g. Lone Star MTN and Orange SMS Messaging Services, BuyFromWomen, etc.) for connecting rural women to information, finance and markets.
- The collection of gender disaggregated data on women’s economic and social empowerment for designing better programmes and projects.
- Linking farming cooperatives, VSLAs and women farmers to financial institutions for increased access to finance for increased economic growth.
- Strengthening the role of traditional rural communities in respecting the rights of young women as it relates to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

## ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<b>Outcome 1 Improved food and nutrition security</b>			
<p><b>Indicator 1.1:</b> Increase of agricultural production of rural women</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 25% of rural women Planned Target (2019): 35% of rural women</p> <p><b>Indicator 1.2:</b> Number of rural women experiencing dietary diversity for improved nutrition</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 5,733 rural women Planned Target (2019): 6,583 rural women</p>	<p>15% increase in agricultural production for cassava and 10% increase in agricultural production for rice with rural women in 2019</p> <p>5,657 rural women and their household have adequate dietary intake for their nutrition. Interviews and focus group discussions during field missions collected food consumption data of the local population, such as the types and amount of food consumed by individuals and their households in the targeted communities.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE reached a total of 5,657 women of the targeted 6,583 women bs in 2019. The remaining 926 women are expected to be reached in 2020 once the condition of road leading to project sites are improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</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 benefitting from the use of high-quality seeds, tools and machineries for increased production.</p> <p>Baseline: 3,193 rural women Planned Target: 510 (408 women and 102 men)</p>	<p>A total of 636 (women 576 and men 60) are benefitting from the use of high-quality seeds, tools and machineries for investing in agriculture. As a result, there has been increased productivity with these women as they and their households now have at least 24 MT of rice that is sufficient for both consumption and sale, with the latter ensuring adequate income generation through their respective agri-businesses and investment of the proceeds from sale into their respective Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). Access to rice for consumption, during the farming season, has been adequate in terms of its contribution to dietary intake for better nutrition.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE reached a total of 636 (576 women; 60 men), overachieving its target for women by 168 beneficiaries but underachieving the target for men by 42 beneficiaries. This was due to more women requesting access to seeds, tools and labor-saving technologies unlike the men. Most men in targeted communities sought to seek employment opportunities with concessions rather than invest in agriculture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>

<p>Indicator 1.1.2 Number of rural women benefitting from lowland development in rice production for increased agricultural production and productivity</p> <p>Baseline: 309 Planned Target: 510 (408 women and 102 men)</p>	<p>A total of 636 (women 576 and men 60) are investing on 19.06 hectares of lowland for rice production. These are reporting income from the sale of processed produce from cassava (e.g. fufu, farina and gari). In addition, 12 satellite communities with over 300 inhabitants have preferential access to purchase and consume varieties of these products being produced from cassava.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE reached a total of 636 (576 women; 60 men), overachieving the target for women by 168 beneficiaries but underachieving the target for men by 42 beneficiaries. This has been the result of more women getting involved with the programme unlike the case with men in targeted communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 Number of hectares of lowland developed for rice production</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 22 hectares of lowland development</p>	<p>A total of 636 (women 576 and men 60) cultivated the sum of 19.06 hectares of lowland for rice production.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE did not reach the target of 22 hectares of lowland development. This was due to very bad road condition which prevented the JP RWEE 's agriculture extension workers from traveling to the project site(s).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Indicator 1.1.4 Number of people benefitting from the provision of assorted food commodity distributed as labor incentives</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,200 (1,320 women and 880 men)</p>	<p>A total of 636 (women 576 and men 60) from targeted farming communities involved in lowland rice cultivation benefited from the distribution of approximately 1.82 MT of food commodities as labor incentives.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE did not reach the target due to WFP's introduction of its biometric registration of beneficiaries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Indicator 1.1.5 Number of rural women accessing and benefitting from poultry units for increased protein consumption and dietary diversification</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,550 (2,040 women and 510 men)</p>	<p>Five poultry units (processing and storing) are being constructed for women's access to protein and dietary diversification. In addition, a five-hectare model garden farm is currently producing high-valued vegetables, fish, meat and eggs units for increased protein consumption and dietary diversification that are benefiting a total of women 576 from targeted communities.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE did not achieve its target due to the late contracting of the construction firm followed by bad road condition which made access to the project's sites difficult.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.2.1 Number of rural women benefitting from trainings in technical approaches and best practices associated with harvesting, storage and processing</p> <p>Baseline: 3,193 rural women</p>	<p>A total of 3,756 accessing local CGRs equipped with labor-saving technologies are engaged in better harvesting, storage and processing of produce. Women farmers have increased knowledge and skills processing and packaging for value-addition (e.g. cassava</p>	<p>The JP RWEE overachieved its target by 313 women. More women enrolled in capacity building trainings in rice and cassava value chains development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>

Planned Target: 3,443 rural women from CGRs	flour, farina, chips, rice flour, puffed rice, etc.)		
Indicator 1.2.2 Number of rural women benefitting from trainings in value addition (e.g. processing, packaging, storage, etc.) for access to markets  Baseline: 3,193 rural women Planned Target: 250 rural women from CGRs	52 women farming leaders received technical training in rice and cassava value chains development. They were trained and sensitized on food traceability and food safety, as well as international packaging standards and on the Hazard Analytical Critical Control points (HACCP) standards of production. These women replicated the training, building the capacity of 200 other women on processing, packaging, storage.	The JP RWEE reached its target of 250 rural women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.</b>			
<b>Indicator 2.1:</b> Income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to markets  Baseline (2018): LD\$ 16,200,000 (or US\$ 81,000) Planned Target (2019): LD\$ 18,200,000 (or US\$ 91,000)	A total of LD\$ 15,427,601.57 (about US\$ 77,138) was generated from 137 rural women in Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Maryland, Rive Gee and Sinoe counties from the sale of processed rice and cassava (e.g. farina, flour, fufu, etc.) including vegetables (e.g. cabbage, pepper, eggplants, bitterballs, etc.) and poultry products (e.g. eggs, meat, etc.)	The JP RWEE did not reach its target due to bad road condition which affected access to markets for rural women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
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 with financial literacy skills that are accessing financial services from established VSLAs  Baseline: 7,233 rural women Planned Target:	A total of 693 rural women are better organizing and managing their respective businesses for increased income and improved livelihood as a result having received business development and financial literacy trainings. These women have access to sustainable credit through 150 VSLAs. These are associations of 20 - 30 women who are saving together and are taking out from those savings.	The JP RWEE reached a total of 693 rural women (693 women; 0 men), overachieving its target for rural women by 393 beneficiaries yet not achieving the target for men. This has been the result of women being the core beneficiaries of business development and financial literacy trainings being offered at community level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
Indicator 2.1.2 Number of rural women who join and are participating in VSLA Associations  Baseline: 7,233 rural women Planned Target: 300 rural women and men (240	A total of 693 rural women are participating in 150 established VSLAs for access to community-owned and sustainable finance.	The JP RWEE reached a total of 693 rural women (693 women; 0 men), overachieving its target for women by 393 beneficiaries yet not achieving the target for men. This has been the result of women being in more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> </ul>

women and 60 men)		control of VSLAs and their unwillingness to allow men manage and record their savings. In this instance, men have chosen not to participate and see VSLAs more as female-headed structures associations at the community level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities</b>			
<p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of rural women accessing decent work</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 772 rural women Target (2019): 1,062 rural women</p>	The JP RWEE has created employment opportunities for a total of 344 as a result of engaging private sector and investing in job skills. Rural women are serving as mobile money agents with Orange Liberia facilitating financial transaction vis the use of ICT. Other women have gained self-employment as women cosmetologists and tailors providing their services at the community level.	The JP RWEE did not reach its target due to bad road condition which affected the mobilization, recruitment and selection of rural women for access to skills building in cosmetology, tailoring and ICT (Orange Money). Moreover, the creation of employment opportunities has been affected by private sector companies (e.g. Sam Darby, Coca Cola, etc.) scaling down their operations in Liberia due to the economic crisis being faced by the country. The remaining target is expected to be reached in 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<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 3.1:</b> Number of rural women who are members of land committees in targeted counties</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 3,218 rural women Planned Target (2019): 300 rural women</p>	367 new women gained membership of land committees at local level in 2019. This can be attributed to increased awareness raising on women's land rights, strengthened leadership skills and access to literacy skills	The JP RWEE did not reach its target due to an inadequate number of women mobilized at the district and county levels for engaging with land committees. In most cases, land committees have been exhausted with membership in targeted counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</b>			

<p>Indicator 3.1.1 Number of young women and adolescent girls accessing secondary education</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,040 young women and adolescent girls</p>	<p>Over 379 girls are accessing secondary education in 13 rural public schools in Margibi, Bassa, Sinoe, River Gee and Maryland Counties. This has been the result of the JP RWEE 's provision of school supplies (e.g. calculators, copybooks, book bags, pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, rules, etc.) to these beneficiaries which improve the retention rate</p>	<p>The JP RWEE did not reach its target due to bad road condition in targeted communities which affected the mobilization, recruitment and selection of potential beneficiaries for access to secondary education at local level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JPRWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Indicator 3.1.2 Number of rural women who are participating in decision-making processes in land committees at local level</p> <p>Baseline: 901 rural women Planned Target: 1,309 rural women</p>	<p>367 new women leaders are actively participating in decision-making on community management of land and other natural resources with land committees at local level. In addition, over 2,247 community women have gained the knowledge and capacity to demand respect of their rights in community management of land and other natural resources.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE did not reach its target due to an inadequate number of women leaders mobilized at the district and county levels for participating in land committees. In most cases, land committees have been exhausted with membership in targeted counties. The JP RWEE however was able to make an impact on impacting over 2,247 community women as it relates to increased knowledge and capacity to demand respect of their rights in community management of land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.4.1 Number of rural women and adolescent girls with increased knowledge and practical skills to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS including other STIs</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 2,093 rural women and adolescent girls Planned Target (2019): 2,040 rural women and adolescent girls</p>	<p>Over 5,657 rural women have increased awareness on practical skills to prevent and respond to HIV/AIDS and other STIs. This has been achieved as a result of the strategic partnership with the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP), where it over 15,000 pieces of condoms were distributed during HIV/AIDS prevention awareness raising across Montserrado, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties.</p> <p>In addition, more than 43 community-based facilitators are building the capacity of S/GBV survivors, women with disability, traditional women and community leaders to prevent and respond to cases of HIV/AIDS including other STIs at the community level.</p>	<p>The JP RWEE achieved its target by over 3,617 additional women.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>

<b>Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women</b>			
<p><b>Indicator 4.1:</b> Number of laws passed to secure rural women’s land ownership</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 1 Planned Target (2019): 0</p>	<p>Liberia Land Rights Act was passed and enacted into Law for implementation beginning in 2018</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>MGCSP Progress Reports</p> <p>LLA Progress Reports</p>
<p>Output 4.1 Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets.</p>			
<p>Indicator 4.1.1 Extent to which policy makers, parliamentarians and other stakeholders are advocating for and supporting the implementation of the Land Rights Act</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 0 Planned Target (2019): The House Committee on Land, the Land Authority and other key stakeholders are advancing the implementation of the Land Rights Act for promoting women’s land rights.</p>	<p>Major actors such as the House Committee on Land, the Liberia Land Authority and other Government and non-governmental bodies are collaborating and promoting women’s land ownership. The JP RWEE was able to establish clear linkages amongst actors in the land sector working on gender and women land rights. These include OXFAM, Swedish NGO Forum Syd, WONGOSOL, Land Registration Authority amongst others.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>
<p>Output 4.3 An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.</p>			
<p>Indicator 4.3.1 Number of national dialogues on women’s land rights that involve rural women’s groups</p> <p>Baseline (2018): 2 dialogues Planned Target (2019): at least 3 dialogues on women’s land rights</p>	<p>A national conference on the Land Rights Act (Law) was organized under the banner: ‘One Law, One Message.’ The purpose of the conference was to jointly review existing gender-sensitive key messages that were developed by the different actors including the LLA for nation-wide awareness with rural women on the new Land Law.</p> <p>A national dialogue on women’s land rights and the national policy dialogue on the Land Rights Act were convened in Liberia. A national dialogue on women’s land rights and the national policy dialogue on the Land Rights Act were convened. Findings from a</p>	<p>The JP RWEE achieved its target of at least three dialogues on women’s land rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MoA/MGCSP County Progress Reports</li> <li>▪ JP RWEE Monitoring Reports</li> <li>▪ IPs Progress Reports</li> </ul>

	mapping of existing gender sensitive instruments/policies that support women's land rights provided useful information that helped inform the discussion points.		
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## A Specific Story

**Name:** Ma Martha S. Karnga

**Location:** Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Republic of Liberia

**Age:** 66 years

### The Story of a Rural Woman Leader



Photo Credit: Rights & Rice Foundation 2019

Ma Martha Karnga, a beneficiary of the United Nations Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) in Liberia, has increased capacity and knowledge to demand respect for her land rights as a result of accessing the programme's awareness raising activities on Liberia's Land Rights Act (LRA). The latter, which was passed into Law in September 2018, now promotes women's right to ownership of land for their social and economic empowerment.

The Act is one of the most progressive land rights laws in Africa and is the first Liberian law that recognizes women's rights to land. Prior to this, women were considered outsiders to the communities that they married into and were rarely allowed to participate in decisions about land.

After the passage of the Land Rights Act and its dissemination, many rural women have now started

accessing this law that has given them the economic independence through acquiring their lands which they were not allowed to have before. This has raised their socio-economic status and now they are participating in decision making processes as it relates to the management of land and other natural resources at local level. With financial independence, the women now also have elevated status in the household and there are indications of reduction of violence against women and girls within the family.

Rural women such as Ma Martha Karnga are actively engaging in Community Land Committees, holding and strengthening leaderships roles including the exercising of their full rights as agents of change as it relates to land rights for agriculture, infrastructure and as means of access to credit from financial institutions for increasing their economic security and improving their livelihood. They are becoming stronger leader with 'voice' of grassroots rural women organization, advocating for women's land rights at the county, district and community levels and being considered as leader, mentor, coach and advocate for rural women economic and social empowerment.

Through the development, simplification and dissemination of key messages on women's land rights as enshrined in the new Land Law 2018, many rural women like Ma Martha Karnga are now participating in decision making processes as it relates to the management of land and other natural resources at local level. Thus, she and other rural women are actively engaging in Community Land Committees, holding and strengthening leaderships roles including the exercising of their full rights as agents of change as it relates to land rights for agriculture, infrastructure and as means of access to credit from financial institutions for increasing their economic security and improving their livelihood.

In the words of Ma Martha Karnga, "I now understand my land rights, and it has made me strong to go out to talk to other community people about land rights issues regardless of gender. I now have my own women's group that I put together called Bassa Women Development Association (BAWODA) that is talking about women land rights and land palaver issues in towns and villages in Grand Bassa County. We rural women leaders are working very hard with rural women to make sure that they have their rights on land matter."

“When my husband died years ago, he left me with a parcel of land. I was in conflict with his family for many years because I had no rights to own the land even though I was his widow. But now and because I now know my land rights, I went to the law in my town to legally acquire the land by registering it and getting my deed. I am very happy now because of the rural women programme that has given me a voice to speak out on my rights as a senior citizen.”

The JP RWEE ‘s intervention on women’s land rights has deeply changed the lives of many rural women like Ma Martha in terms of empowerment, as she has become a stronger leader of a grassroot rural women organization, advocating for women’s land rights at the county, district and community levels. She now owns a land deed unlike many rural women and is working to ensure that other rural women have increased social status through their ownership of land. Today, many rural women in Grand Bassa County look up to her as a women leader, a mentor, a coach and an advocate for rural women economic and social empowerment.

### **Specific Story**

**Name:** Madam Lorpu Gizzie

**Location:** Daniel Village, Margibi County, Republic of Liberia

**Age:** 57 years

### **The Story of a Rural Woman Leader**



Madam Lorpu Gizzie, a beneficiary of the United Nations JP RWEE on Rural Women Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) in Liberia and Chair of the Progressive Rural Women Farmers in Daniel Village, Margibi County, has experienced increased income and economic security as a result of her access to labor-saving technologies (e.g. cassava grater, etc.), investing in vegetable production, and serving as a Chair of her local Village Savings and Loan Association group where she is successfully managing 30 women farmers currently engaged into value chain development with cassava for income generation. Madam Gizzie is also self-employed and participates in her VSLA as both the Chair and a member.

With the income from the sale of vegetables (e.g. cabbage, bitterballs, eggplants, etc.) and processed produce (e.g. farina, cassava flour, fufu, etc.), Madam Lorpu has managed to finance the schooling of her three children, with two attending high schools in Kakata, Margibi County and one attending the African Methodist Episcopal University based in Monrovia.

For Madam Gizzie and her community, the Progressive Rural Women Farmers group has become a self-sustaining and self-managed group contributing to solidarity and equality at the community level. Being part of such a successful community group has led to impressive gains in her social status and that of its members. These women are starting their own businesses and taking part in community decision-making processes. Being able

to contribute financially within their families has put these women on a more equal footing with their husbands. The VSLA group is providing a neutral platform for people from the community, nearby towns and villages to come together for individual and collective gains.

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

There was no assessment, nor an evaluation undertaken during the reporting period.

### IV. Resources

The use of funds follows approved JP RWEE implementation plans and budgets, pre-approved by the Government of Liberia and the UN System through the JP RWEE Steering Committee. The JP RWEE received US\$ 800,000 for 2018/2019 programming year. This amount funded activities with UN Women, FO and WFP as per the signed workplan approved by the JP RWEE International Steering Committee.

#### *Human Resources:*

Three UN staff members (UN Women, WFP, and FAO) have received financial support from the JP RWEE since the start of 2016. The JP RWEE's implementation is also supported by multiple other programmes, operations, and administrative staff within the participating agencies.

JPRWEE-supported staff are:

- National Staff:
  - o JP RWEE National Coordinator, UN Women
  - o National Program/Monitoring Officer (Regional Level), FAO
  - o National Program Officer, WFP
- International Staff:
  - o None

#### *Financial Resources:*

<b>Total approved 2018/2019 budget: US\$ 800,000 RWEE-MPTF</b>	<b>Budget by Agency</b>	<b>Expenditure by Agency Estimated</b>	<b>Balance</b>
MPTF Contribution <sup>6</sup> :			
<input type="checkbox"/> UN Women Liberia	US\$ 300,000.00	US\$ 294,625.56	US\$ 5,374.44
<input type="checkbox"/> WFP Liberia <sup>3</sup>	US\$ 250,000.00	US\$ 81,243.05	US\$ 168,756.95
<input type="checkbox"/> FAO Liberia	US\$ 250,000.00	US\$ 208,012.00	US\$ 41,988.00

<sup>3</sup> Due to heavy rains, road infrastructure affected WFP's delivery; applies also to FAO and UN Women