



**ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN
BI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 30 JUNE 2020**

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Liberia • MPTF Office Project Reference Number:¹ 00092003 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</p> <p>Republic of Liberia Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Maryland, River Gee, and Sinoe Counties</p> <p>The strategic result is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</p> <p><u>2020 Beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct (501 beneficiaries; 341 women and 60 men) • Indirect (1,563 beneficiaries; 1,023 women and 540 men) <p><u>Total Beneficiaries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct (10,743 beneficiaries; women: 9,273 and men: 1,470) • Indirect (42,600 beneficiaries; women: 38,245 and men: 4,445)
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO, IFAD, UNWOMEN, WFP 	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Gender Children, and Social Protection • Ministry of Agriculture • Liberia Land Authority • National Rural Women’s Structure • Rights and Rice Foundation • National Adult Education Association of Liberia • Association of Women in Cross Border Trade • THINK Liberia • Farmers Assistance Programme • Liberia Marketing Association • EduCARE Liberia • Agro-Machinery Company
<p align="center">Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: US\$ 900,000</p> <p>MPTF Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women - US\$ 264,091 • FAO - US\$ 364,068 • WFP - US\$ 271,841 <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women - US\$ 0.00 • FAO - US\$ 0.00 • WFP - US\$ 0.00 <p>Government Contribution</p>	<p align="center">Programme Duration</p> <p>Overall Duration 8 YEARS</p> <p>Start Date (15 10 2012)</p> <p>End Date (31 12 2021)</p>

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

(if applicable)
Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable)
TOTAL: US\$ 900,000
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – <i>if applicable please attach</i>
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Report Submitted By
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Name: Ramon G. Garway ○ Title: National Coordinator ○ Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women ○ Email address: ramon.garway@unwomen.org



List of Acronyms

AWICBT	-	Association of Women in Cross Border Trade
CGRs	-	Community Grain Reserves
COVID-19	-	Coronavirus Disease
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization
GCCs	-	Gender County Coordinators
GRB	-	Gender Responsive Budgeting
JP	-	Joint Programme
JPRWEE	-	Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment
LMA	-	Liberia Marketing Association
MGCSP	-	Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection
MoA	-	Ministry of Agriculture
MT	-	Metric Ton
NJSC	-	National Joint Steering Committee
NTAC	-	National Technical Advisory Committee
PAPD	-	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
SLAs	-	Savings and Loan Associations
SRH	-	Sexual and Reproductive Health
UN Women	-	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
VSLA	-	Village Savings and Loan Association
WFP	-	World Food Programme

NARRATIVE REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2020 bi-annual progress report represents a consolidation of information collected from the JP RWEE participating UN agencies in Liberia; the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP); and a host of implementing partners from Civil Society covering the period January to June 2020.

Key results include:

- 501 beneficiaries (women: 341; and men: 60) are increasing their production of rice in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties by cultivating 34.56 hectares of farmland. In addition, over 18.5 hectares of farmland have also been cultivated with industrial cassava for access to markets during harvest.
- Four (4) metric tons of paddy rice has been reported as increase in yield during the reporting period.
- Thirteen (13) new Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are providing access to sustainable rural finance for 350 women beneficiaries in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties. VSLA members have increased self-esteem and are contributing to decision-making at the household and community levels.
- At least 487 women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties can read, write, count, and access relevant information because of having accessed and completed literacy and numeracy skills trainings. This has enabled beneficiaries to improve on household and care-giving roles. The programme is unlocking the full potential of women beneficiaries where they have gained a new sense of confidence through the ability to read, write their names, and use mobile phones.
- At least 487 women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties have rediscovered their self-worth and self-confidence because of having accessed and completed life skills trainings (e.g. tailoring and cosmetology). In this context, new knowledge and skills in cosmetology and tailoring have thereby opened new opportunities for self-employment, income generation, and wealth creation. In addition, these beneficiaries are participating in community meetings and are making decisions as it relates to issues that are affecting their community as well as their wellbeing.
- At least 200 young women beneficiaries in Montserrado and Margibi Counties have increased knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) and are accessing services at the community level for better family planning and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM). This has been achieved because of their access to SRH education and capacity building in MHM.

I. Results

Despite the COVID-19 crisis and the many challenges (e.g. travel restrictions, ban on gatherings, closure of schools/training centers, etc.) that followed, results were achieved between 1 January to 30 June 2020 as follows:

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

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

- 501 beneficiaries (women: 341; and men: 60) in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties have access to quality seeds, assorted hand tools and other planting materials for increasing their production of rice and cassava crops. In addition, the income-generation capacity of these beneficiaries has improved using labor-saving technologies (e.g. motorized cassava graters, etc.) which were distributed to communities across the targeted counties.
- 501 beneficiaries (women: 341; and men: 60) are increasing their production of rice in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties respectively by cultivating 34.56 hectares of farmland. In addition, over 18.5 hectares of farmland has also been cultivated with industrial cassava for access to markets during harvest. Beneficiaries (women: 341; and men: 60) have also increased their access to and control over 12.6 hectares of lowland planted with rice and assorted vegetables in Margibi County; and an additional 5 hectares integrated model garden has been fenced with dwarf wall and chain linked wires. Bore-hole wells were constructed in this garden, operated by women beneficiaries, for access to water.

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

- Four (4) Mt of paddy rice has been reported as increase in yield in two (2) Community Grain Reserves in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties during the reporting period.

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

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

- Thirteen (13) new VSLAs are providing access to sustainable rural finance for 350 women beneficiaries in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties. VSLA members have increased self-esteem and are contributing to decision-making at the household and community levels.

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

- Despite the impact of COVID-19, at least 27 women are accessing employment opportunities from ORANGE Liberia as women mobile money agents operating mobile money kiosks in Twenty-Seven (27) targeted communities across Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties. These women beneficiaries have reportedly provided mobile money services to over 9,831 clients/customers between 1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020. In addition, UN Women, ORANGE, and the Liberia Marketing Association (LMA) have embarked on the profiling of women mobile money agents and kiosks impacted by COVID-19 for reactivation as part of the joint programme's response to COVID-19 impact on its beneficiaries.
- At least 487 women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties have accessed and completed life skills trainings (e.g. tailoring and cosmetology). In this context, new knowledge and skills in cosmetology and tailoring have thereby opened new opportunities for self-employment, income generation, and wealth creation. In addition, these beneficiaries are participating in community meetings and are making decisions as it relates to issues that are affecting their community as well as their wellbeing.
- At least 487 women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties are transforming market tables into profitable businesses; and making profits from business investments in cosmetology and tailoring at local level. The JPRWEE specialized business development and financial literacy trainings are transforming women beneficiaries from selling "for selling sake" to selling for profits. These beneficiaries are saving their money as bank account holders. In addition, local community women are demonstrating their potential and resourcefulness as business programme facilitators in targeted communities in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties.

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

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

- At least 487 women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties can read, write, count, and access relevant information because of having accessed and completed literacy and numeracy skills trainings. This has enabled beneficiaries to improve on household and care-giving roles. The programme is unlocking the full potential of women beneficiaries where they have gained a new sense of confidence through the ability to read, write their names, and use mobile phones.

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

- At least 200 young women beneficiaries in Montserrado and Margibi Counties have increased knowledge of SRH and are accessing services at the community level for better family planning and MHM. This has been achieved because of their access to SRH education and capacity building in MHM.
- At least 350 young women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties have increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention and response because of capacity building training in HIV/AIDS prevention, management, and response at the household and community levels.

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

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

- The joint programme has contributed to the development of methodology, research areas, and research questions for a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on women, girls, children, and their communities. It will co-fund the implementation of the rapid assessment in the third quarter of 2020.

- A Terms of Reference for the Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) analysis has been drafted and will be finalized for the implementation of the analysis by the end of Quarter 3, 2020.

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

Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic in Liberia has presented the JP RWEE with several challenges which have impacted the implementation capacity of ‘Delivering as One’ at the national and sub-national levels. These included not being able to implement joint targeting of beneficiaries and communities, the holding of National Technical Advisory Committee and National Joint Steering Committee (NJSC) meetings as a result of travel restrictions curfew and the call for social distancing and the joint programme’s focal points in Government (e.g. Ministries of Agriculture; Gender, Children, and Social Protection, etc.) being challenged by limited or no access to internet connections at home during the lockdown period, for participating in regular virtual meetings.

Internal processes within the participating UN agencies proved even more challenging as the UN System had to work from home as a mitigating measure for preventing COVID-19 spread within staff. For instance, the increased bureaucracy with processes of procurement and contracting with the participating UN agencies due to the pandemic, contributed to delays with programme implementation. Thus, the JP RWEE had to adapt to the country context in response to COVID-19 and has been implementing measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on programme implementation as well as on beneficiaries. This included the contribution to the COVID-19 National Response Plan by aligning the joint programme’s priorities with the COVID-19 Emergency Food Security Plan as it relates to purchasing and pre-positioning of emergency food stocks; expanding cultivation; strengthening coordination; and investing in agro-processing. Coordination challenges have been addressed with participating UN agencies and government ministries including relevant Civil Society Organizations (e.g. NAEAL, RRF, LNRWS, ,etc.) through virtual meetings using different Information Communication Technology platforms (e.g. Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, etc.)

To address the challenges presented by the travel restrictions imposed due to COVID-19, the joint programme was able to utilize the local extension workers from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Gender County Coordinators under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to support monitoring and supervision efforts at the district and community levels. These extension workers and gender county coordinators from the two government ministries have played a key role in following up with beneficiaries at the community level and reporting to their respective ministries and the participating UN agencies.

Lessons Learned

One important lesson learned was that food baskets should have been considered to be provided to beneficiaries as a stimulus package to cope as some beneficiaries did not actively participate in agricultural work under programme implementation due to restrictions imposed by government. Moreover, the lockdown has imposed distasteful hardship on rural households’ ability to access nutritious food for a healthier life. As a result of this, some beneficiaries were seeking low income jobs at palm and rubber plantations as unskilled laborers to secure income for catering to their households. This was observed to be the main driving force behind some beneficiaries not having the time or the energy to engage with the JP RWEE activities. Through consultations with extension workers from the Ministry of Agriculture, it was realized that selection of beneficiaries and communities should be conducted jointly with the input of all agencies, consistent with their respective comparative advantages. For example, some communities previously selected for intervention before COVID-19 did not have access to agricultural land for production even though women beneficiaries and some community leaders informed participating UN agencies individually that there was land available. This contributed to delays in the implementation and had to be mitigated through massive awareness and negotiations with community leaders to give women access to land for investing in agriculture.

Gaining new skills in digital literacy and mobile banking competencies and organizational capacities between January and March 2020 has resulted in continued participation of women beneficiaries in socio-economic activities. These new skills continue to enhance women’s decision-making roles and to earn increased respect within and outside their households.

Men’s engagement as gender advocates has continuously proven successful as they have assisted and continue to assist in achieving transformative changes against stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination and inequality at the household and community levels. For examples, two strategic approaches here have been through awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns via national and community radios. Furthermore, building synergies with other programmes and projects (e.g. Spotlight Initiative, BuyFromWomen Pilot Project, etc.) are ensuring increased participation of men and boys as agents of change in support of women’s empowerment in Liberia.

Good Practices

The JP RWEE has aligned its 2020/2021 implementation plan with the COVID-19 Emergency Food Security Plan by ensuring that it targets the most vulnerable households as well as households facing lost income as a result of the pandemic. The programme contributes to the boosting of local production of staple crops which include rice, cassava, beans, and vegetables to

mitigate imminent slowdowns in trade and provides a stimulus for agro-processors which will transform crops and raw materials into consumer-ready food. It is seamlessly working with diverse stakeholders such as the key government ministries and institutions, international finance institutions and development partners, private sector companies, commercial and investment banks, as well as smallholders and other farmers, cooperatives, and agro-processors for building synergies across networks and communities of practice.

Another good practice identified that continues to make coordination work better with the JP RWEE is the building of synergies with other programmes and projects funded by the private sector, which are crucial to promoting rural women's economic empowerment. The joint programme is strengthening linkages with the Alibaba funded BuyFromWomen pilot project led by UN Women for connecting women smallholder farmers and cooperatives to information, finance, and markets via information communication technology (ICT); the Innovation Norway funded project on digital solutions to improve women smallholder farmers resilience to natural disasters led by UN Women; and the Orange Foundation funded project on women's access to digital literacy and a women's digital center for their economic and social empowerment.

The joint programme remains flexible in its approach to delivering its interventions at local level. In this context, interventions related to Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) prevention, management, and response; HIV/AIDS prevention, management, and response; MHM, and SRH education have been provided and continue to be provided for beneficiaries across targeted counties in Liberia.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic and with measures taken for mitigating the spread of the Coronavirus, the joint programme could only deliver some results relevant to three of its four outcomes. These include for results related to improved food and nutrition security, increased income, and enhanced leadership and participation.

III. Qualitative assessment

Due to travel restrictions and the curfew brought on by the COVID-19 lockdown, the use of extension workers from the Ministry of Agriculture and social media (e.g. Facebook and WhatsApp) was instrumental in providing support in terms of monitoring and reporting on the impact of the joint programme and the impact of COVID-19 on women, their households, and communities. The extension workers conducted monitoring visits and took photos of activities in the field for reporting on progress, challenges and/or constraints. Thus, the joint programme was able to document the following as of June 30, 2020:

- The joint programme established strategic partnership with the National Public Health Institute through aligning its implementation plan with the COVID-19 National Response Plan for mitigating the impacts of the pandemic on individuals, households, and communities. In addition, the joint programme also established a strategic partnership with the National AIDS Commission (NAC) on HIV/AIDS prevention in targeted communities across Montserrado, Margibi, and Grand Bassa Counties.
- In rural households, women beneficiaries are preparing foods that are crucial to the increase of dietary diversity. Hence, they are ensuring that access to food within the household is no longer determined by their cultural practices nor the power relationships within the family. Based on feedback from Agriculture Extension Workers and Gender County Coordinators, women beneficiaries continue to state that they are maintaining nutritional intake equally as men do at the household level.
- Male beneficiaries continue to recognize the importance of serving as male advocates in advocating for the end to violence against women and girls at the household and community levels. These men are also continuing to stand by women even during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic wherein they are jointly working with women for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on the individuals, households, and communities by promoting social distancing and hand washing, including raising awareness on COVID-19.
- Women beneficiaries, their families and communities have seen the value in Community Grain Reserves and have strengthened their ownership of all reserves and their facilities for protecting themselves from grain (e.g. rice) production shortfalls and for strengthening the resilience of poor households to food insecurity and economic shocks due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Liberia. Women beneficiaries in grain reserves have been managing and maintaining labor-saving technologies for increasing production despite the pandemic.
- Women beneficiaries have mobile money accounts and are in possession of their bank books and VSLA booklets which indicate they are accessing financial services for expanding their investments and experiencing economic growth. Thus, women beneficiaries have better organized businesses that are registered and recognized by their local communities and authorities.
- Women beneficiaries are vocal about addressing SGBV at the household and community levels including for promoting HIV/AIDS prevention, COVID-19 prevention, SRH and better menstrual hygiene management. Furthermore, communities have recognized the JP RWEE's efforts in creating a more supportive community for women and girls to exercise their rights.

- The NTAC serves as the Secretariat, which is chaired by the lead UN agency, UN Women. In addition, there is also a NJSC, co-chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The NJSC is also represented by the Heads of Agencies from FAO, WFP and UN Women and includes heads of relevant government ministries, agencies, and commissions. This continues to sustain institutional memory and enhance the level of coordination and collaboration between the participating UN agencies and the Government for delivering on key results.
- The JP RWEE has selected interventions in strategic sectors (e.g. agriculture, trade, education, etc.) where both women and men have already a comparative advantage and where there is potential for growth and value addition through better marketing, quality services, improved standards and access to sustainable financing. Overall, the JNSC remains responsible for the monitoring and adapting of interventions and strategies that respond to any changes that may affect the sustainability of the programme's interventions.
- The JP RWEE in Liberia continues to remain focused on 'Delivering as One' and is attempting to accelerate progress for contributing towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a UN development system that delivers more and better for the poorest and most disadvantaged Liberians. The joint programme is serving as a model for other UN agencies in contributing to the implementation of the government's Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD 2019 – 2023) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2020-2024.

Recommendations based on information provided by the Ministry of Agriculture in response to the impact of COVID-19 on food security and livelihood at local level

The JP RWEE needs to focus more on responding to COVID-19 by contributing to the implementation of the COVID-19 Emergency Food Security Plan through the following recommendations:

- Strengthening coordination with key government ministries and public entities, international finance institutions and development partners, private sector, commercial and investment banks, as well as smallholder farmers, cooperatives, and agro-processors for building synergies across networks and communities of practice.
- Investing in agro-processing as a stimulus for agro-processors where they will transform crops and raw materials into consumer-ready food products. When existing processing facilities remain operational, this will preserve jobs and incomes, and boost local production capacities during the emergency period and beyond.
- Expanding cultivation by boosting local production of staple crops which include rice, cassava, beans and vegetables to mitigate imminent slowdowns in trade. In addition, there is an increased need for the purchase and distribution of seeds, tools, and labor-saving technologies, possibly using mobile money (e-wallet) solutions. Purchasing and pre-positioning emergency food stocks including rice, cassava, beans, and pulses to address food insecurity. This should also ensure that emergency distribution targets the most vulnerable households, as well as households facing lost income because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Other stocks should be pre-positioned in storage facilities in hard-to-reach locations and enough storage facilities should be installed, both for avoiding depletion of food reserves.

Interaction and Participation in COVID-19 Planning

The JP RWEE is collaborating with the UN System and the Government of Liberia through the MGCSP to conduct a joint assessment on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on Women, Children, and their Communities. The assessment is guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its central promise to 'leave no one behind'. It considers the new United Nations framework for the immediate socio-economic response to support countries and societies in the face of COVID-19, putting in practice the UN Secretary-General's Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity report on the same subject. This planned assessment is expected to cover key areas, namely food and nutrition security; social protection and basic services; economy and jobs; education and early learning; social cohesion and community resilience; poverty and public finance; health; water sanitation and hygiene; and gender-based violence within the context of COVID-19 in Liberia.

The JP RWEE is also planning with key stakeholders and partners in the UN System, Government, the private sector, and Civil Society to reactivate Savings and Loan Associations (SLAs) impacted by COVID-19 across Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, Maryland, River Gee, and Sinoe Counties. The resuscitation exercise is expected to cover over at least 750 women beneficiaries that are members of affected SLAs. In addition, conditional cash transfers are being considered for women beneficiaries for further strengthening the agribusinesses in the targeted counties.

Joint Programme Support to Beneficiaries during COVID-19 Crisis

The JP RWEE supported its key networks, namely the Liberia National Rural Women Structure, the LMA, the National Peace Huts Women of Liberia, and the Association of Women in Cross Border Trade to conduct COVID-19 outreach activities with women and men beneficiaries in over 55 targeted communities across Montserrado, Margibi, Grand Bassa, and Sinoe Counties.

The exercise was aimed at promoting social distancing and WASH practices with the programme beneficiaries as measures for curtailing the spread of the virus.

In addition, WASH supplies (e.g. hand washing soap, chlorine, hand sanitizers, wash buckets with faucets, etc.) in support of the COVID-19 response were distributed to key CSOs implementing COVID-19 awareness activities in Liberia as part of the national response. The supplies were meant to be distributed with beneficiaries in the joint programme's targeted communities across Montserrado and Margibi Counties.

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 Improved food and nutrition security			
<p>Indicator: Increase of agricultural production of women beneficiaries Baseline (2019): 40% of women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 35% of women beneficiaries</p> <p>Indicator 1.2: Number of women beneficiaries with a dietary diversity score above average Baseline (2019): 11,390 beneficiaries (women 10,423 / men 967) Planned Target (2020): 3,207 beneficiaries (women 2,774 / men 433)</p> <p>Note: The average dietary diversity score (DDS) has been calculated by summing several unique food groups consumed which include vegetables, meat/egg, and cereals/roots, and fruits.</p>	<p>10% increase in agricultural production for cassava and 5% increase in agricultural production for rice for women beneficiaries in 2020</p> <p>501 beneficiaries (women 441 and men 60) have adequate dietary intake at the household level for their nutrition in 2020. Despite COVID-19, the Ministry of Agriculture of Agriculture Extension Officers at the county level collected food consumption data of the local population, such as the types and amount of food consumed by individuals and their households</p>	<p>This is the 2020 Bi-Annual report, and progress reporting remains ongoing. However, the inaccessibility of project communities due to travel restrictions because of COVID-19 has impacted the timely delivery of results</p> <p>The Planned targets are expected to be fully reached by the end of December 2020, if the COVID-19 pandemic ceases in Liberia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Output 1.1 Rural women have increased access to and control over resources, assets, and services critical for their food and nutrition security			
<p>Indicator 1.1.1 Number of beneficiaries benefitting from the use of high-quality seeds, tools, and machineries for increased production</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 3,829 beneficiaries (women 3,769 / men 60) Planned Target (2020): 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91)</p>	<p>501 beneficiaries (women 441 and men 60) are benefitting from the use of high-quality seeds, tools, and machineries for increased production</p>	<p>The target of 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91) was over met by additional 10 beneficiaries that the joint programme was able to reach with support from the Ministry of Agriculture extension workers at the county level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports

Indicator 1.1.2 Number of beneficiaries benefitting from lowland development in rice production for increased agricultural production and productivity Baseline (2019): 945 beneficiaries (women 885 / men 60) Planned Target (2020): 510 beneficiaries (women 408 / men 102)	501 beneficiaries (women 441 and men 60) are cultivating on 34.56 hectares of lowland for rice production	The target of 510 beneficiaries (women 408 / men 102) has not been met as this is ongoing with the target expected to be reached by December 2020. COVID-19 travel restrictions also contributed to the target not being reached	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves and their production			
Indicator 1.2.1 Number of beneficiaries accessing and utilizing innovative food processing units Baseline (2019): 3,756 Planned Target (2020): 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91)	491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91) are yet to access the 7 innovative food processing units that are currently under construction	The target has not been met due to the COVID-19 lockdown and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Indicator 1.2.2 Number of new food processing facilities Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target: 7 innovative food processing units	7 innovative food processing units are being constructed for catering to 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91) affected by COVID-19. These are expected to provide women's access to protein and dietary diversification	The target has not been met due to the COVID-19 lockdown and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Indicator 1.2.3 Number of CGRs in use for the storage of rice produce Baseline (2019): 5 Planned Target: 5 CGRs in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties	2 of 5 CGRs are storing 4 Mt of paddy rice which were reported as an increase in yield in Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties	The target has not been met due to the COVID-19 lockdown and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.			

<p>Indicator: Income generated by women beneficiaries from the sales of their agriculture produce in markets</p> <p>Baseline (2019): LD\$ 31,627,601 (US\$ 158,138) Planned Target: LD\$ 18,200,000 (or US\$ 91,000)</p>	<p>Women beneficiaries were unable to access markets for the sale of their agriculture produce due to the national lockdown, given the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>The joint programme did not reach its target because of the COVID-19 travel restrictions which affected access to markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<p>Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products</p>			
<p>Indicator 2.1.1 Number of beneficiaries with strengthened entrepreneurship skills</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 7,926 (women 7,926 / men 0) Planned Target (2020): 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91)</p>	<p>A total of 200 beneficiaries (women 200 / men 0) have better organized businesses after having accessed credit from their respective VSLAs</p>	<p>The target was not met due to the COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women Women’s Economic Empowerment Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<p>Indicator 2.1.2 Number of beneficiaries who are participating in Village Savings and Loan Associations for access to rural credit</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 7,926 Planned Target (2020): 491 beneficiaries (women 400 / men 91)</p>	<p>A total of 200 beneficiaries (women 200 / men 0) were organized into VSLAs for access to rural credit for investing in agriculture</p>	<p>The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women Women’s Economic Empowerment Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<p>Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities</p>			
<p>Indicator 2.2.1 Number of women beneficiaries accessing decent work</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 1,116 women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 300 women beneficiaries</p>	<p>487 women beneficiaries have created job opportunities for themselves as cosmetologists and tailors, managing their respective shops in targeted communities</p> <p>At least 27 women beneficiaries are accessing employment opportunities with private sector company ORANGE as</p>	<p>The target of 300 beneficiaries (women 300 / men 0) was over met by additional 214 women beneficiaries with support from the partnerships developed with National Adult Education Association of Liberia and ORANGE Liberia.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women Women’s Economic Empowerment Progress reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports

	women mobile money agents operating 27 mobile money kiosks. These women beneficiaries have reportedly provided mobile money transaction services to over 9,831 clients/customers between 1 January 2020 and 30 June 2020		
Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes			
Indicator: Number of women beneficiaries who are members of land committees in targeted counties Baseline (2019): 3,585 women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 75 women beneficiaries	No new women beneficiaries were able to gain memberships in land committees at the local level due to restrictions on social gathering because of COVID-19. Land Committee Meetings have been suspended till further notice	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberia Land Authority County Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Indicator 3.1.2 Number of capacity building trainings in leadership and decision-making skills conducted Baseline (2019): 10 Planned Target (2020): 2 capacity building trainings	No capacity building trainings in leadership and decision-making skills were conducted during the reporting period	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports • UN Women WEE Progress Reports
Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives, and unions			
Indicator 3.2.1 Number of women beneficiaries organized into and participating in newly formalized women producer organizations Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target (2020): 350 women beneficiaries	No women beneficiaries were organized into or are participating in producer organizations due to the COVID-19 pandemic	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports

<p>Indicator 3.2.2 Number of women-based producer organizations organized</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target (2020): 5 women-based producer organizations</p>	<p>No women-based producer organizations were organized due to the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<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>Indicator 3.3.1 Number of national dialogue mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involves rural women's groups</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 5 Planned Target: 3</p>	<p>No change here due to the COVID-19 pandemic</p>	<p>The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<p>Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.4.1 Number of women beneficiaries exercising their land rights for agriculture</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 3,556 women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 2,774 women beneficiaries</p>	<p>Based on observation by Gender and Agriculture County Coordinators in targeted counties, at least 400 women beneficiaries are reportedly exercising their land rights for agriculture under the joint programme.</p>	<p>The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
<p>Indicator 3.4.2 Number of women beneficiaries accessing information on women's land rights from the Land Desk at the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection</p> <p>Baseline (2019): 912 women beneficiaries Planned Target: 350</p>	<p>No progress has been reported here as the Land Desk at the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection has been reportedly inactive due to COVID-19</p>	<p>The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown and social distancing imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports • UN Women WEE Progress Reports

Indicator 3.4.3 Number of women beneficiaries accessing SHR education Baseline (2019): 9,273 women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 500 women beneficiaries	At least 200 women beneficiaries in Montserrado and Margibi Counties are accessing SRH education at the community level for better family planning and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Indicator 3.4.4 Number of women beneficiaries accessing awareness raising in HIV/AIDS prevention Baseline (2019): 9,273 women beneficiaries Planned Target (2020): 500 women beneficiaries	At least 350 young women beneficiaries in Montserrado, Margibi Counties, and Grand Bassa Counties have increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention and response because of awareness raising in HIV/AIDS prevention, management, and response	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown, social distancing, and travel restrictions imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture County Progress Reports Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
Indicator: Number of laws/policy frameworks passed to secure rural women's land ownership Baseline (2019): 1 Planned Target: 0	The Land Rights Act for Liberia was signed into law by President George Weah on September 19, 2018	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports Liberia Land Authority Progress Reports
Output 4.1: Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws, and budgets			
Indicator 4.1.1 Number of capacity building trainings conducted on the Land Rights Act implementation for decentralized officials at all levels	No progress has been reported here due to COVID-19	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown and social distancing imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports

Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target: 2 capacity building trainings for 100 policy makers (women 50 / men 50) from the Legislature and relevant MACs			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Women WEE Progress Reports
Indicator 4.1.2 Number of awareness building and advocacy exercises on the Land Rights Act conducted with relevant stakeholders/partners Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target: 2 awareness building and advocacy exercises	No progress has been reported here due to COVID-19	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown and social distancing imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by June 30, 2021, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports UN Women WEE Progress Reports
Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women			
4.2.1 Evidence of a rapid assessment report that showcases the impact of COVID-19 on women, girls, children, and their communities within the contexts of food and nutrition security, social protection, health, education, WASH, etc. Baseline (2019): 0 report Planned Target (2020): 1 rapid gender assessment report	The joint programme has contributed to the development of methodology, research areas, and research questions for a rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on women, girls, children, and their communities. It will co-fund the implementation of the rapid assessment in Quarter 3 of 2020	The target was not met due to COVID-19 lockdown and social distancing imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports UN Women WEE Progress Reports
Indicator 4.2.2 Evidence of a GRB analysis report on the proportion of GoL COVID-19 national budgetary resources that are allocated or not allocated to addressing food and nutrition insecurity amongst others during the pandemic Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target: 1 GRB analysis report	A Terms of Reference for the GRB analysis has been drafted and will be finalized for the implementation of the analysis by the end of Quarter 3 2020	The target was not met due to the COVID-19 lockdown imposed by the Government of Liberia. The target is expected to be reached by December 31, 2020, if COVID-19 ceases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports UN Women WEE Progress Reports

Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.			
Indicator 4.3.1 Number of national consultations on JPRWEE held to inform a second phase that supports COVID-19 post recovery Baseline (2019): 0 Planned Target (2021): 1 national consultations dialogue	The ToR for the national consultations is yet to be drafted. The consultations are expected to be held in May of 2021.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Women WEE Progress Reports • Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection County Progress Reports