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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Investing in rural people



World Food
Programme



<p>Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00092000-6 	<p>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p> <p>Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda</p>
<p>Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAO IFAD WFP UN Women 	<p>The strategic result is to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs</p>
<p>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p>	<p>Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Ministries, NGOs/CSOs, private sector, and other UN Agencies and International Organizations
<p>Total approved budget as per project document: US\$ 35,000,000</p> <p>MPTF Contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAO: US\$ 7,188,265 IFAD: US\$ 3,266,464 UN Women: US\$ 8,539,158 WFP: US\$ 8,103,189 <p>TOTAL: US\$ 27,097,076</p>	<p>Programme Duration</p>
<p>Programme Assessment/Review/MTR</p>	<p>Overall Duration: 60 months (as per programme document)</p> <p>Start Date 15/10/2012 Original End Date 14/10/2017 Current End Date 31/12/2021</p>
<p>Assessment/Review <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation Report <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Report Submitted By</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name: Felicity Chard Title: JP RWEE Global Coordinator Email address: felicity.chard@wfp.org

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS (FAO)**



Investing in rural people

**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
(IFAD)**



World Food
Programme

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)



**UNITED NATIONS ENTITY FOR
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AA:	Administrative Agent
BALI:	Business Action Learning for Inclusion
CFS:	Committee on World Food Security
CGR:	Community Grain Reserve
CSW:	Commission on the Status of Women
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS:	Farmer Field School
GALS:	Gender Action Learning System
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
GESI:	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
IFAD:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI:	International Food Policy Research Institute
IGA:	Income Generating Activity
IP:	Implementing Partner
ISC:	International Steering Committee
JP:	Joint Programme
M&E:	Monitoring & Evaluation
MPTFO:	Multi Partner Trust Fund Office
NSC:	National Steering Committee
P4P:	Purchase for Progress
PO:	Producer Organisation
PHHS:	Post-Harvest Handling and Storage
PUNOs:	Participating UN Organizations
RBAs:	Rome-Based Agencies
RUSACCO:	Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives
RWEE:	Rural Women's Economic Empowerment
SDG:	Sustainable Development Goals
SHG:	Self-Help Group
Sida:	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SGBV:	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SRH:	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI:	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TAC:	Technical Advisory Committee
ToT:	Training of Trainers
TF:	Trust Fund
TWG:	Technical Working Group
UNDG:	United Nations Development Group
UN Women:	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VSLA:	Village Savings and Loan Associations
WEAI:	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP:	World Food Programme

DEFINITIONS

Allocation	Amount approved by the Steering Committee for a project/programme.
Approved Project/Programme	A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.
Contributor Commitment	Amount(s) committed by a donor to a Fund in a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.
Contributor Deposit	Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement.
Delivery Rate	The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Participating Organization against the 'net funded amount'.
Indirect Support Costs	A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Participating Organizations. UNDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs. As of 2018, WFP applies a fixed indirect cost rate of 6.5%
Net Funded Amount	Amount transferred to a Participating Organization less any refunds transferred back to the MPTF Office by a Participating Organization.
Participating Organization	A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is an implementing partner in a Fund, as represented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular Fund.
Project Expenditure	The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all Participating Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Participating Organization follows for donor reporting.
Project Financial Closure	A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.
Project Operational Closure	A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which Participating Organization(s) received funding have been completed.
Project Start Date	Date of transfer of first instalment from the MPTF Office to the Participating Organization.
Total Approved Budget	This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Steering Committee.
US Dollar Amount	The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

1. NARRATIVE REPORT

Executive summary

The Joint Programme 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' (JP RWEE) is a global initiative that aims to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. Jointly implemented since 2014 by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Women, in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, the JP RWEE builds on each Agency's comparative advantages and strengths to improve the status of women in rural areas.

A total of US\$ 5,600,000 was allocated to country teams (US\$ 800,000 each) to continue the work in 2019 and consolidate the gains made in previous years of JP RWEE implementation.¹ The country allocations were provided following a rigorous review that ensured 2019 works plans adopted a long-term outlook that incorporated new rural women; updated monitoring plans; strengthened synergies and complementarities along the mandates of the other Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs); and further supported country ownership and programme sustainability.

The evidence from 2019 shows how women smallholder farmers have enhanced their food security status and productive potential through increased access to productive assets, resources and services facilitated by JP RWEE. They have increased income opportunities and access to high-value markets. Furthermore, rural women's decision-making roles in sustainable development continued to be leveraged through the consistent promotion of rural women's participation and leadership in production and political structures.

In 2019, the Programme continued to target two key groups of rural women (i) the most vulnerable, poorest and illiterate women, who are often bypassed by conventional economic empowerment programmes; and (ii) women entrepreneurs already organized in Producer Organizations (POs), including cooperatives with highest potential to dynamize the communities' economy. This programmatic approach responds to the 2030 Agenda commitment to 'Leave No-One Behind'.

Considerable progress was made during 2019, with strong results achieved in the JP RWEE countries. All participating countries saw solid increases across the four (4) outcomes leading to improved income security and a more gender-responsive policy environment. Of note was the improved income to secure productive livelihoods realized (under Outcome 2), resulting from the significant increase in agricultural production and in the numbers of rural women accessing integrated nutrition services. Also, and notwithstanding a delay in implementation of activities from late 2018, additional efforts in 2019 contributed towards more gender responsive policy environments (outcome 4).

The longer-term approach adopted by JP RWEE has solidified past results and strengthened the programmatic impacts. This was enabled by, for example, the expanded use of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) and the Business Action Learning for Inclusion (BALI) methodologies. A global

¹ US\$ 5,600,00 (US\$ 800,000 for each country of implementation) was allocated to fund 2019 JP RWEE workplans. Likewise, a total of US\$ 7,600,957 was received in the JP RWEE Trust Fund during 2019 from which US\$ 6,300,000 was disbursed to country teams in December 2019 to fund 2020 workplans and US\$ 1,095,571 was allocated for the JP RWEE Global Learning Plan.

learning plan was initiated in 2019 to further gather and systematize the experiences of the seven countries to help inform project performance, delivery and the scale up of good practices.

The learnings combined with findings from the JP RWEE evaluation (Ethiopia) and reviews (Rwanda and Liberia) in 2019 demonstrate the value of multiagency collaboration and the holistic approach taken by JP RWEE to rural women’s economic empowerment, inclusive of the emphasis on partnerships and collaboration. The ongoing financial contributions from the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, complimented by allocations of staff time and core resources by the PUNOs, enabled the JP RWEE in 2019 to reach 38,294 individuals (35,068 women and 3,226 men) and a further 204,954 indirectly through their households. A breakdown by country is presented in Table 1, while the corresponding percentages over the total, are shown in Figure 1.

Table 1: JP RWEE direct and indirect beneficiaries, by gender and country

Country	Women (direct)	Men (direct)	Total (direct)	Average household size	Estimated total household member beneficiaries
Ethiopia	3,500	0	3,500	4.8	16,800
Guatemala	4,529	1,083	5,612	4.8	26,938
Kyrgyzstan	2,591	278	2,869	5.2	14,919
Liberia	5,657	120	5,777	5.3	30,618
Nepal	2,333	0	2,333	4.8	11,198
Niger	14,745	1,375	16,120	5.9	95,108
Rwanda	1,713	370	2,083	4.5	9,374
TOTAL	35,068	3,226	38,294	5	204,954

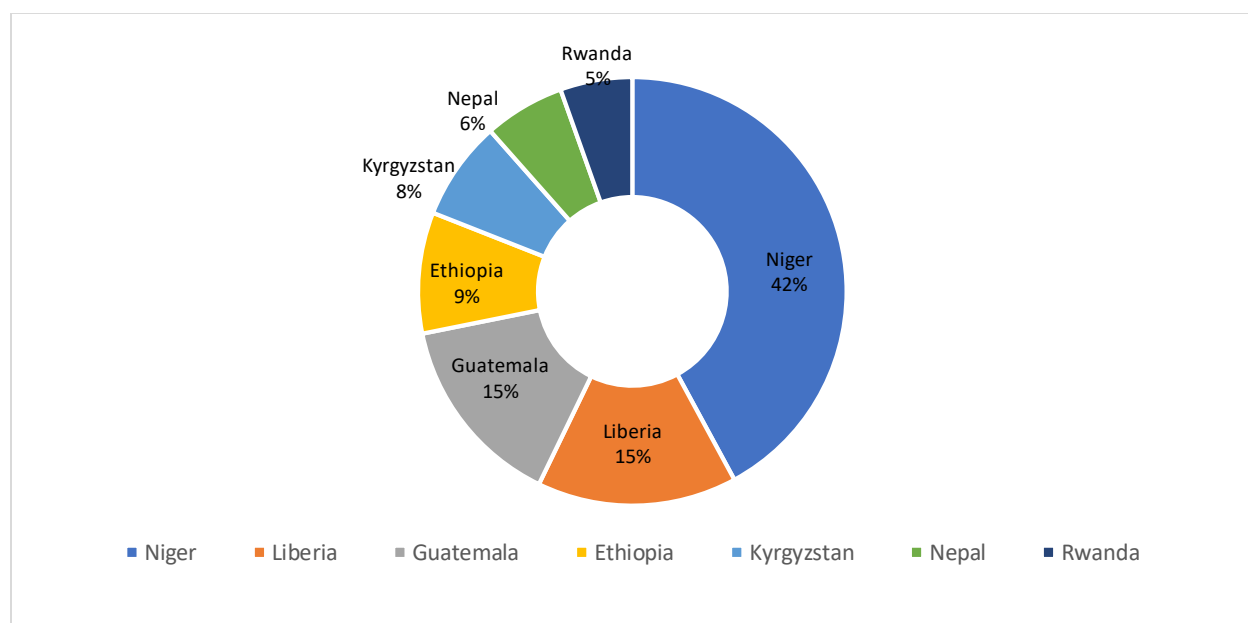


Figure 1: JP RWEE direct beneficiaries by country as percentage of the total

Main results by JP RWEE outcome

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

- 127 percent average increase in the agricultural production of participating rural women;
- 5,671 rural women accessed labour saving technologies;
- 7,403 people (6,812 women, 591 men) received nutrition education or training; and
- 6,051 rural women accessed and managed food reserves.

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

- US\$ 743,025 generated from sales at the individual and group levels, raising the aggregated amount for 2016-2020 to US\$ 2.54 million;
- 16,257 beneficiaries (15,707 women, 555 men) organised in 650 saving groups with approximately US\$ 226,367 saved;²
- 10,041 rural women equipped with improved skills on business and financial management, value chains, marketing and negotiation; and
- 5,421 rural women engaged in self-employment / income-generating activities, in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

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

- 4,023 rural women enabled to access primary/secondary education and literacy courses;
- 395 producer organizations supported by the JP RWEE led by women or with women holding key leadership positions (from four countries);³ and
- 22 informal groups joined formally registered Producer Organizations, cooperatives and unions.⁴

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

- 2,131 additional government staff trained on gender mainstreaming and rural women's empowerment.

Since the JP RWEE commenced implementation in 2014, the Programme has supported a total of 58,382 rural women and a further 205,510 indirect beneficiaries as members of their households.⁵

The aforementioned achievements along with other examples and testimonies were showcased in a variety of regional and global advocacy events such as the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). As in previous years, the JP RWEE was presented as a good practice and a source of lessons for enabling the full

² Total amount from five countries: Guatemala, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda.

³ From Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nepal and Niger.

⁴ From Guatemala, Nepal and Rwanda.

⁵ The 2019 workplans were developed and started implementation in mid-2018. It should be noted, however, that during 2019 the number of direct beneficiaries was lower than in the previous reporting periods. This was due to different programmatic reasons exacerbated by an irregular funding cycle which lengthened the period of implementation but without additional funds. For instance, in Nepal reduced funding was reflected in the selection of a lower number of districts as targeted areas. In Kyrgyzstan, several members of self-help groups belonging to the 2nd cohort became inactive and therefore did not participate in programme activities. In Rwanda, the number of rural women members of JP RWEE POs or groups decreased in 2019 compared to 2018.

and equal participation of rural women in economic, political and social life.⁶ The JP RWEE's governance model also continues to be seen as a good practice. For example, a new Joint UN Programme (FAO, IFAD, WFP, EU) on the 'Scaling up of Gender Transformative Approaches' that was launched in 2019 used the JP RWEE governance structure for its development. A joint UN Women and UNIDO programme on 'Economic Empowerment of Women in Green Industries' has also utilized governance structures successfully implemented by the JP RWEE.⁷ This suggests how the JP RWEE has created a model for cooperation and joint delivery among UN agencies engaged in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment – which could also potentially be replicated in other areas or sectors. These new joint programming initiatives provide an opportunity for sharing of lessons in 2020 and beyond.

The 2019 results reflect the commitment and dedication of the National Coordinators, PUNOs Focal Points and Country Teams who continue to execute their work plans with diligence and professionalism. Their contributions maintain the JP RWEE as an effective platform for learning and exchange that has facilitated productive relationships with government entities, local institutions, private sector actors, civil society organizations and other UN agencies.

This report is presented in two parts: the narrative on what was done and achieved, followed by the section detailing financial gains and expenditures. It consolidates the quantitative data, information and examples presented in the individual country reports and their Performance Monitoring Frameworks (PMF).⁸ The report has been approved by the JP RWEE International Steering Committee (ISC), which is composed of representatives of the four Agencies, participating countries, Global Coordination Team, Administrative Agent (the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office) and donors (Sweden and Norway).

I. Purpose

Rural women are key agents of change who play critical roles in supporting food security and nutrition. They are major contributors to the agricultural sector and generate vital income that contributes to rural economies, as well as the health and wellbeing of their families and communities. However rural women continue to face significant barriers that limit their ability to fully participate in and equally benefit from profitable economic activities. Restricted access to resources and services, such as land, finance, healthcare, education, market information, agricultural inputs and technology, are further compounded by broader systemic barriers, such as the burden of carrying out unpaid care and domestic work and the exclusion from decision-making structures and processes. All of which are exacerbated during times conflict, food, economic and/or environmental crises.

The JP RWEE was developed by FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women to tackle the inequalities experienced by rural women in the economic sphere. Since 2014, the JP RWEE has been implemented in seven countries (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda), to unlock rural women's economic potential through farming and entrepreneurship using an integrated approach to economic empowerment.

⁶ For instance, in the Mid-term Evaluation Final Report from both Ethiopia and the Rwanda Mid-term review.

⁷ In September 2019, the JP RWEE Global Coordinator was invited by WFP's Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Country Office to present the experience of implementing a Joint Programme.

⁸ The annual narrative country reports were prepared and validated by the respective National Steering Committees and are available in each country's dedicated page on the [MPTFO website](#).

As recent assessments have shown, the JP RWEE addresses the needs of rural women identified in baseline assessments. Furthermore, it has tackled the multiple manifestations of gender inequality in an integrated manner.⁹ Adopting an integrated approach has multiplying effects that enhance the impact and sustainability of programme outcomes. Rural women gain significantly from acquiring life skills, such as through nutrition education, literacy training, financial education, entrepreneurship, leadership and social empowerment, that enhance their ability to benefit from the agricultural and financial inputs provided. Additionally, the integrated approach is efficient because it streamlines the delivery of learning opportunities and other activities through one programme.

Outcomes across individual, household, community and policy levels are achieved by leveraging the comparative advantages of the participating UN organizations. The JP RWEE benefits from FAO's technical knowledge and policy assistance on food and agriculture, IFAD's experience in co-financing rural investment programmes and addressing gender at the household level, WFP's innovations in food assistance, and UN Women's global championship of gender equality and its strong partnerships with global, regional and national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Collaboration between the four PUNOs, combined with partnerships with local actors, the governments of the seven participating countries, Sida and the Government of Norway, as well as civil society organizations and private sector actors, has been key to the success of the JP RWEE.¹⁰ Bringing together the combined experiences, resources and reach of the various actors, substantive and substantial achievements have been made with respect to rural women's economic empowerment. Information from 2019 illustrates that the JP RWEE is contributing to the productive potential of women smallholder farmers through improving their access to productive assets, resources and services, as well as expanding their income opportunities and access to high-value markets. In addition, the critical need to enhance rural women's participation and leadership in productive and political structures continues to be maintained to leverage rural women's decision-making in sustainable development (Outcome 3 results).

II. Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

In 2019, JP RWEE countries continued to focus on two principle groups of rural women, based on criteria agreed with the respective national governments and after conducting baseline assessments:

1. the most vulnerable, poorest and illiterate women, who are often bypassed by conventional economic empowerment programmes; and
2. women entrepreneurs already organized in Producer Organizations (POs), including cooperatives with the potential to grow their businesses and contribute to economic revitalization and growth in their communities.

⁹ Please refer to Section III Other Assessments and Evaluations.

¹⁰ JP RWEE Liberia has partnered with Orange and Coca Cola in previous years of JP RWEE implementation.

This approach enables the JP RWEE to concentrate activities on established or newly formed women's groups that have previously received external support and possess basic skills with respect to literacy, numeracy or business, or alternatively who have self-organised into a group.¹¹ It also responds to the 2030 Agenda commitment to 'Leave No-One Behind' to ensure that women who may experience multiple forms of social, economic or political marginalisation are included.

The JP RWEE continues to employ a multi-track strategy to achieve results in the immediate-, medium- and long-term. Increased production, sales and savings ensure rural women's improved access to income in the immediate term. In the medium-term, knowledge sharing, advocacy for rural women's rights, leadership training and skills development further assist rural women and their communities to enhance and sustain the benefits from Programme interventions. The longer-term work focuses on promoting gender responsive policy and legal environments for rural women's economic empowerment.

Specific results from 2019 include:

a. OUTCOME 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

In Outcome 1, the JP RWEE focuses on increasing the productive potential of women smallholder farmers by facilitating their access to and control over productive resources and services critical to food security and nutrition, while strengthening capacities in enhanced agricultural production, harvesting and storage. The Programme also addresses rural women's access to social protection programmes and enhanced control and management of local food security reserves.

In 2019, the agricultural production by rural women farmers across six countries increased an average of 127 percent, in comparison to the baseline.¹² The largest growth was reported in Nepal, with a 329 percent increase in vegetable production, attributed to on-farm on-site trainings and guidance. Ethiopia recorded increases of 125 percent in maize and 100 percent in wheat production. While Guatemala (49.5%) and Niger (54%) experienced more modest increases for certain produce, there were significant increases from baselines. An increase in animal production in Niger, at an average rate of 216 percent, helped mitigate the consequences of a decline in crop production of 60 percent in the villages where the JP RWEE is implemented.

Evidence of improvements in rural women's nutrition status was registered in Kyrgyzstan where the dietary diversity score reached 6.22, rising from a baseline of 4.5 over five years, due to more frequent consumption of vegetables, fruits and meat products. In Nepal, there was an increase in food availability, with a 69.9 percent increase in vegetable consumption (both in quantity and frequency) from kitchen gardens.

As documented by the Ethiopia end-of-term evaluation, increases in farm productivity were observed due to the JP RWEE's farm technology and input support.¹³ As farm productivity improves, household food

¹¹ Support could have been provided by government, private sector or development/humanitarian organizations.

¹² Data was not available from Rwanda.

¹³ As indicated in the mid-term evaluation survey results, 99.2% of rural women in Oromia and 98.6% in Afar regions, improved their food supply from own production.

supply and food reserves increase. The JP RWEE evaluation further indicated that the vast majority of beneficiary women in the villages of both Oromia and Afar eat three times a day, demonstrating improved results from JP RWEE's standard reporting.¹⁴

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

This output looks at strategies to improve rural women's access to, and ownership of, resources that are critical for food security, including land, improved seeds, agricultural tools, capacity strengthening on sustainable cropping techniques and farming technologies.

In 2019, 4,960 rural women gained access to improved production techniques and a further 5,671 rural women accessed labour-saving technologies.¹⁵ In Rwanda, there was focus on ensuring equitable access to and control over water resources through training and technology provision. Rainwater harvesting training was complemented with the provision of water harvesting infrastructure for 275 women, farming techniques such as drip irrigation, and water tanks to cope with droughts. Recipient women can now store water for farming and household uses, reducing the physical and time burdens associated with water collection. The promotion of climate-smart agriculture practices by the JP RWEE is a direct contribution to the resilience of the women and their communities to climate change.

Women participating in the JP RWEE also benefited from access to agricultural inputs and resources, such as land (515 women in Niger), high quality seeds (636 women in Liberia), plastic tunnel greenhouses (700 women in Kyrgyzstan), energy saving stoves (1,092 women in Rwanda), pastoral kits (100 women in Niger), transformation kits (15 units made accessible in Niger) and shallow wells (accessible to 250 households in Nepal). To ensure the impacts of activities under this output reached beyond the direct JP RWEE rural women, most countries employed a training of trainer's (TOT) system that transmitted knowledge to other community members. As a result, 7,403 people (6,812 women, 591 men) received nutrition training or education.¹⁶

The JP RWEE is using kitchen gardens as the primary driver of improvements in the diversity and nutritional value of beneficiary diets.¹⁷ Kitchen gardens were promoted in five countries and used to grow a diverse range of nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits; the consumption and sale of which increased dietary diversity and incomes. In Rwanda, targeted rural women were provided with information on vegetables that support nutritious diets and that can be cultivated throughout the year. Beneficiary women in Rwanda reported reduced expenditure for vegetables, given the production from their own kitchen gardens. As one woman recounted:

"Nutrition training changed our nutrition perception. Before I used to think that it is enough to eat ugali and beans. Now we have changed. We eat vegetables and fruits. We created kitchen gardens to reduce money spent on vegetables and the community is copying from us. This is a great activity that benefits all."

¹⁴ Indicators showed that 90 percent of beneficiary women in Oromia and 35 percent in Afar are able to eat three times a day. However, the survey linked with the evaluation found that higher numbers: 93 percent in Oromia and 87 percent in Afar eat three times a day.

¹⁵ In Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, and Niger.

¹⁶ In Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

¹⁷ Kitchen gardens were promoted in Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

In Nepal, the JP RWEE increased rural women farmers' access to information and inputs through the creation of an agro-veterinarian shop that supplied inputs to cooperative members and provided technical advisory services on agriculture and livestock development.

In Niger, cooking demonstrations were held in the Dimitra clubs for community members using locally available food products, resulting in community demonstrations that illustrated the benefits of this approach. Over 932 rural women were trained and received instruction in preparing nutritious meals from locally available products to support balanced diets among family members. In Guatemala, where the improvement of family nutrition status continued to be encouraged through the promotion of the use of native plants, a cooking competition involving 243 participants (171 women, 72 men) was held. As a result of this activity, and in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA), a 'Compendium of Native Plants and Recipes' was produced and distributed among rural communities. Additionally, MAGA initiated a process of identifying native medicinal plants for a comprehensive compendium that will be used by extension workers to improve food security and nutrition.

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

Several activities were held across JP RWEE countries in 2019 relating to the storage and conservation of cereal products, which resulted in 6,051 women accessing food reserves and 4,699 women using food processing technologies. Training in post-harvest techniques was provided to 854 rural women in Guatemala that resulted in a 21.7 percent reduction in post-harvest losses. In addition, the rural women in Guatemala were able to increase their stocks of maize and beans, helping to offset purchasing grains in markets and thus increasing women's and household cash savings. Likewise, in Liberia 3,756 rural women and their household members are now using grain reserves to protect themselves from grain production shortfalls and thereby stabilizing grain prices at the community and district levels.

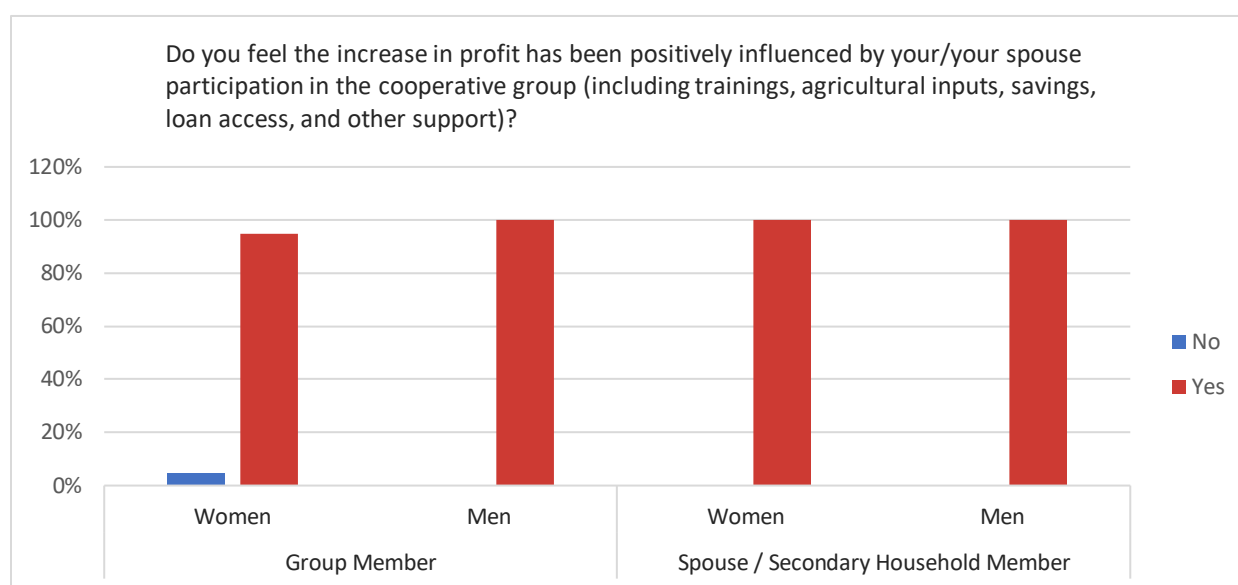
To enhance control over local food security reserves in Niger, a livestock feed bank was installed to serve three villages. The livestock feed bank provides space for 10.3 tons of feed and enables women to purchase inputs locally, supporting livestock production and generating income. A tailored technological training package was developed and rolled out in participation with the communal livestock department and the local council in the rural commune of Guidan Amoumoune. As a result, 1,211 rural farmers (921 women, 290 men) strengthened their capacities on cereal storage and conservation techniques.

Maize drying sheds were provided to three cooperatives in Rwanda that support 489 farmers (405 women, 84 men) in their post-harvest activities to preserve the quality of the maize and mitigate post-harvest losses. Farmers were informed about aflatoxin abatement to improve grain quality and avoid adverse health effects caused by exposure to aflatoxins. Food safety was also addressed in Liberia, where rural women farmer leaders participated in technical trainings on food traceability and food safety related to cassava and rice value chains. This training also incorporated information on international packaging standards and on the Hazard Analytical Critical Control Points (HACCP) standards of production. The participating women replicated the training, thereby strengthening the capacities of 200 other women on processing, packaging and storage.

b. OUTCOME 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods and create wealth

Activities under outcome 2 focus on creating, supporting and developing rural women-led enterprises, fostering entrepreneurship, supporting women’s roles along value chains, enhancing their income opportunities and promoting linkages to high value markets. Women-led associations and small-scale businesses were supported in overcoming supply side constraints which contributed to improving rural women’s engagement in markets. In 2019, six countries generated US\$ 743,025 from sales to both WFP and commercial markets, taking the total sales generated through the JP RWEE since 2015 to over US\$ 2,500,000.¹⁸

Increases in income and profit were attributed to the participation of rural women (or that of their spouses) in the JP RWEE. In Rwanda, 95 percent of women members and all men members felt that their participation in JP RWEE activities (led by both participating Agencies and implementing partners) had contributed to the increases in profits, mostly through the sale of more, and more diverse, agriculture produce. (Figure 2)



*Figure data includes all sampled group members (n=133) and sampled household members (n= 98) across current districts, (group member: women=109, men=24; household member: women=21, men=77).

Figure 2: Opinions of JP RWEE participants in Rwanda about profit increases due to participation in co-operatives, based on 2014-2019 review¹⁹

In Nepal, there was a 253 percent increase in sales in 2019, linked to the sale of the increased production of vegetables and the ability to sell surplus. Also, in Nepal, a WFP cash assistance programme implemented in 2019 enhanced income-generating opportunities by providing 135 rural women with temporary employment.²⁰ This programme constructed two markets and allowed targeted rural women to receive a daily wage to construct two market outlets, earning a monthly average of US\$ 74.75 each. Cash transfers were provided to promote financial inclusion of unbanked women through the opening of bank accounts, through which they directly received their wages. Two management committees were formed, consisting

¹⁸ The six countries that provided data on total sales for 2019 are Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

¹⁹ Source: Mid-term Review of the JP RWEE in Rwanda (2014-2019).

²⁰ Part of the WFP Cash Assistance for Assets Programme, which has been implemented in different locations in Nepal since 2007.

of 11 rural women members each. The women members of the management committees gained knowledge and skills related to outlet management, repair and maintenance. Following the construction of market outlets, more than 2,000 rural women farmers have started selling their surplus produce. The market outlets have facilitated market linkages for rural women farmers, contributing in market-oriented agriculture, sustained local economies, increased financial inclusion, management skills and more sustainable incomes for rural women.

The JP RWEE in Rwanda focused on 18 cooperatives, supporting them through a range of capacity building activities on different topics such as financial literacy and organizational capacity. In 2019, thanks to specific efforts through WFP's Farm to Market Alliance (FTMA), the Twitezimbere Cooperative was, for the first time, able to sell 25 metric tonnes of maize, generating US\$ 5,500 in sales.²¹

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

Increasing access to credit, technology and other business services is a key part of the JP RWEE strategy to strengthen entrepreneurship and support rural women's businesses. Over 650 savings groups/associations, with 15,702 members, were established through Village Saving and Loans Associations (in Guatemala, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda), Self-Help Groups (Kyrgyzstan) and Rural Saving and Credit Cooperatives (Ethiopia). The various groups were able to generate a total of US\$617,250 in savings.²² The credit acquired by the rural women was mainly reinvested in increasing the working capital for their enterprises and purchasing production inputs. In Guatemala, inputs such as corn fertilizer needed at harvest time, poultry (broilers) and pigs were bought, and savings were used by the rural women to meet basic needs. A small percentage of the profits was used to support food purchases for their households.

In Ethiopia, 1,000 new beneficiaries organised themselves into five Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives (RUSACCOs). The total number of programme beneficiaries in the 15 RUSACCOS (both existing and new) reached 4,527, of which 97 percent are women. In Liberia, 693 rural women participated in 150 established Voluntary Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) to access community-owned and sustainable finance, thus more than doubling the target for number of rural women.²³ The target number of men was not reached, due to the reported unwillingness among the women members to allow men to manage and record their savings. As a result of this perception, men largely chose not to participate, considering the VSLAs as women-only associations.²⁴ The issue of inclusivity and gender responsiveness amongst the rural women participating in the VSLAs has been addressed through different trainings at community and local government levels.

To complement and further foster entrepreneurship, support was provided to women-led enterprises in the JP RWEE countries to provide the women with additional sources of income, to be used to meet household needs and re-invested in the women's businesses. Capacity strengthening activities were delivered in

²¹ The Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA) initiative links smallholder farmers with corporate buyers directly through a contract, eliminating the intervention of middle entities and facilitating net gains for farmers' cooperatives.

²² Total amount obtained reflects data provided by Guatemala, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda.

²³ The term 'sustainable finance' here refers to the revolving funds that get restored and reused.

²⁴ It is worth clarifying however that this has been just a perception issue and there are some cases where men are serving as VSLAs members, specifically performing record keeping functions.

marketing, financial literacy, business management, project proposal development and the value chain approach; reaching 10,041 women cooperative members across six countries. To boost market exposure and create networking opportunities, peer-to-peer learning and networking exchanges were held in Rwanda. The BALI methodology (Business Action Learning for Innovation) was piloted in Kyrgyzstan. BALI helped Producers' Organizations (POs) to identify, evaluate and select creative, financially viable and profitable business ideas. The JP RWEE in Kyrgyzstan further supported business entrepreneurship among rural women, using the BALI, with 40 partner organisation members and increasing rural women's access to decent employment opportunities.

In Niger, JP RWEE rural women farmers were linked to supply chains for WFP school canteens that sustained the enrolment of 13,996 school children (including 6,264 girls). In October 2019, a second phase of local purchases from JP RWEE producer organizations to schools using cash transfers was initiated. This has enabled schools to directly purchase food products from JP RWEE women partner organizations and local suppliers, benefiting both the school (which can choose the products purchased for their canteens) and rural women (through sustained income).

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

As in previous years, the JP RWEE continued to expand women's employment opportunities and improve their access to decent work. Activities related to Output 2.2 focus on removing structural barriers to women's engagement in economic activities, including the provision of technology for increased production, use of household methodologies for a fairer distribution of unpaid care work and establishment of revolving funds for access to capital.

In four JP RWEE countries, 6,831 rural women initiated or strengthened income-generating activities in agriculture and related sectors.²⁵ Their activities ranged from growing tomatoes, processing of cowpeas, millet and peanuts, selling doughnuts, peanut oil and ready-made meals through to craft production from animal by-products, sewing, dairy processing, packaging of dried fruits and vegetables and the retail trade of frozen products. Seed capital provided by the JP RWEE was fundamental for enabling women to start their own income-generating activities, thereby increasing the number of rural women who have diversified and secure sources of income from 2,915 in 2018 to 3,578 in 2019.

In Niger, 2019 saw a shift in focus from cereal stocks to the processing of agricultural products, with new options for access to credit and the introduction of small ruminant kits. The women recipients recorded a 20 percent increase in income compared to 2018.

Despite challenges created by the economic crisis in Liberia, 344 employment opportunities were created for women as a result of the JP RWEE's engagement with the private sector and investment in job skills development. Approximately 750 rural women commenced mobile banking as a practical and safe way of saving their money, also including its use for making purchases from vendors in local markets as IGAs. In addition, they have started providing this service to other rural women and men; ten of the women obtained employment with Orange Liberia as mobile money agents.

²⁵ Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan and Niger.

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

Activities under this outcome promote rural women's and girl's active participation and leadership in decision-making bodies, households, producer organizations and communities. Actions seek to increase rural women's voice and influence in policy-related forums, as well as engage men to guarantee political and social recognition of women and their value and contributions to their communities. During 2019, 6,793 rural women participated in land committees.²⁶ The number of producer organizations led by women or with women in key leadership roles increased to 395 in across Ethiopia, Guatemala, Niger and Nepal.

JP RWEE's holistic approach under this outcome, focusing on leadership training, skills development, awareness-raising on rights and the engagement of men, also led to increases in women's decision-making power at the household level. For instance, in Ethiopia 57 percent of rural women reported an increase in their decision making over the sales of assets like cattle and the rental of land.

There were positive trends also in the number of women holding local elected positions. In Guatemala, 18 rural women who participated in JP RWEE leadership trainings went on to hold positions with development councils (9), community development councils (7) and municipal development councils (2). Moreover, 102 women are members of the Boards of Directors of producer organizations.

In four countries, the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology was employed to improve power dynamics within households, as well as roles and responsibilities of all household members.²⁷ Participants from Kyrgyzstan reported that the use of GALS enabled more equal relations between household members. It was especially important for households to understand how unevenly distributed care work and household responsibilities created barriers for women to equitably and profitably participate in productive economic activities and leadership roles. Moreover, a GALS user was selected as representative of Kyrgyz farmers to attend the global Farmers Forum in Rome.

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

Access to education, leadership skills development and rights awareness emerged as the three main themes under output 3.1 in 2019. The literacy skills of 1,263 rural women were strengthened through provision of adult literacy sessions in Guatemala and Ethiopia. In Niger and Liberia, the attendance of 2,760 girls and boys in secondary schools was supported through the provision of school meals, supplies and scholarships. Scholarships were also provided in Guatemala to 1,222 girls, with the conditionality of attending information sessions on early marriage and good nutrition.

With respect to leadership development and vocational training, 3,131 community members (2,959 women, 172 men) participated in activities for enhancing self-confidence and leadership skills. A variety of methods were used to promote positive perceptions among targeted communities about women's leadership, as

²⁶ In Ethiopia, Liberia and Niger.

²⁷ GALS methodology was employed in Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Rwanda. Through a set of pictorial tools, the GALS methodology encourages household members to build their vision for the future, defining strategies on how to achieve it and subsequently fostering shared planning and decision-making

well as disseminate information on gender equality issues at the community level. A 'political training and empowerment of women' camp was held in Guatemala, 'Community conversations' were conducted in Ethiopia, and 'Leadership and Gender Schools' were run in Kyrgyzstan. All JP RWEE countries recorded increased numbers of women holding leadership roles with increased confidence.

In Nepal, after a five-day training-of-trainers course on life skills, gender equality, social inclusion, women's rights and local level planning processes, 78 percent of the 1,295 participating women felt more confident to address these issues. Additionally, over 66 percent of the women reported increased awareness of their personal strengths, which included the ability to lead, negotiate and speak without fear.

Men's engagement in community activities was prioritized in Rwanda, Niger and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, for example, 1,995 men participated in community conversations to strengthen the voices of women, challenge inequitable gender relations and bring about positive behaviour changes in their communities. Participants in the community conversations were beneficiary women, their spouses or other relatives and representatives of the JP RWEE, therefore adopting an approach where multiple groups and levels of influence were targeted.

Output 3.2 - Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate in producer organizations, cooperatives and unions

The JP RWEE facilitated the formal registration of 22 producer organizations, cooperatives and unions in 2019. The members of the 22 collectives were able to access services offered by national governments and private sector actors, such as commercial banks and credit associations. Activities to strengthen the capacities of the producer organizations were undertaken in Niger, Ethiopia and Rwanda. As a result, over 121 producer organizations adopted regulations and practices that led to improved financial management and gender equitable governance.

In Nepal, one multipurpose cooperative that was formed and registered incorporated 200 members from eight of the JP RWEE's rural women's farmers groups. Due to the JP RWEE catalysing influence and training for enhanced leadership and sustainable livelihoods, the women are now eligible to request the services of banks and other financial institutions, with lower tax and interest rates as well as subsidies. In Guatemala, women boards of directors were established in 16 producer organization, along with internal controls to support their effective governance and operation.

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

In 2019, activities were implemented to provide targeted rural women with market exposure, advocacy and learning exchange opportunities. This ensured that targeted rural women could voice concerns with national and local institutions; showcase products, achievements and expertise; and learn from other women farmers and entrepreneurs. In policy forums in Nepal and Kyrgyzstan, rural women had the opportunity to discuss and advocate for an end to gender-based violence (GBV), reflecting the JP RWEE's response to multidimensional issues faced by rural women.

Other activities related to Output 3.3 included a study tour in Niger, organised by Dimitra Clubs, that enabled 22 women to share ideas and challenges with local officials. From orientation sessions on women's

economic empowerment, which reached 992 rural women in Nepal, contributed to the realization among women's groups of the unequal representation they had in local level planning processes. As a consequence, the women met with local officials, where they advocated for fair representation in planning processes; with accordant commitments from the government for the next planning process.

In Kyrgyzstan, the JP RWEE mobilized 80 women activists to conduct 19 round table discussions with women members of local councils to discuss the promotion of women's rights, challenging gender stereotypes and eliminating violence against women and girls. Events were also organised for self-help groups to showcase and sell their produce at the municipal level, with attendance by heads of municipalities, village councils, representatives of district administrations and local residents. Ethiopia's 2019 International Women's Day celebrations included an event that showcased the agricultural products from a JP RWEE cooperative.

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

In 2019, the JP RWEE continued to raise awareness of the rights of women, in targeted households and communities through established methodologies. At the household level, the JP RWEE applied the GALS. GALS is a community-led empowerment methodology that encourages gender-transformative changes and equitable gender relations at the household level by challenging discriminatory social norms, attitudes and behaviours. It uses visual materials to encourage participants to consider their current life situations and visualise their futures. While GALS has been implemented since 2015 in Rwanda and Kyrgyzstan, in 2019 it was piloted in Guatemala and Nepal, reaching 1,802 people in the four countries.

In Nepal, 411 community members created positive changes in their households, such as the sharing of chores, which reportedly improved household harmony and overall welling. Following training in Guatemala ,168 people used GALS tools with household and community members. In Kyrgyzstan, the GALS methodology was applied in ten villages to encourage the fair distribution of household care and domestic responsibilities and finances among household members. In several households, incomes were redirected for purchasing electric washing machines and water heating systems that reduced the time spent by women on household chores.

In Nepal 1,294 rural women farmers and their household members were reached through a series of community discussions on gender equality, social inclusion, local level planning processes and women farmers' access to resources; with the participating women reporting an increase in their knowledge and confidence.

"These sessions help us understand our strengths and our priorities and take actions accordingly. We are now able to take actions collectively as a group on the issues of women, prioritize the issue, develop an action plan and submit it to the respective Palika", (Member of Mankamana Mahila Farmer Group of Gujara Municipality, Rautahat, Nepal).

In Niger, the Dimitra Clubs that assemble 3,600 members (2,400 women and 1,200 men) to discuss issues impacting on women's lives and rights, were further strengthened through monthly support missions to help ensure the suitability of previous activities and address new challenges. Accordingly, 20 village meetings took stock of the past achievements and helped orient new activities. Results achieved include the mobilization of funds for the automatic pumping of a community borehole which has increased access to drinking water, reduced conflict over water, and reduced women and girl's workload contributing to

improving girls school attendance. Community discussions held in 2019 focused also on issues, such as women's and girl's right to education, women's literacy, the reduction or elimination of dowry as a pre-condition of marriage, the elimination of child marriage and community resilience against climate change.

It should be noted that, in Liberia, activities under this output were carried out with 5,657 rural women increasing their awareness on sexual reproductive health and rights, including HIV/AIDS prevention. This was achieved as a result of a strategic partnership with the National AIDS Control Programme and completed the activities of 43 community-based facilitators (17 women and 26 men) who are working towards building the capacity of SGBV survivors, women with disability, women home-keepers, and community leaders to prevent and respond to cases of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) at the community level.

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

Outcome 4 aims to catalyse legislative and policy reforms for the effective enforcement of rural women's land rights and their access to decent wage employment, social protection, services and infrastructure. It involves advocating with governments, parliamentarians and other relevant stakeholders for delivering greater development outcomes in the framework of the 2030 Agenda. This includes engagement with local government institutions and authorities to enhance their knowledge and understanding of how a more gender-sensitive policy environment at the local level can address the multiple needs of rural women farmers. The creation of evidence on current challenges and priority areas for interventions aimed at enforcing rural women's rights to land, resources, social protection and infrastructure is also included here.

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

Significantly, a shift occurred from the focus on implementation of policies and strategies observed in 2018 to a focus on the capacity development of policy makers and parliamentarians in 2019. Capacity development trainings for over 2,131 elected leaders were held in Nepal, Niger, Guatemala and Ethiopia. The topics ranged from gender sensitive planning and gender budgeting, women's rights, women's participation through to gender analysis and gender sensitive monitoring. Following a training session in Nepal, 38 participants (22 women, 16 men) shared that they were more aware about the local level planning process and the importance of ensuring women's representation in the related planning progress.

The JP RWEE continued to provide some technical assistance to implement specific policies or strategies: in Rwanda, on the revision of the Agricultural Gender Strategy; in Liberia, on the Land Rights Act that promotes equal rights to land and equal participation in governance; and in Ethiopia, on the Agricultural Mechanisation Policy, where a rapid assessment was conducted from which a policy brief was developed and shared to further inform the development process of the policy.

Public hearings and strategic dialogues with policy makers, local government and communities on connecting national policy implementation with the needs of rural men and women were held with the participation of more than 150 people in Nepal, Kyrgyzstan and in Liberia, on women's land rights. During the national conference 'Women Entrepreneurs in the Kyrgyz Republic: A new impulse for sustainable development' rural women groups participating in the JP RWEE attended and met with relevant government

stakeholders from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and Parliament. Discussion on the legislative changes required for enabling development of women's entrepreneurship in the country took place, enhancing knowledge of the leaders and increasing the likelihood that issues related to women's economic empowerment will be mainstreamed in future policies.

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

The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) continued to be an important tool of measurement in the JP RWEE's implementation. Four out of the seven countries continued to use the tool to measure women's empowerment in agriculture, going beyond quantitative indicators to include qualitative indicators. In Ethiopia, the WEAI was used to collect midline data from 1,200 beneficiary households. The preliminary findings identified that women participating in the JP RWEE have increased control over income and production as well as improved levels of decision making in agricultural production over high value farming production and horticulture. The findings also revealed that the Programme has unfortunately increased women's time burden by engaging them into new production and learning activities, which will require further consideration in 2020. The WEAI has helped compare and consolidate JP RWEE endline results among pilot countries, and the results from the Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Nepal surveys will further contribute to this in 2020.²⁸

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 raise awareness about the rights of rural women and their multiple contributions to society. This message is largely communicated through the development and dissemination of knowledge products and engagement of the JP RWEE in global events. In 2019, three such events were: (i) the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in New York; (ii) the event 'Indigenous Peoples, Custodians of Nature: From Laudato si' of Pope Francesco to the Sustainable Development Goals', co-organized by the Vatican Mission to the RBAs and FAO; and (iii) the International Cooperation Expo held in Rome (EXCO2019), focusing on the role of ICTs and innovations in the JP RWEE. These events played a significant role in raising awareness of the importance of rural women's empowerment for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

e. Delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned and good practices

The monitoring and assessment field missions carried out in 2019, together with country reports, evaluations, reviews and exchanges, have been instrumental for gathering information on how the JP RWEE improves rural women's lives.²⁹ They have created a pool of information from which lessons, good practices and challenges are collected.

²⁸ Both Nepal and Niger had included end line WEAI surveys in their 2019 workplans but have shifted them to the end of 2020 to allow for completion of the current phase of implementation.

²⁹ Two field missions were organized by the Global Coordination team in 2019; to Nepal in February and to Ethiopia in May. In addition, other field missions were arranged by country offices for monitoring purposes.

The principal lessons learned from an *operational* perspective include:

- The alignment among the JP RWEE and the different national and global policies and standards to promote and protect women's economic rights and autonomy has proven to be a key aspect of the Programme's success and ownership by participating countries. At the local level, strategic alliances with municipal bodies have consolidated ownership of programme activities by district authorities;
- The continued leveraging of synergies at the country level with other programmes – such as UN Women's Buy from Women Initiative, and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Programme – has bolstered the JP RWEE's capacity to deliver tangible results;^{30,31}
- The standardization of tools for data collection at the country level has facilitated and strengthened the monitoring and evaluation of the national JP RWEE programmes, ensuring that PUNOs have clear guidelines on type and format of information to be reported.

As for the level of *activities*, some of the lessons learned include the following:

- Conducting rapid assessments for informed diagnosis of the JP RWEE's current status serves to refine the programme's interventions. For instance, the 2019 rapid assessment conducted in Rwanda revealed how most cooperatives (83.3%) lacked regular access to markets for their products and entrepreneurship skills. This information was used to revise Programme activities;³²
- Working with women's groups increases rural women's commitment and confidence for participating in programme activities, while the increased peer support contributes to strengthening associativity;
- Providing rural women with mentorship enables women to actively use the literacy and business skills they have acquired during training sessions, as community-based facilitators are able to engage with them on a one-on-one basis, thereby providing tailored support;
- The establishment of peer-to-peer learning exchange mechanisms provides an opportunity for rural women from similar contexts to exchange knowledge and experiences, helping them to leverage their own expertise and contribute to the economic empowerment of other rural women;
- The engagement of rural men is needed for ensuring success, ownership and sustainability of the JP RWEE and to transform inequitable gender relations, including the division of labour at both household and community levels. Men were targeted as participants for capacity strengthening activities and advocates for gender equality. For instance, in Liberia, men participated in awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns for land rights of rural women through (i) UN Women's HeForShe campaign, and (ii) during participatory community dialogues facilitated by the JP RWEE;³³ and

³⁰ Buy from Women initiative in Liberia and Rwanda.

³¹ NEPAD is an economic development program of the African Union, which has Human Capital Development (Skills, Youth, Employment and Women Empowerment) under its areas of work.

³² This type of assessments normally includes focus group discussions, key informant interviews and field observations.

³³ HeForShe is a solidarity campaign for the advancement of gender equality, initiated by UN Women with the aim of achieving equality by encouraging all genders to partake as agents of change and take action against negative gender-based stereotypes and behaviors. Further information can be found in the website: <https://www.heforshe.org/>.

- Strengthening and promoting the engagement of rural women with value chains contributes to sustainable results. This is being attained through the development of competitive marketable products, the increased involvement of rural women in the creation of business plans, and the provision of transferrable skills through trainings.

Selected good practices

Examples of good practices identified by country teams in 2019 include³⁴:

- Strengthening the savings and loan groups in Guatemala, which were established to enable rural women without collateral to obtain loans for starting businesses, securing sufficient capital for productive inputs and for expanding livelihood alternatives in non-farm sectors. The savings and loan groups have also contributed to the organizational strengthening of women's groups and women's improved financial and accountancy skills.
- Socializing the legal frameworks for rural women's land access in Liberia, subsequent to the passing of the 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA), which advances rural women's rights to land.³⁵ The JP RWEE, in partnership with local civil society networks, has employed social mobilization and advocacy for raising awareness and fostering local leaders' support for rural women's land tenure security, employing, for example, SMS services and the curricula for adult literacy and business development trainings. Social mobilization contributed to securing community-based support for rural women's land rights, including granting of individual titles to land, joint titling and land distribution programmes.³⁶
- Applying mentorship methodologies through the Leadership and Gender Schools in Kyrgyzstan brought gender expertise to rural institutions and promoted gender-equitable policy making at local levels. Following training, rural women participated in local budget planning, hearings and meetings with heads of municipalities. Through the development of gender-responsive plans, the Leadership Gender Schools contributed to addressing lingering gender-discriminatory stereotypes, such as women's lack of capacities to improve agricultural production and lead businesses.
- Engaging local leaders and government officials in Nepal on a regular basis through information sessions and training on gender equality and social inclusion plans and policies. These activities were coupled with field visits from local leaders to increase understanding of the challenges faced by rural women in Nepal. An increase in the level of ownership and commitment by local governments with the JP RWEE and its mission was recorded.
- Using Dimitra Clubs as the main channel for the implementation of JP RWEE's programme activities. Dimitra Clubs have contributed to improved food and nutrition security by facilitating access to inputs (such a pastoral kits) for producing more diverse foods and to skills on food security, nutrition, food processing and entrepreneurship. In addition, through the Dimitra Clubs, numerous

³⁴ Refer to the Knowledge Management section for more information.

³⁵ Between 2015 and 2018, the JP RWEE advocated for the passage of the Land Rights Act in the national parliament through strategic policy dialogues and lobbying with parliamentarians working with the House Committees on Land and Gender.

³⁶ Local civil society networks included the Rights and Rice Foundation (RRF), EduCARE Liberia and the Foundation for Community Initiative (FCI).

rural women and men received the opportunity to participate in thematic discussions on law, gender equality, rights and leadership.

- Implementing an enhanced GALs methodology in Rwanda provided rural households with the tools to jointly and comprehensively envision improved livelihoods, including also the ability to promote health nutrition and adapt to climate change. Due to the targeting of largely marginalized groups, social inclusion was promoted, with members of the marginalized groups accessing the extensive JP RWEE package of interventions for helping advance their 'vision', including agricultural productive inputs, capacity strengthening activities on food production and nutrition, and leadership training.³⁷

Challenges

The identification and redress of challenges in the JP RWEE implementation will ensure its continued relevance and impact. Operational challenges encountered included the turnover of JP RWEE country coordinators in three countries, potentially triggered by lack of funding predictability. This situation made coordination uneven among PUNOs and implementing partners, hampering activities such as meetings, joint preparation of documentation, organization of events and monitoring visits.³⁸ In the three countries, the leading agencies were however able to appoint temporary focal points to provide the needed support to complete activities and produce required documentation, such as the annual workplans and bi-annual reports. In Rwanda for example, two WFP focal points led the JP RWEE coordination for four months while the position was vacant, being able to successfully coordinate expected deliverables.³⁹

Notwithstanding the support provided for the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the JP RWEE at country level, including increased technical support from the Global Coordination Unit and dedicated staff at country level, the ability to obtain and systematize data for effective M&E was hampered by the (i) differentiated monitoring systems applied by PUNOs, (ii) lack of standardized data baselines to guide posterior data collection, and (iii) limited local capacities to devise and measure the indicators on non-tangible components.⁴⁰ Accordingly, development of qualitative assessments that consider the holistic nature of the JP RWEE have been particularly challenging. This challenge will, however, be addressed through implementation of the Global Learning Plan in 2020.

The unpredictability of funding remains the biggest obstacle for the planning, implementation and sustainability for JP RWEE results. Despite the renewed commitment of the Governments of both Sweden and Norway, leading to an extension of the Trust Fund, the annual funding cycle contributed to overall uncertainty as to the future prospects of the JP RWEE.⁴¹ Predictability of funding will be prioritised in Phase II of the JP RWEE.

³⁷ Marginalized groups included HIV positive rural women, former sex workers, single teenage mothers, and GBV survivors.

³⁸ Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan and Rwanda.

³⁹ The head of Livelihoods Unit and the Purchase for Progress Programme (P4P) coordinator.

⁴⁰ Often specialized staff members from PUNOs at country level have provided valuable support to the M&E activities, without being dedicated JP RWEE staff.

⁴¹ Refer to the Governance arrangements section for more information.

Political contexts and transition periods, such as elections, declared states of emergency, changes in governments, local government staff turnover and travel restrictions, contributed to delays in implementation of programme activities. Implementation delays were, for example, particularly apparent where there was reliance on provision of technical support by both implementing partners and PUNOs and where National Coordinators had to brief new focal points as governments changed.⁴² Efforts to ensure smooth transitions between such occurrences were made by numerous countries such as Guatemala who adapted their strategy for targeting training participants to prioritize those holding longer-term contracts within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA).

Rural women with limited literacy reported difficulties in comprehending some content from the training, thereby preventing them from fully benefiting from participation in such JP RWEE activities. Opportunities to practice community and household leadership were, however, provided through women's groups, learning exchange visits and the application of tools for shared planning and decision making. Activities implemented subsequent to the training increased women's confidence, overcoming literacy barriers and with some rural women obtaining leadership roles in their communities.

Certain conditions required to access markets remained unmet by rural women at the individual and collective levels such as shared or cooperative bank accounts, productive capacity to consistently match a regular demand from buyer groups, quality control certificates, and other official certifications required to become providers of processed food to either government institutions (like school canteens) or the private sector (restaurants, hotels, etc.).⁴³ Efforts continued for strengthening organizational and productive capacities of producer organizations, alongside increased support for formalizing them as cooperatives or unions.⁴⁴

f. Qualitative assessment of the JP RWEE's implementation

Quantitative information needs to be coupled with a qualitative assessment in order to thoroughly understand the impact of the JP RWEE while taking into consideration those components and experiences that are not quantifiable.

During 2019, the JP RWEE continued to demonstrate the advantages of implementing a model that leverages the expertise of four different UN Agencies, while solving a complex issue using an intersectional approach.

Over the years of implementation, the JP RWEE has been able to consolidate strategic partnerships with a wide array of agents globally and across the seven countries, from national government institutions to local NGOs, through civil society organizations and global research and advocacy bodies. The partnerships have been crucial for sustainability and ownership of the Programme at national and community levels. Moreover, partnerships with private sector actors have provided rural women with employment

⁴² This became an issue primarily in Guatemala after the general elections in June, in which two out of three targeted local authorities changed.

⁴³ For instance, in Rwanda, tomato production from greenhouses did not sufficiently meet the local demand that supply was paired to, resulting in buyers' perception of production not to be consistent or reliable, and therefore shifting to other suppliers.

⁴⁴ For instance, in Niger, and in partnership with the local NGO DIKO, 105 POs were supported to comply with the new Law on Association and Grouping (OHADA), helping them to improve their access to economic opportunities. The JP RWEE has been working with some Producer's Unions in countries such as Kyrgyzstan

opportunities in the formal labour market. In Liberia, for instance, a partnership with Orange Mobile Liberia has allowed approximately 344 rural women to receive the training needed to work as mobile money agents for facilitating financial transactions.

JP RWEE countries continued efforts to consolidate the engagement of their Ministries of Agriculture through different schemes remained a key success of the Programme. These collaborations have substantially contributed to the progress and sustainability of the JP RWEE, by advancing gender mainstreaming and gender targeted initiatives in institutions where gender is not at the core of their missions, while implementing activities within existing structures. Moreover, the JP RWEE's alignment with national plans, policies and overall strategic priorities regarding women's sustainable livelihoods and economic rights has proven to be fundamental for the Programme's relevance and sustainability.

Assessment of the JP RWEE's set of interventions reveals innovation as a key cross-cutting element to the achievement of results. Innovation is evident in technology, such as the JP RWEE's facilitation and use of labour-saving equipment or information and communications technology (ICT) tools.⁴⁵ Innovation is also evident in programme approaches, such as implementation of the GALS methodology, which have contributed to empowering outcomes for rural women.⁴⁶

Positive changes have materialised in the lives of rural women. For example, improvements in overall economic conditions were achieved by tackling the structural barriers impeding rural women's access to and control over productive resources and assets. In this area, the most significant gains relate to increased income-generating opportunities (through value chain development and promotion of non-farm economic activities) and control over income. In Niger, a qualitative study on the impact of small ruminant kits described how rural women were able to re-invest the benefits obtained in their households' well-being, mostly through purchasing diverse nutritious food items (42%), health services (15%) and schooling for children, including supplies and uniforms (8%).⁴⁷

Attitudinal changes on discriminatory gender norms were achieved by addressing the underlying social structures that continue to undermine rural women's economic empowerment. For instance, the engagement of men in programme activities contributed to re-thinking the roles of women and power dynamics within the household and the community. Participating men themselves recognized the importance of serving as advocates for an array of causes, including rural women's empowerment.

The Abbreviated Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (A-WEAI) exercise that was undertaken in Rwanda as part of the mid-term review revealed that approximately 90 percent of rural women were able to achieve an adequate level in the domains of production, resources, income, leadership and time and gender parity in the household.⁴⁸ The 9.1 percent of women not achieving 'adequacy' recognized that a primary factor contributing to their disempowerment is the intense workload of both paid work and unpaid

⁴⁵ The JP RWEE has continued to expand its work on digital literacy by ensuring that innovation and ICTs offer opportunities to unlock the business potential of rural women and allow access to financial and non-financial services, such as mobile banking, market information, amongst others.

⁴⁶ This household methodology relies in innovative participatory exercises that help developing the vision journey of households and enable discussions around a shared vision for their future and their current situation – including gender inequalities – in order to address identified constraints.

⁴⁷ This study was led by IFAD alongside local implementing partners

⁴⁸ The Abbreviated WEAI (A-WEAI) is a shortened version of the WEAI Index which, under the five domains of empowerment, retains six out of 10 composite indicators, with the weights for each indicator adjusted accordingly.

care and domestic activities (Figure 3). This finding reinforced how gendered workload division remains a challenge to gender equal relations and women’s empowerment.

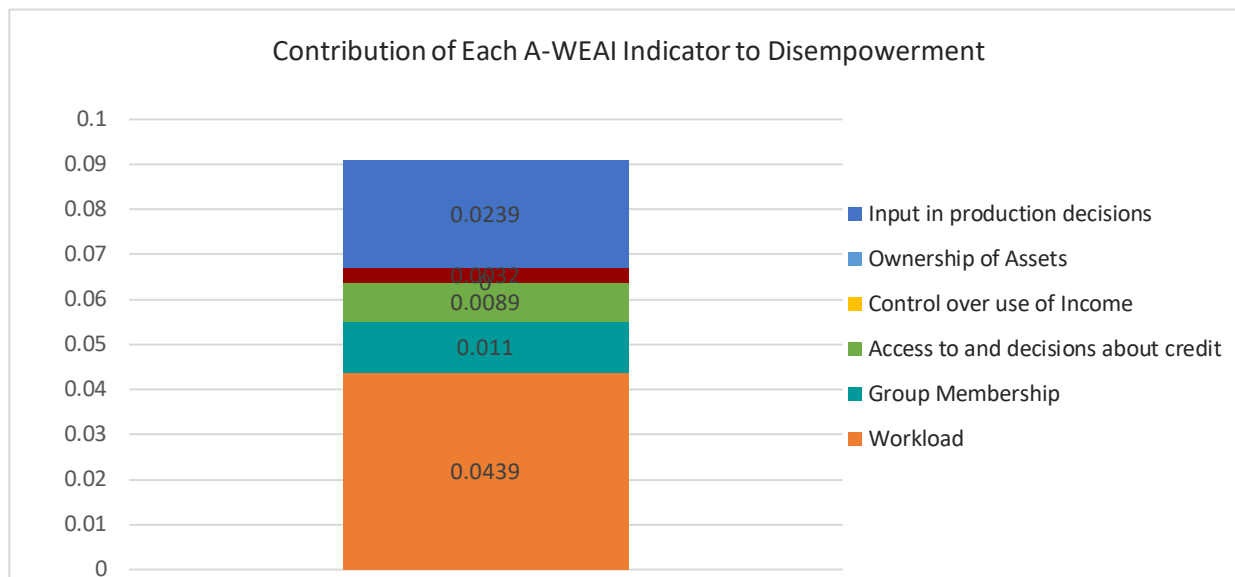


Figure 3: Contribution of each indicator to disempowerment according to the A-WEAI.⁴⁹

The strengthening of community networks through different schemes, such as the Dimitra Clubs in Niger, the Self-help Groups (SHG) in Kyrgyzstan or the Community Conversations in Ethiopia, provided safe spaces for rural women to discuss different issues, including subjects surrounded by silence and stigma, like sexual and reproductive health and rights. The conversations were coupled with the acquisition of practical and soft skills.⁵⁰ The JP RWEE also promoted the exchange of knowledge and experiences through exchange visits and national dialogue mechanisms. For instance, in Guatemala, the installation of the Technical Board for Rural Development and Indigenous Peoples has become a foremost initiative for inclusive and efficient learning and advocacy for rural women.

The above-mentioned changes are echoed in the experiences and reflections of rural women.

“Now we share that all women have knowledge and skills to undertake an activity within their home and thus contribute to the family economy by setting goals, with effort and courage. Thanks to the training we have received through the JP RWEE, we have been able to wake up, listen, know our rights and empower ourselves to say what we feel and act so that our daughters and sons are better than us and can live in harmony”

Concepción Pop Cac de Sacul from Guatemala

g. Governance arrangements

JP RWEE’s robust governance mechanism continues to provide effective coordination and leadership to ensure efficient preparation and implementation of activities while also delivering transparency of

⁴⁹ Source: Rwanda JP RWEE Mid-term Review – Final Report, 2019

⁵⁰ Soft Skills are those which are considered to enable people to navigate their environment, communicate and collaborate with others, while performing well towards their goals. They include social skills, communication skills, character or personality traits, attitudes, emotional intelligence, among others.

allocations and expenditures. Based on strong ownership at both the government and civil society levels in the participating countries, it continues to be seen as a successful model and one that has now been replicated in other development programmes. The governance mechanism consists of:

- An International Steering Committee (ISC), with representatives of the four agencies, the donors and of the seven participating governments, provides overall guidance, strategic vision and oversight of the allocation of funds. The ISC is chaired by one of the PUNOs on a rotational basis (in 2019 it was WFP) and meetings regularly include a representative from the MPTFO as Administrative Agent. The annual meeting of the ISC was held on 27 November 2019 that approved: the 2020 Workplans; allocations of available funds for 2020; and the extension of the MOU with the MPTFO regarding the operational aspects of the RWEE Trust Fund from 30 June 2020 to 31 December 2021 to allow alignment with the utilization of SIDA and Norway's additional contributions and ensure an orderly closure of Phase I of the JP RWEE;
- The ISC is supported by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), constituted with focal points of the four participating UN Agencies and the global coordination team. Its main role is to provide operational support to the ISC by providing all the necessary information needed for the ISC to take decisions on the RWEE. The TAC reviews project and budgets proposals and additionally reviews country financial and narrative reports to measure programme performance. In 2019, the TAC met on a monthly basis to provide technical support to the JP RWEE and approve relevant documentation;
- National Steering Committees (NSC) then operate at country level that are chaired by a high-level official of the Ministry of Agriculture with the participation of other relevant ministries (Ministry of Women's Affairs/Gender, Labour, Youth, Finance, etc.), the UN Resident Coordinator, civil society organizations, and representatives of rural women. The NSC oversees the allocation of funds to the different components of the country programme and provides coordination and guidance on implementation. Furthermore, it reviews and approves related progress reports;
- In addition to the National Steering Committee, in each country a JP RWEE Country Team/Technical Working Group (TWG) has been established to build synergies, address cross-sectoral matters and review progress of the implementation of the programme's activities. The JP RWEE Country Team performs the same role in-country as the TAC at the global level and includes the National Programme Coordinator;
- As the only dedicated JP RWEE staff members in country, the National Programme Coordinators lead in-country activities, ensure the harmonized and timely delivery of activities and reporting, as well as advance visibility and advocacy actions;
- The JP RWEE Global Coordinator is responsible for the overall management of the Programme and is hosted by WFP. The JP RWEE Global Coordinator reports to a designated senior official from the host organization and provides secretariat support to the ISC and the TAC.
- The Knowledge Management (KM) and Communication Consultant is responsible enhancing the visibility and knowledge management of the Programme. The KM and Communication Consultant works under the general supervision of the JP RWEE Global Coordinator and the Senior Gender Advisor from the host organisation.

h. Knowledge management and sharing events

The efforts to systematize and disseminate knowledge generated during the JP RWEE implementation continued over the course of 2019. These materialised primarily through the preparation of the following guiding documents at global level:

- Development and dissemination of a Good Practice Identification Guidance Note: With the purpose of providing a standardized guide to identify, systematize, and document JP RWEE good practices at country level, a guidance note was developed and shared with the seven implementing countries. The document included instructions for the execution of a one-day workshop focused on identifying and validating good practices;
- The JP RWEE Communications Plan: Designed with the aim to guide the sourcing, production and dissemination of communication and knowledge sharing materials, for increasing the visibility of the JP RWEE through diversified channels. The plan envisioned its implementation at both global and local levels and was therefore shared among JP RWEE country teams; and
- The JP RWEE Global Learning Plan: In order to bolster the production, documentation, dissemination, and use of the knowledge emerging from the JP RWEE implementation, a global learning plan was developed and approved by the ISC during 2019. The products and activities include i) the JP RWEE Global Evaluation; ii) a global consolidation workshop; iii) the development of policy briefs on JP RWEE relevant issues; iv) a synthesis report on WEAI end lines; and v) documenting good practices, innovations and successful approaches.⁵¹

These three documents will help define the critical aspects from the JP RWEE that can inform the next steps of the initiative and future development of joint programmes focusing on rural women, gender equality, women's empowerment and food security.

In addition, during this period, concrete activities focused on sharing the JP RWEE experience internally and externally took place:

- Launching of the 'Faces of Empowerment' publication which showcases cross-cutting topics that are tackled by the JP RWEE across the seven implementing countries, featuring photos and testimonies from rural women along with short texts about the relevance of each of them. This publication aims at increasing programme visibility and raising awareness within a wider audience;
- The organization of JP RWEE side event during the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) that took place at the UN Headquarters in New York on 14 March 2019. The event on 'Rural Women's Empowerment for Food Security and Nutrition for All: Evidence from Joint UN Work' showcased the importance of rigorous qualitative and quantitative assessment for understanding the local meaning of empowerment and assessing the impact of programme on the key dimensions of rural women's empowerment for enhancing food security; and

⁵¹ In accordance with the Joint Governance principle of the Programme, the plan contemplated that each participating agency would take the lead on a different activity; FAO for the global evaluation, IFAD for the WEAI synthesis report, UN Women for the policy briefs and WFP for both the documenting of good practices and the consolidation workshop.

- Presentations focused on specific cross-cutting topics of the JP RWEE during multi-stakeholder events. During 2019, these presentations were on: i) 'Indigenous Women Empowerment for Food Security and Improved Livelihoods' – Case of the JP RWEE in Guatemala, for the joint FAO/Vatican event on indigenous communities that took place in Rome on March 28 2019, ii) 'The Role of ICTs and Innovation in the Rural Women's Economic Empowerment Partnership' during the International Cooperation Exposition (EXCO) 2019 held in Rome on May 15 2019, iii) social inclusion through targeted marginalized populations for the workshop 'Social and Economic Drivers of Sustainable Local Economic Development' held in Tshwane, South Africa.

Moreover, the JP RWEE country teams engaged with the learning and systematization around the programme experience:

- The seven participating countries organized 'Good Practice Identification Workshops', with the active participation from the implementing agencies and representatives from the local implementing partners. As a result, good practices have been identified and documented in a standard template at country level;
- The JP RWEE country teams filled two separate templates (one on Monitoring and Evaluation and one on Knowledge Management) which were then compiled at the global level to have a clearer idea of the processes taking place at country level and the products being developed; and
- During the preparation of the annual workplans for 2020, country teams were requested to give relevance to the monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management sections. These sections were rigorously evaluated and represented 25 percent of the total workplan score under the compliance checklist.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

The table below shows an update on the main results achieved for 2019, using the logical framework from the JP RWEE Programme Document. Since each country has translated the four main JP RWEE outcomes into activities aligned with their own national priorities and baseline assessments, the results are listed with a reference to the country that reported it.

	Achieved Indicator Targets	
Outcome 1: Improved food and nutrition security	<p>Quantitative: Increase of agricultural production of women farmers</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% increase in rural women’s wheat production. - 125% increase in rural women’s maize production. - 83% increase in rural women’s teff (local crop) production. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 49.5% increase in rural women’s maize production. - 33.3% increase in rural women’s bean production. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15% increase in rural women’s cassava production. - 10% increase in rural women’s rice production. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 329% increase in rural women’s vegetable production. 	<p>Qualitative: Evidence of improvement of rural women dietary diversity and consumption patterns</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of rural women were able to feed their household 3 times a day with a diversified diet, including at least 3 or more food groups served per meal. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dietary Diversity Score increased to 6.22 in 2019, as compared to the 4.5 in 2014. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,657 rural women and their household had adequate dietary intake for their nutrition. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,333 rural households experienced 69.9% increase in vegetable consumption of kitchen gardens by quantity and frequency. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dietary Diversity Score increased from 3.8 to 5 in Falwel and from 2.42 to 3.73 in Djirataoua.

<p>Output 1.1: Rural women have increased access to resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,108 rural women received agricultural production inputs and technologies, including seeds. - 1,031 rural women accessed improved agriculture production techniques. - 842 rural women accessed labour-saving technologies. - 1,556 rural women accessed integrated nutrition services. - 333 rural women from 2 cooperatives gained access to land for livestock and farming activities. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 333 rural women received improved agricultural production inputs and knowledge for agro-ecological practices and backyard garden practices. - 822 community members (594 women and 228 men) strengthened their capacities in gender-sensitive food and nutrition security. - 1,125 rural women strengthened their knowledge in proper and nutritious use of foods including food preparation. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 700 rural farmers (649 women and 51 men) accessed improved agriculture production techniques, including tunnel greenhouses. - 691 rural farmers (645 women, 46 men) strengthened their capacities on vegetable production technologies and drip irrigation systems. - 689 rural farmers (644 women and 45 men) strengthened their capacities on irrigation methods. - 355 rural farmers (329 women and 26 men) participated in learning exchange visits for vegetable growing. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 636 rural farmers (576 women and 60 men) accessed high-quality seeds, tools and machineries for enhancing agricultural production. - 150 rural farmers (128 women and 22 men) accessed improved agricultural techniques for cassava production. - 3,186 rural women increased their capacity and knowledge for managing labour saving technologies such as power tiller and assorted hand tools.
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	<p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,333 rural women accessed improved agriculture inputs and production techniques including vegetable seeds, irrigation schemes, agricultural machinery and equipment, and agricultural technologies. - 250 rural women gained access to agricultural water through installed infrastructure. - 2,333 rural women accessed integrated nutrition services. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 330 rural farmers (220 women and 110 men) in three districts accessed labour-saving technologies. - 515 rural women gained access to land. - 323 rural women from 5 PO's strengthened the infrastructure of their market gardens. - 100 new pastoral kits were distributed. - 900 rural women strengthened their capacities on livestock management. - 1,129 community members (801 women and 328 men) strengthened their knowledge on nutrition. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 11,278 rural farmers (11,000 women and 278 men) accessed small-scale irrigation. - 2,060 rural farmers (1,697 women and 363 men) accessed nutrition training. - 1,092 households were provided with energy saving stoves.
<p>Output 1.2: Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300 rural women accessed processing technologies saving technologies such as maize sheller, milk processing materials and modern beehives. - 300 rural women strengthened their capacities on household food reserves' management. - 2,295 rural women managed household's food reserves. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21.7% of reduction of post-harvest farm and storage losses achieved. - 854 rural women strengthened their capacities on post- harvest techniques. - 1,125 rural women strengthened their capacities and knowledge on nutrition and proper use of food. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 685 rural farmers (643 women and 42 men) accessed vegetable and fruit processing technologies.

	<p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,756 rural women accessed local Community Grain Reserves (CGRs) equipped with processing technologies. - 252 rural women strengthened their knowledge in post harvesting value addition. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,333 rural women benefitted from kitchen gardening and commercial fresh vegetable production. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,211 rural farmers (921 women and 290 men) strengthened their capacities on cereal storage and conservation techniques. - 632 rural women accessed integrated nutrition services including nutrition education, farmer field schools and school canteens. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 938 rural farmers strengthened their skills on Post Harvest Handling and Storage (PHHS). A Training of Trainers (ToT) approach was used where 27 participants (18 women and nine men) were trained to disseminate knowledge to 911 fellow farmers. - 1,860 rural farmers benefitted from kitchen gardening. - 483 rural women accessed food processing technologies. - 2,153 rural farmers (1,771 women and 382 men) strengthened their knowledge on good nutrition practices and balanced diets; ToT approach was used where 70 lead farmers (58 women and 12 men) were trained to disseminate knowledge to 2,083 fellow farmers. - 18 farmer field schools (FFS) were created.
<p>Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 10,927 income generated from the sales by rural women organized in three cooperatives. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 128,921 income generated from sales by rural women. - US\$ 106,062 (126% increase since last year) generated by community savings and credit groups. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 77,138 income generated from sales by rural women. - US\$ 17,325 generated by community savings groups.

	<p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 241,617 (253.42% increase since 2018) income generated from sales by rural women. - US\$ 54, 618 generated by community savings groups. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 116,422 (20% increase since 2018) income generated by rural women's cooperatives from sales to WFP - US\$ 32,520 generated by community savings groups. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - US\$ 168,000 income generated through the sales by rural women. - US\$ 15,842 generated by community and savings groups (total amount estimated based on the average daily individual savings of each of the 2,361 saving groups' members).
<p>Output 2.1: Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,213 rural women accessed credit from revolving funds. - 3,280 rural women strengthened their knowledge on basic business knowledge and entrepreneurship skills. - 2,958 rural women accessed diversified sources of income. - 100 rural farmers (93 women and 7 men) accessed new local markets for their products. - 472 rural women gained access to the Addis Ababa market. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,410 rural women strengthened their knowledge on effective negotiation and marketing, value chains and associative marketing and financial management. - 635 rural farmers (492 women and 43 men) accessed technical assistance and inputs for the development of the honey value chain. - 543 rural farmers (377 women and 166 men) engaged in service provision enterprises for processing of traditional tortillas. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 644 rural women strengthened their entrepreneurial, financial literacy and business skills. - US\$ 2,600 were generated from the sales of dried fruits and vegetables by cooperatives. - Four PO's (1,673 rural women) participated on the Business Action Learning for Innovation (BALI) methodology pilot.

	<p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,657 rural women accessed business development support, including surpluses trading value chains development for cassava and rice. - 693 rural women strengthened their financial literacy skills. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,258 rural women accessed credit through revolving funds. - 40 women farmers' groups were provided marketing equipment, such as weighing machine and plastic crate, in order to handle and carry fresh vegetables safely to the market. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4,650 rural women to accessed credits through their VSLAs. - 418 rural women strengthened their entrepreneurship skills. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2,361 rural farmers (1,986 women and 375 men) strengthened their financial literacy skills. - 1,662 rural women received entrepreneurship trainings for building on the capacities of cooperatives.
<p>Output 2.2: Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,723 rural women accessed start-up capital for their individual IGAs including cattle fattening, milk processing, grain production and grinding mills services. - Four cooperatives reorganized into agri-business cooperatives and obtained legal certification. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,410 rural women were directly involved in IGAs including egg production, poultry, aquaculture, honey production, textiles, among others. - 221 community members (150 women and 71 men) accessed employment opportunities in the 'Water Purification Plant' implemented alongside the Healing Water International Foundation and the Association for Integral Rural Development (ADRI). <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 644 rural women strengthened their knowledge and skills for IGAs including baking and sewing, poultry farming.

	<p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 344 rural women gained employment within the private sector (Orange Liberia Mobile Money). - 749 rural women entrepreneurs increased their capacity and skills to operate mobile money on their phones. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 135 rural women received short-term wage employment through cash assistance for assets activities <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 998 rural women engaged in income-generating activities. - 16,045 community members (14,745 women and 1,300 men) accessed newly provided equipment for IGAs, including peanut processing kits, cattle carts and pulleys. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total of US\$ 19,584 was provided to rural women for IGA. 		
<p>Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes</p>	<p>Proportion of rural women who are members of land committees</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,197 rural women participated in land committees at county level. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,564 (367 new members since last year) participated in land committees at county level. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 32 rural women participated in Land Commissions across three municipalities 	<p>Proportion of POs led by women</p> <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 69 POs led by rural women. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 130 POs led by rural women. 	<p>Evidence of rural women's empowerment in intra-household decision making</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 57% (1,193) of the 2,100 rural women targeted to increase decision making capacities, participated in household decision-making involving the sale of assets like cattle and rental of land.

<p>Output 3.1: Rural women, including young women, have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</p>	<p>Rural women have been supported to gain access to literacy skills and basic education</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,007 rural women enrolled in adult literacy trainings. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 256 rural women enrolled in literacy courses in collaboration with the National Literacy Committee (CONALFA). <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 379 rural girls enrolled in secondary education. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,830 (community members 1,159 women and 671 men) enrolled in literacy courses. - 1,222 rural girls received scholarships for completing primary and secondary education. 	<p>Rural women have strengthened their self-confidence and leadership skills</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 249 rural women strengthened their leadership, assertiveness and management skills. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 500 rural women participated in sessions on adult literacy, vocational skills training, and awareness raising on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Menstrual Hygiene Management. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,294 rural women strengthened their leadership skills. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,043 rural farmers (871 women and 172 men) enhanced their self-confidence and leadership skills. - 79 (55 women and 24 men) rural farmers strengthened their cooperative management skills. 	<p>Rural women have increased their participation in Local Governance</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <p>rural women participated in decision-making at rural institutions and communities</p> <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 240 rural women took part in decision-making spaces at the organizational level <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80 rural women leaders participated in the process of local planning and budgeting.
<p>Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form,</p>	<p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five informal groups joined formally registered POs, cooperatives and unions. - Seven producer organizations (comprising 294 rural women) implemented gender policies. 		

<p>sustain and participate in POs, cooperatives and unions</p>	<p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eight women’s groups registered as formal cooperatives, encompassing 200 rural women. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nine Unions of POs strengthened their organizational capacities. - 105 POs complied with the new law on association and grouping (OHADA). <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nine informal groups legally registered as formal cooperatives. - 600 (500 women and 100 men) rural farmers from 18 POs participated in leadership discussions to encourage higher participation within their communities.
<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>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 53 institutions, including 24 women led cooperatives (RUSACCOs and Agri-business cooperatives), advocated for women to access and control land and other public services and resources. - Forum on Women’s Agency for Economic Empowerment and Family Resilience organised in collaboration with the Organization for Women in Self Employment (WISE). <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seven rural women became representatives of the Community Development Council (COCODES) and two rural women of the Municipal Development Council (COMUDES). - 140 rural women participated in the commemoration march of International Women’s Day. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80 rural women participated in policy lobbying activities at local and central levels. - Two regional dialogue mechanisms launched during the celebrations International Women’s Day and national Rural Women’s Day, <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two national dialogues were organized; on women’s land rights and the national policy dialogue on the 2018 Land Rights Act. - A national conference was organized on the 2018 Land Rights Act. <p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 22 Dimitra Clubs’ members (12 women and 10 men) participated in learning exchange visits.

	<p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 38 (10 men and 28 women) rural farmers participated in the Gender Accountability Day celebrated at national level.
<p>Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women, have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 230 community members (164 women and 66 men) enhanced their awareness on gender issues and women’s economic rights. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 758 rural women enhanced their awareness and knowledge on women’s rights. - 168 (148 women and 20 men) community members received training on the application of the GALS methodology; 121 replications took place afterwards. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 644 rural women enhanced their awareness and knowledge on women’s rights. - 19 public events organized at local level for raising awareness about women’s rights, gender equality and gender stereotypes. - 1,013 community members participated in the GALS methodology. <p><u>Liberia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5,657 rural women increased their awareness on sexual reproductive health and rights, including HIV/AIDS prevention. - 2,247 rural women increased their knowledge and capacity to demand respect of their rights in community management of land and other natural resources. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 992 rural women strengthened knowledge in issues related to women’s economic empowerment, barriers and discriminatory social norms, gender responsive program of local government, and challenges faced by women farmers. - 1,312 rural women (18 women facilitators) participated in discussion sessions on women’s human rights and GESI responsive approaches and women rights. - 411 community members (331 women and 81 men) participated in the GALS methodology.

	<p><u>Niger</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3,600 community members (2,400 women and 1,200 men) participated in 120 DIMITRA clubs to learn and exchange about their rights. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 115 GALS participants (92 women and 23 men) participated in a joint study visit. 	
<p>Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women</p>	<p>Government Institutions developing work plans and budgets ensuring rural women inclusion on resource distribution</p> <p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four public institutions incorporated gender equality targets in their policy and programmes. - Three policies are being revised to enhance gender mainstreaming. <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One local development work plan developed following an inclusive and participatory process. - 20 targeted municipalities integrated gender priorities in their local plans. 	<p>Proportion of government budgets and donor funding allocated to programmes benefitting rural women</p> <p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20 target municipalities allocated a total of US\$ 12,500 from the annual budgets for gender-sensitive activities. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three municipalities allocated a total of US\$ 11,433.5 for different activities contributing to rural women’s economic empowerment.
<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><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,434 public officials (832 women and 602 men) enhanced their knowledge and skills to promoting gender mainstreaming and gender responsive policies. <p><u>Guatemala</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 495 public officers enhanced their knowledge and skills to promoting gender mainstreaming and gender responsive policies. - Technical Board for Rural Development of Gender and Indigenous peoples was fully operational. 	

	<p><u>Kyrgyzstan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 policy makers participated in learning and advocacy events on rural women’s empowerment. - 28 representatives from Village health committees (VHC) enhanced their knowledge on nutrition and reproductive health for rural women. <p><u>Nepal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 38 locally elected leaders (22 women and 16 men) from Rautahat and Sarlahi districts enhanced their knowledge on GESI and GRB in local level participatory planning processes. <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ‘Agriculture Gender Mainstreaming Strategy’ was finalized and validated with support from the JP RWEE to MINAGRI.
<p>Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women</p>	<p><u>Ethiopia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three evidence-based studies were finalized (Cost of gender gap in agricultural productivity, Policy brief on agricultural mechanization and Gender Profile). - Midline data collection of WEIA Index took place <p><u>Rwanda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two evidence-based studies were finalized (Gender analysis of the financial and bean value chains).
<p>Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional and global policy processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One side event organized at global fora as part of the awareness-raising work around rural women’s issues and priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o One during the 63nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in New York City in March 2019

iii) A Specific story

Rural women's individual stories illustrate the transformational journey experienced by accessing the tools and skills needed to enhance their food security, livelihoods diversification and decision-making power within their households and communities. In 2019, three stories from rural women in Rwanda, Liberia and Nepal are showcased.

Story 1: Francine and the enhancement of food security

Name: Francine Mukazayire

Location: Ngera Sector, Nyaruguru District, Rwanda

Francine Mukazayire is a member of the JP RWEE supported savings group Twungubumwe Ngera, which consists of 45 members (36 women and nine men). Prior to her involvement in the group, she was uncomfortable speaking in front of people, especially in the presence of men. However, as a result of the training on governance and women leadership, she took the initiative to apply for the position of the secretary in the group. *"I am now a member of the executive committee and I feel more empowered"* she proudly narrates. *"I was trained on Post-Harvest Handling and storage practices and I was also provided with drying and storage*



equipment. Before the Programme, I could not store food for my home consumption, I just could sell all the produce right at the harvest and it was not profitable at all. In 2019, I harvested 250 kg of maize from which I sold 100 kg on 200 Rwf/kg which and earned me 200,000 Rwf (US\$ 220), gaining incomes for food which will sustain my family up to the next harvest".

Additionally, Francine narrates the relevance of nutrition lessons to complement this income increase: *"The training on nutrition was eye opening to me, I learnt that what we consume has an impact on our health, the education of our kids and life expectancy. Since then, I have changed my cooking habits to include more vegetables and animal proteins as much as possible. When the sector office requested for a person who could volunteer to host an early child development centre, I accepted. More than 30 children gather at my house with their mothers, we prepare a healthy meal and we get milk from government to feed the children. In that same platform, we discuss as women on how to implement good breast-feeding practices and habits as well as other hygiene matters required in the households."*

Story 2: The story of a rural woman leader

Name: Madam Lorpu Gizzie

Location: Daniel Village, Margibi County, Liberia

Madam Lorpu Gizzie is a 54-year-old JP RWEE beneficiary and Chair of the Progressive Rural Women Farmers Group. She has experienced increased income and economic security as a result of her access to labour-saving technologies such as a cassava grater and has therefore been able to invest in vegetable production and to serve as a Chair of her local Village Savings and Loan Association group. There, she successfully manages 30 women farmers who are currently engaged in value chain development with cassava for income generation. Madam Gizzie is also self-employed in her VSLA as both the Chair and a member.

With the income from the sales of vegetables (cabbage, bitterballs, eggplants), and processed produce (farina, cassava flour, fufu), Madam Lorpu has managed to finance the schooling of her three children; two attending high school 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-sustained and self-managed group that contributes 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 have been able to start their own businesses and take 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. Furthermore, the VSLA has provided a neutral platform for people from the community, nearby towns and villages to come together for individual and collective gains.



Story 3: Learning to build improved livelihoods

Name: Ms. Shiva Kaliya Devi Mukhiya

Location: Rautahat district, Nepal

Ms. Shiva Kaliya Devi Mukhiya is a member of the Janaki group in Brindaban and lives with her two sons and three daughters in the Rautahat district. Her family owns land covering an area of 0.5 hectares. Thanks to the support of the JP RWEE, she has received technical and financial support to start



farming off-season vegetables using high a plastic tunnel.

The JP RWEE has been working in close collaboration with the local government and therefore 96 rural women's groups have been formed since 2015, encompassing members of 2,333 households of five urban and five rural municipalities in Rautahat and Sarlahi districts. After observing the positive results achieved by their neighbours, more rural women farmers gained interest to engage in the off-season vegetable farming adopting the plastic tunnel technology. Shiva Kaliya Devi Mukhiya was one of them.

She increased her number of plastic tunnels from one to four at her own cost and received from the JP RWEE the needed skills and knowledge to use locally available resources. Now, she knows how to create better livelihood opportunities with affordable investments. The vegetables added to her kitchen have also added value to the nutrient intake of her family's daily meals.

As she shares: "It has been a learning process. After the JP RWEE's interventions, I learned the techniques to establish the vegetable nursery, to transplant vegetables seedlings and to control disease and pest and many more. This supported me to learn how to earn better livelihood."

III. Other assessments or evaluations

With the aim to generate evidence from the JP RWEE implementation, Ethiopia completed a mid-term evaluation and two countries (Liberia and Rwanda) completed mid-term reviews. These exercises were completed in accordance with the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) Criteria for Evaluating Development Assistance of; i) relevance, ii) effectiveness, iii) efficiency, iv) impact and v) sustainability.⁵²

⁵² The DAC Network on Development Evaluation from OECD approved an updated set of definitions and principles for evaluation criteria. Further information can be found in the website:

<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

The mid-term evaluation in Ethiopia had its final report approved and released in April 2019. While the data collection and drafting process took place during 2018, the completion of the report with the proper quality assurance occurred in 2019. Notably, the evaluation highlighted the contribution of the JP RWEE to the 2030 Agenda and its alignment with the pillars of the Ethiopian Growth and Transformation Plan II and the outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Fund 2016 – 2020 (UNDAF). Key recommendations included strengthening substantive partnerships (particularly with government institutions), the need to execute more thorough market assessments, and to strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation framework in such a manner that it covers all dimensions of women empowerment beyond economic empowerment.

The Rwanda mid-term review was finalized and approved in September 2019, providing a further analysis of the operational aspects of the programme's implementation. The initial challenges in the overall coordination during the onset of JP RWEE were highlighted in the document, however the improvement of this situation was also recognized. Broad evidence of the JP RWEE's contribution to rural women's improved livelihoods was found and showcased; notwithstanding, the need to promote men's engagement in programme implementation was stressed.

The review also included a scaled measurement of the WEAI Index in targeted areas covered by the JP RWEE, providing an objective overview of the Programme's impact on promoting and achieving empowerment itself through the different dimensions. It was found that most targeted rural women achieved adequacy in the domains of production, resources, income, leadership and time and gender parity in the household.

The mid-term review in Liberia had its data collected and report drafted mostly during 2018 and underwent a quality assessment processes during the first quarter of 2019. However, the results from this later exercise didn't give positive feedback to the execution of the evaluation report; it was therefore decided it shouldn't be called an evaluation but a joint review. However, the data collected through the process has been useful to illustrate how the Programme has advanced, its main achievements and challenges. The process itself has also been a good learning experience, at both country and global levels, about the management of joint evaluations and the importance of stakeholders' engagement through their different stages.

IV. Programmatic revisions

In April 2019 JP RWEE countries were requested to develop proposals for a budget of USD 500,000 (an allocation provided by SIDA) for the continuation and consolidation of JP RWEE activities for the period 1 October 2019 - 30 June 2020. The proposals were then assessed against a compliance checklist composed of five criteria:

1. Relevance: The project proposal is consistent with the JP RWEE programme objectives;
2. Added value: JP RWEE added value is demonstrated by synergies and complementarities among the mandates of the PUNOs;
3. Sustainability: Project activities are sustainable at the individual, community and institutional levels;
4. Budget: The budget is relevant, appropriate, balanced and consistent in itself and with the specific objectives of the project; and
5. Monitoring and Evaluation: The monitoring and evaluation plan is adequate and includes measures to collect qualitative information.

The minimum score for approval was set at 75 (out of 100). Due to an additional contribution from Norway of 30 million NOK (approx. USD 3.2 million) country teams revised their proposals and increased their budgets to USD 900,000. The revised proposals were required to include strengthened sustainability components, with a focus on: value chain development, collaboration with national authorities; monitoring and evaluation; and knowledge management (including the organization of a national consultation to discuss good practices, lessons learned, and priority strategies for a potential Phase II of the JP RWEE).

All seven revised project documents were then assessed and approved by the TAC on 5 November 2019, along with the Global Learning Plan that contained the five main expected outputs of:

1. Joint Global Evaluation of the JP RWEE, led by FAO;
2. Development of 4 policy briefs on JP RWEE relevant issues, led by UN Women;
3. WEAI synthesis report, led by IFAD;
4. Consolidation workshop with JP RWEE stakeholders, led by WFP; and
5. Documenting good practices, innovations and successful approaches, led by WFP.

V. Resources

In 2019, a total of US\$ 7,600,957 in December 2019 was transferred to the JP RWEE TF following the signature of an Addendum to the Standard Administrative Agreements (SAAs) with Sida and Norway.

During the annual meeting of the ISC held on 27 November 2019, seven proposals validated through the assessment process presented in the previous paragraph were approved, for a total amount of US\$ 6,300,000. These resources were complemented by an allocation of US\$ 1,095,571 for the Global learning plan.

Resource Mobilization

Efforts to mobilize additional resources were led at the global level by the Global Coordinator and the HQs of the four participating UN Agencies. Several events were held to raise the profile of the JP RWEE and to initiate new donor interest in the Programme, including a side event organized during CSW 63 in New York. The three-pronged approach to resource mobilization outlined in 2018 was further pursued that involved:

1. Asking current donors to become 'JP RWEE advocates' by participating actively in the different meetings/events organized, and explaining why it is important to fund initiatives such as the JP RWEE;
2. Identifying 'JP RWEE champions' in the senior leadership of the four Participating UN Organizations and the Resident Coordinators of the seven countries, so to include the Programme in their official speeches, meetings with donors, and field visits; and
3. Organizing individual meetings/presentations for potential resource partners to introduce the JRWEE. Meetings in 2019 included UN Women Executive Director's visit to the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Ottawa; the Director of WFP's Gender Division holding a number of bilateral donor consultations during WFP's Annual Executive Board Meetings; and IFAD's President who pursued donor interest from the Irish Government while on mission to Ireland. These efforts have not yet not led to securing additional resources.

2. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

This chapter presents financial data and analysis of the 'Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' Fund using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December **2019**. Financial information for this Fund is also available on the MPTF Office GATEWAY, at the following address: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RWF00>. The financial data are recorded in US dollars. Due to rounding of numbers, the totals may not be an exact sum of the composite figures.

1. Sources and Uses of Funds

As of 31 December 2019, **2** contributors deposited US\$ **29,164,859** in contributions and US\$ **129,695** was earned in cumulative interest. The cumulative source of funds was US\$ **29,294,647**. Of this amount, US\$ **28,682,921** has been net funded to **4** PUNOs, of which US\$ **19,651,119** has been reported as expenditure.

The Administrative Agent fee has been charged at the approved rate of 1% on deposits and amounts to US\$ **291,649**. Table 1 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses, and balance of the Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women Fund as of 31 December 2019.

Table 1. Financial Overview, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

	Annual 2018	Annual 2019	Cumulative
Sources of Funds			
Contributions from donors	6,038,143	7,600,957	29,164,859
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	32,731	79,910	129,695
Interest Income received from Participating Organizations	92	-	92
Refunds by Administrative Agent to Contributors	-	-	-
Fund balance transferred to another MDTF	-	-	-
Other Income	-	-	-
Total: Sources of Funds	6,070,966	7,680,867	29,294,647
Use of Funds			
Transfers to Participating Organizations	5,600,000	6,300,000	27,097,076
Refunds received from Participating Organizations	-	-	(439,769)
Net Funded Amount	5,600,000	6,300,000	26,657,307
Administrative Agent Fees	60,381	76,010	291,649
Direct Costs: (Steering Committee, Secretariat...etc.)	302,375	1,095,571	2,025,614
Bank Charges	182	179	602
Other Expenditures	-	-	-
Total: Uses of Funds	5,962,938	7,471,760	28,975,172
Change in Fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	108,028	209,108	319,475
Opening Fund balance (1 January)	2,340	110,367	-
Closing Fund balance (31 December)	110,367	319,475	319,475
Net Funded Amount (Includes Direct Cost)	5,902,375	7,395,571	28,682,921
Participating Organizations' Expenditure (Includes Direct Cost)	3,016,980	4,065,232	19,651,119
Balance of Funds with Participating Organizations			9,031,802

2. Partner Contributions

Table 2 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this Fund as of 31 December **2019**.

The 'Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' Fund is currently being financed by **2** contributors, as listed in the table below. The table below includes commitments made up to 31 December **2019** through signed Standard Administrative Agreements, and deposits made through **2019**. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond **2019**.

Table 2: Contributors' Commitments and Deposits, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Contributors	Total Commitments	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2018 Deposits	Current Year Jan-Dec-2019 Deposits	Total Deposits
NORWAY, Government of	6,127,970	2,841,379	3,286,591	6,127,970
SWEDISH INT'L DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION	23,036,889	18,722,523	4,314,366	23,036,889
Grand Total	29,164,859	21,563,902	7,600,957	29,164,859

3. Interest Earned

Interest income is earned in two ways: 1) on the balance of funds held by the Administrative Agent (Fund earned interest), and 2) on the balance of funds held by the Participating Organizations (Agency earned interest) where their Financial Regulations and Rules allow return of interest to the AA.

As of 31 December **2019**, Fund earned interest amounts to US\$ **129,695**. Details are provided in the Table 3 below.

Table 3: Sources of Interest and Investment Income, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Interest Earned	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2018	Current Year Jan-Dec-2019	Total
Administrative Agent			
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	49,785	79,910	129,695
Total: Fund Earned Interest	49,785	79,910	129,695
Participating Organization			
Total: Agency earned interest			
Grand Total	49,785	79,910	129,695

4. Transfer of Funds

Allocations to Participating Organizations are approved by the Steering Committee and disbursed by the Administrative Agent. As of 31 December **2019**, the AA has transferred US\$ **27,097,076** to **4** Participating Organizations (see list below).

4.1 Transfer by Participating Organization

Table 4 provides additional information on the refunds received by the MPTF Office, and the net funded amount for each of the Participating Organizations.

Table 4: Transfer, Refund, and Net Funded Amount by Participating Organization, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2018			Current Year Jan-Dec-2019			Total		
	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded
FAO	5,329,597		5,329,597	1,858,668		1,858,668	7,188,265		7,188,265
IFAD	2,362,040	(439,769)	1,922,271	904,424		904,424	3,266,464	(439,769)	2,826,695
UNWOMEN	6,818,660		6,818,660	1,720,498		1,720,498	8,539,158		8,539,158
WFP	6,286,779		6,286,779	1,816,410		1,816,410	8,103,189		8,103,189
Grand Total	20,797,076	(439,769)	20,357,307	6,300,000		6,300,000	27,097,076	(439,769)	26,657,307

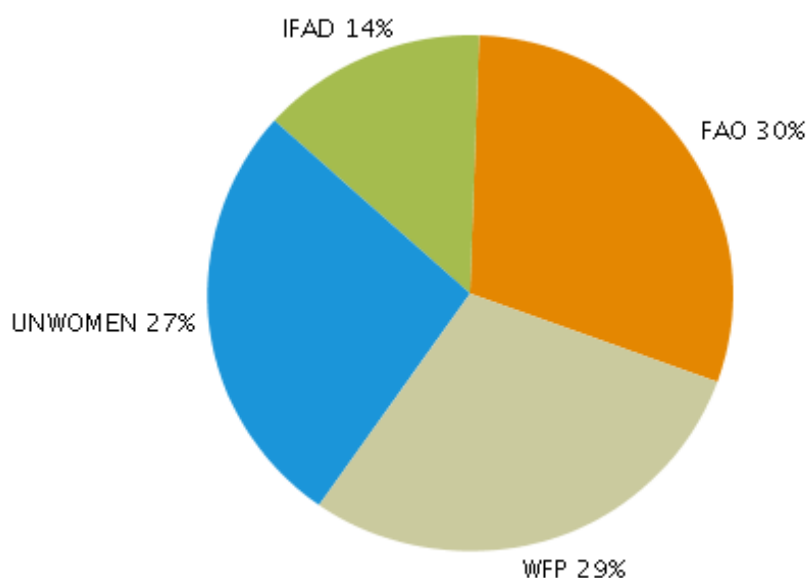


Figure 1: Transfers amount by Participating Organization for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2019

5. Expenditure and Financial Delivery Rates

All final expenditures reported for the year **2019** were submitted by the Headquarters of the Participating Organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization and are reported as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The reported expenditures were submitted via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The 2019 expenditure data has been posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY at <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RWF00>.

5.1 Expenditure Reported by Participating Organization

In 2019, US\$ **6,300,000** was net funded to Participating Organizations, and US\$ **3,784,093** was reported in expenditure.

As shown in Table 5.1 below, the cumulative net funded amount is US\$ **26,657,307** and cumulative expenditures reported by the Participating Organizations amount to US\$ **18,792,354**. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of **70** percent.⁵³

Table 5.1: Net Funded Amount, Reported Expenditure, and Financial Delivery by Participating Organization, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure			Delivery Rate %
			Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2018	Current Year Jan-Dec-2019	Cumulative	
FAO	7,188,265	7,188,265	3,839,065	998,482	4,837,546	67.30
IFAD	2,826,695	2,826,695	1,144,812	407,612	1,552,424	54.92
UNWOMEN	8,539,158	8,539,158	5,288,560	1,317,451	6,606,012	77.36
WFP	8,103,189	8,103,189	4,735,825	1,060,548	5,796,373	71.53
Grand Total	26,657,307	26,657,307	15,008,261	3,784,093	18,792,354	70.50

5.2 Expenditure by Project

Table 5.2 displays the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Participating Organization.

Table 5.2: Expenditure by Project within Country, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Country / Project Number and Project Title		Participating Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Ethiopia						
00092000	RWEE Ethiopia	FAO	933,418	933,418	470,830	50.44
00092000	RWEE Ethiopia	UNWOMEN	901,123	901,123	492,538	54.66
00092000	RWEE Ethiopia	WFP	1,553,715	1,553,715	1,243,919	80.06
Ethiopia Total			3,388,256	3,388,256	2,207,287	65.15
Guatemala						
00092001	RWEE Guatemala	FAO	977,688	977,688	727,887	74.45
00092001	RWEE Guatemala	IFAD	250,500	250,500	47,253	18.86
00092001	RWEE Guatemala	UNWOMEN	1,307,774	1,307,774	1,049,076	80.22
00092001	RWEE Guatemala	WFP	1,652,292	1,652,292	1,264,438	76.53
Guatemala Total			4,188,254	4,188,254	3,088,654	73.75

⁵³ The Fund expenditure delivery rate is influenced by the 2019 allocation of US\$ 6,300,000 that was disbursed to country teams in December 2019 to fund 2020 workplans.

Kyrgyzstan						
00092002	RWEE Kyrgyzstan	FAO	1,070,589	1,070,589	838,154	78.29
00092002	RWEE Kyrgyzstan	IFAD	584,500	584,500	353,065	60.40
00092002	RWEE Kyrgyzstan	UNWOMEN	1,515,821	1,515,821	1,205,671	79.54
00092002	RWEE Kyrgyzstan	WFP	1,067,345	1,067,345	831,178	77.87
Kyrgyzstan Total			4,238,255	4,238,255	3,228,067	76.17

Liberia						
00092003	RWEE Liberia	FAO	995,021	995,021	543,277	54.60
00092003	RWEE Liberia	UNWOMEN	2,001,885	2,001,885	1,730,466	86.44
00092003	RWEE Liberia	WFP	1,091,349	1,091,349	656,032	60.11
Liberia Total			4,088,255	4,088,255	2,929,775	71.66

Nepal						
00092004	RWEE Nepal	FAO	869,739	869,739	613,471	70.54
00092004	RWEE Nepal	IFAD	383,174	383,174	84,775	22.12
00092004	RWEE Nepal	UNWOMEN	1,150,800	1,150,800	895,311	77.80
00092004	RWEE Nepal	WFP	874,061	874,061	556,761	63.70
Nepal Total			3,277,774	3,277,774	2,150,319	65.60

Niger						
00092005	RWEE Niger	FAO	1,531,500	1,531,500	1,070,378	69.89
00092005	RWEE Niger	IFAD	842,793	842,793	568,102	67.41
00092005	RWEE Niger	UNWOMEN	837,443	837,443	620,185	74.06
00092005	RWEE Niger	WFP	876,521	876,521	519,779	59.30
Niger Total			4,088,257	4,088,257	2,778,444	67.96

Rwanda						
00092006	RWEE Rwanda	FAO	810,310	810,310	573,549	70.78
00092006	RWEE Rwanda	IFAD	765,728	765,728	499,228	65.20
00092006	RWEE Rwanda	UNWOMEN	824,312	824,312	612,765	74.34
00092006	RWEE Rwanda	WFP	987,906	987,906	724,266	73.31
Rwanda Total			3,388,256	3,388,256	2,409,807	71.12

Grand Total			26,657,307	26,657,307	18,792,354	70.50
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5.3 Expenditure Reported by Category

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. In 2006 the UN Development Group (UNDG) established six categories against which UN entities must report inter-agency project expenditures. Effective 1 January 2012, the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) modified these categories as a result of IPSAS adoption to comprise eight categories. All expenditure incurred prior to 1 January 2012

have been reported in the old categories; post 1 January 2012 all expenditures are reported in the new eight categories. See Table 5.3 below.

2012 CEB Expense Categories

1. Staff and personnel costs
2. Supplies, commodities and materials
3. Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation
4. Contractual services
5. Travel
6. Transfers and grants
7. General operating expenses
8. Indirect costs

Table 5.3: Expenditure by UNDG Budget Category, as of 31 December 2019 (in US Dollars)

Category	Expenditure			Percentage of Total Programme Cost
	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2018	Current Year Jan-Dec-2019	Total	
Staff & Personnel Cost (New)	2,082,315	352,378	2,434,693	14.03
Suppl, Comm, Materials (New)	1,797,768	211,612	2,009,380	11.58
Equip, Veh, Furn, Depn (New)	648,626	136,579	785,205	4.52
Contractual Services (New)	3,304,101	777,650	4,081,751	23.52
Travel (New)	859,431	341,877	1,201,308	6.92
Transfers and Grants (New)	2,882,817	935,339	3,818,156	22.00
General Operating (New)	2,300,893	722,010	3,022,903	17.42
Programme Costs Total	13,875,950	3,477,445	17,353,396	100.00
⁵⁴ Indirect Support Costs Total	1,132,311	306,648	1,438,959	8.29
Total	15,008,261	3,784,093	18,792,354	

6. Cost Recovery

Cost recovery policies for the Fund are guided by the applicable provisions of the Terms of Reference, the MOU concluded between the Administrative Agent and Participating Organizations, and the SAAs concluded between the Administrative Agent and Contributors, based on rates approved by UNDG. The policies in place, as of 31 December **2019**, were as follows:

- **The Administrative Agent (AA) fee:** 1% is charged at the time of contributor deposit and covers services provided on that contribution for the entire duration of the Fund. In the reporting period US\$ **76,010** was deducted in AA-fees. Cumulatively, as of 31 December **2019**, US\$ **291,649** has been charged in AA-fees.
- **Indirect Costs of Participating Organizations:** Participating Organizations may charge 7% indirect costs. In the current reporting period US\$ **306,648** was deducted in indirect costs by Participating Organizations. Cumulatively, indirect costs amount to US\$ **1,438,959** as of 31 December **2019**.

⁵⁴ Indirect Support Costs charged by Participating Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

7. Accountability and Transparency

In order to effectively provide fund administration services and facilitate monitoring and reporting to the UN system and its partners, the MPTF Office has developed a public website, the MPTF Office Gateway (<http://mptf.undp.org>). Refreshed in real time every two hours from an internal enterprise resource planning system, the MPTF Office Gateway has become a standard setter for providing transparent and accountable trust fund administration services.

The Gateway provides financial information including contributor commitments and deposits, approved programme budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by Participating Organizations, interest income and other expenses. In addition, the Gateway provides an overview of the MPTF Office portfolio and extensive information on individual Funds, including their purpose, governance structure and key documents. By providing easy access to the growing number of narrative and financial reports, as well as related project documents, the Gateway collects and preserves important institutional knowledge and facilitates knowledge sharing and management among UN Organizations and their development partners, thereby contributing to UN coherence and development effectiveness.

8. Direct Costs

The Fund governance mechanism may approve an allocation to a Participating Organization to cover costs associated with Secretariat services and overall coordination, as well as Fund level reviews and evaluations. These allocations are referred to as 'direct costs'. In the reporting period, direct costs charged to the fund amounted to US\$ **1,095,571**. Cumulatively, as of 31 December **2019**, US\$ **2,025,614** has been charged as Direct Costs.

Table 8: Direct Costs

Participating Organization	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate
FAO	420,839	35,639	8%
IFAD	53,500	3,500	7%
UNWOMEN	34,240	2,240	7%
WFP	1,517,035	817,386	54%
Total:	2,025,614	858,765	42%