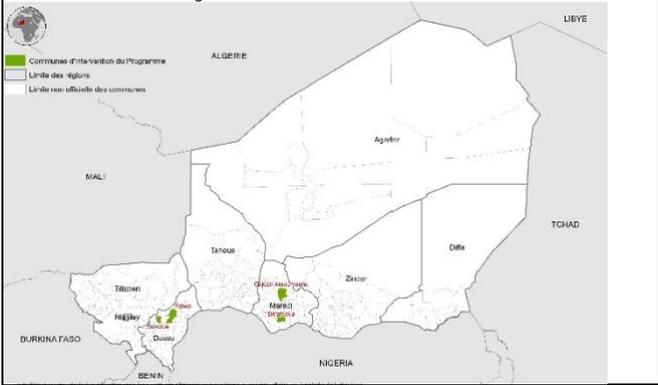


**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN”
FINAL REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 15/04/2015 TO 31/06/2021**

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results
<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <p>Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women</p> <p>MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00092005</p> 	<p>Republic of Niger: Regions Dosso (Falwel and Sokorbe communities) and Maradi (Guidan Amoumoune and Djirataoua communities)</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 align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme 	<p align="center">Programme Beneficiaries</p> <p>Direct beneficiaries: 17,477 (15,837 women and 1,640 men)</p> <p>Indirect beneficiaries: 28,739 19,087 women</p> <p>Number of participants from the beginning of the Joint Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct: 17,477 Indirect: 28,739 <p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <p><i>National counterparties</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Child Protection Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock I3N (‘Nigériens Nourishing Nigériens’ Initiative) High Commission University of Niamey (CRESA) Regional Directorates of Community Development and Spatial Planning of Dosso and Maradi <p><i>Local organizations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NGO Action Educative pour le Développement Local AEDL

- NGO Actions pour la sécurité alimentaire et le développement intégré ASADI
- KAIDIYA KUNDJI FONDO ; DIKO ; CCD / OPRD,
- Framework for Collaboration and Dialogue of Peasant Organizations in the Dosso Region / AREN)
- Departmental Directions of the Environment, Lakalkaney Group
- NGO HIMMA
- INTES, private organization

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)

Total approved budget as per project document:

MPTF /JP Contribution¹:

- *by Agency (if applicable)*

Agency Contribution

- *by Agency (if applicable)*

UNPO	2014-2018
FAO	1561500
IFAD	842793
UNWOMEN	867443
WFP	861521
Total Niger	4133257

Government Contribution
(if applicable)

Other Contributions (donors)
(if applicable)

TOTAL:

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.

Evaluation Completed

Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

Evaluation Report - Attached

Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy*

Programme Duration

Overall Duration (*months*)

Start Date:² 15/04/2015

Original End Date:³ 31/12/2017

Actual End date:⁴ 30/06/2021

Have agency (ies) operationally closed the Programme in its (their) system? Yes No

Expected Financial Closure date⁵: 31/05/2022

Report Submitted By

- Name: Halimatou Moussa Idi
- Title: National Coordinator
- Participating Organization (Lead): FAO
- Email address: Halimatou.Moussa@fao.org

¹ The MPTF/JP Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

² The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

³ As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

⁴ If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date, which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](#).

⁵ Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report](#).

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEDL	Educational Action for Development
AREN	Association for the Revitalization of Livestock in Niger
ASADI	Action for Food Security and Integrated Development
BAB	Banque d'Aliments pour Bétail
BC	Cereal Bank
CRESA	Regional Center for Education Specialized in Agriculture
DACPOR	Directorate of Cooperative Action and Promotion of Rural Organizations
DIKO	Local NGO
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
H13N	High Commission to Initiative 3N (Nigerians Feed Nigerians)
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGA	Income Generating Activities
INTES	Innovation et Nouvelles Technologies au Service des Études Socioéconomiques
PBSG	Planning Gender-Sensitive Budgeting
MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund
MAGEL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MPF/PE	Ministère de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Protection de l'Enfant
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGP	National Gender Policy
OHADA	Organisation pour l'Harmonisation du Droit des Affaires
PO	Producer Organization
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
RWEE	Rural Women Economic Empowerment
WEAI	Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Joint Programme "Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women" (JP RWEE) was implemented by FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP from April 2015 to June 2021 in 20 villages in the Dosso and Maradi regions of southern Niger. The programme reached 17,477 direct beneficiaries during its implementation, 15,837 women and girls, and 1,640 men and boys. The selection of the intervention villages was the result of a participatory and inclusive process and the decision making, planning, implementation and supervision processes were jointly executed by the four agencies throughout the programme. The monitoring and evaluation exercises carried out throughout the course of the programme demonstrate that the JP RWEE resulted in significant achievements for the economic empowerment of rural women, despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. The global final evaluation found that, in Niger, several factors contributed to the achievement of results in the country, including the participatory approach of the Dimitra Clubs, the effectiveness of national coordination mechanisms, the complementarity of the agencies' interventions targeting the same beneficiaries, and the enhancement of solidarity and social cohesion in the targeted villages.

Key highlights achieved by the programme include the following:

Outcome 1: From 2015 to 2021, there was an average increase in women's rain fed crop production that varied between 14% and 53% according to the crop. The average Food Dietary Diversity Score for all municipalities increased from 3.49 to 4.84, which is very close to the target of 5. The level of knowledge of the beneficiaries on the causes and means of prevention of malnutrition increased significantly for 90% of beneficiaries.

Outcome 2: The diversification of the sources of income helped women to better cope with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The income generated by rural women through the sale of their production to supply school canteens increased eight-fold from US\$ 83,090.65 in 2016 to US\$ 682,171.83 in 2021. The proportion of rural women with empowerment in the income domain of the WEAI (control over use of income) increased from 1.6% to 2%. The savings mobilized within the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) have increased from 0 to 62,931,000 CFA francs (US\$ 126,000). The monetary value of the cereal stock mobilized by the women beneficiaries is estimated at 44,170,000 XOF/ (US\$ 76,155).

Outcome 3: 120 Dimitra Clubs and 4 Communal Networks of Dimitra Clubs were created and supported, with a total of 3,600 members (2,400 women/girls and 1,200 men/boys). The clubs acted as coordination mechanisms at village level and as a driver for women and girls to develop their leadership skills. Out of the 240 Dimitra Clubs' leaders who emerged from the Dimitra Clubs process, 120 are women and 40 girls and their roles are fully recognized at local level by the community including traditional and administrative authorities. Women and girls, along with men and boys, participate actively in public meetings and in community related decision-making. In addition, a total of 523 women's groups and 3 unions were created and supported and 167 POs with 5,397 members, including 4,277 women, were strengthened. The percentage of elected women in targeted councils doubled from 13% to 26%.

Outcome 4: The percentage of the municipal budget allocated to programmes that benefit rural women's empowerment in the targeted councils increased from 12% to 26.5%. The gender capacities of 87 senior government staff (40 women and 47 men) from government institutions at communal, regional, and departmental levels, as well as members of the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, have been strengthened. The JP RWEE also gave technical support to develop and review the Land Policy, National Gender Policy and National Nutrition security policy by ensuring that gender was better reflected in the policies' formulations.

The key challenges identified by the evaluation included: the impact of COVID-19 on programme implementation; delays to implementation caused by turnover of staff and slow recruitment; establishing inter-agency methods of working at the start of the programme, and unreliable agricultural seasons which at times

affected agricultural productivity. Lessons learned and good practices included: the success of holistic approaches vis-à-vis the extremely vulnerable beneficiary target group, the importance of community-based approaches as part of the programme strategies and the involvement of men and women in defining the programme's operational strategies.

I. Purpose

The JP RWEE aimed to improve the livelihoods and secure the rights of rural women in the post-MDG (Millennium Development Goals) and sustainable development context. The programme activities were implemented using an integrated approach that facilitates the empowerment and capacity building of rural women in vulnerable situations, as well as their access to and control of productive resources. The JP RWEE contributed to the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental) while strengthening social cohesion. It is a contribution of the United Nations System to the development objectives of the Government of Niger, and it is fully aligned with the following policies and strategies: i. the five-year action plan 2018-2022 for the implementation of the national strategy for the economic empowerment of women in Niger (SNAEF), ii. the common “convergence approach” of the 3N Initiative (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens), which is based on the principle of programmatic, thematic, and geographical synergy among United Nations Agencies under the leadership of the Office of the High Commissioner to improve resilience of vulnerable communities. The JP RWEE is a contribution to the implementation of sub-program 6.5 of Niger ‘economic and social development plan’ (PDES 2017-2021). iii. it was also aligned with the three strategic outcomes of UNDAF Niger 2019-2022 RS3-Social Development and Protection: RS2-Governance, Peace and Security and RS1-Resilience.

II. Assessment of Programme Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security

To improve food security and nutrition, the JP RWEE worked towards ensuring rural women’s enhanced access to agricultural resources, assets and basic essential services, as well as strengthening their capacities to enable them to better manage their agricultural production and local stocks. The JP RWEE measured the improvement in food and nutrition security of rural women through: (i) the rate of increase in agricultural production (crop and livestock) of women farmers; and (ii) the increase in the dietary diversity score within households.

Increase in the agricultural production of women farmers was measured with two sub-indicators: the increase in crop production and the increase in animal production:

Crop production: From 2015 to 2021, crop production increased on average as follows:

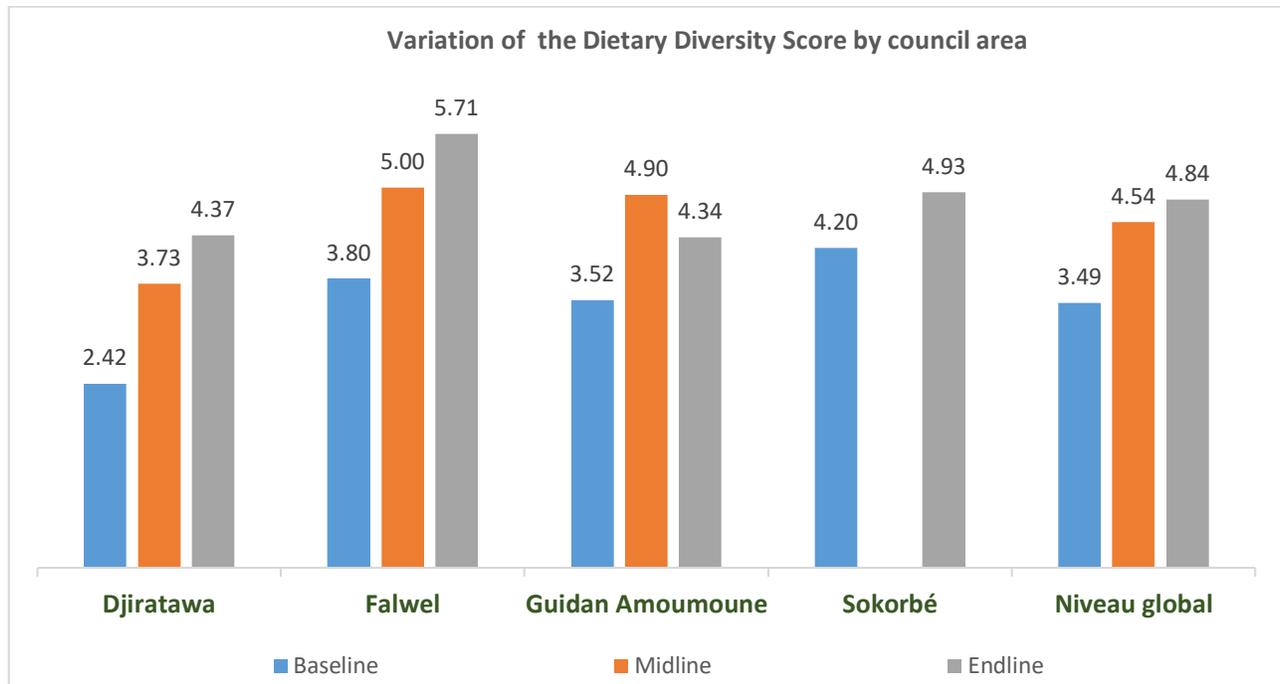
- 634 kg/ha for groundnut (a 53% increase on the baseline study);
- 486 kg/ha for cowpea (34% increase on the baseline study);
- 429 kg/ha for sesame (a 29% increase on the baseline study);
- 543 g/ha for millet (a 9% increase on the baseline study).

Crop production fluctuated as the intervention area has experienced a decline in production in the last few years due to irregular rains. The communes of Falwel, Sokorbé (Loga department, Dosso region) and Djirataoua (Madarounfa department, Maradi region) were most affected. Despite all these climatic stressors, significant crop production was achieved.

Animal production: The average growth rate of small ruminant kits, which contained two female goats and one male goat, distributed over the years has been estimated at 126%, ranging from 55% to 219%. Qualitative monitoring of the changes generated by the small ruminant kits distributed, conducted by JP RWEE in collaboration with the Departmental Directorate of Community Development of Dosso, showed that more than 50% of the income from the sale was used to cover household food needs.

ii) Increase in the Dietary Diversity Score

The 2021 final KAP survey revealed an average variation in the Dietary Diversity Score from 3.49 to 4.84, which is very close to the target of 5. This average rate hides a disparity at the commune level as shown in the graph below, taken from the final KAP nutrition survey report.



The study also found that more than 58% of beneficiaries have an average level of dietary diversity and 17% have strong diversity at the final assessment, as it increased from 3.49 at the baseline to 5.71. Almost half (48%) of the beneficiaries established a clear linkage between food production and nutrition. The existence of latrines in households has increased from 19% to 39%, implying a decrease in open defecation. Of all the key moments of hand washing, washing with soap was the least mentioned by the respondents (42%). The prevalence of diarrhea among children has decreased significantly, as has the use of traditional treatment for affected children. The level of knowledge of beneficiaries on the causes and means of prevention of malnutrition increased significantly from 59% to 87%.

To help achieve this outcome, targets have been achieved for the two following outputs:

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

Results achieved under this output were the result of the combined actions of the four agencies to facilitate vulnerable women's access to loans, services, equipment, and integrated agriculture and nutrition services so that they could adopt improved agricultural techniques and nutritional practices. Between 2015 and 2021, all the activities planned under this output were completed and resulted in improvements in access to information and communication, access to loans through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), access to

improved seeds, access to and control of pastoral kits and land, and nutritional education. The achievement of this output is estimated at 91%. Ten of the eleven targets of the indicators and sub-indicators of this product were met. The target not met is related to the malnutrition rate in the Maradi region where the increase of the rate is largely due to the impact of COVID-19 (especially the closure of the borders), and terrorist attacks which have caused population displacement.

Access to information and participatory communication

Access to information and participatory communication for men and women was provided through 120 Dimitra Clubs and four community radio stations, in collaboration with the NGO *Action Éducative pour un Développement Local* (AEDL), which trained its facilitators and community radio agents to ensure the transfer of skills to club members. The club members then relayed information beyond the clubs, particularly on topics such as nutrition education, food storage and preservation, and agricultural techniques. An estimated 3,600 women have improved their direct access to information and participatory communication, and 18,000 people were indirectly reached. See below the testimony of one of the members of the Mallam Koira Elderly Women's Club:

“Club life has brought us a great change, a great relief; we have understood many things that improve our health. Even the woman who is not a member of the club, she benefits from the club because she is aware of everything that others are doing, she also sees the change in other women, and she reproduces it. (...)”⁶

Access to loans

Women were able to access loans through the VSLAs and, to a lesser extent, the Agricultural Bank of Niger (BAGRI), especially from 2020 onwards. Over the course of the JP RWEE, 11,145 women participated in these self-managed savings groups and benefited from small loans allocated from the funds mobilized in these associations. The total amount of credit granted since 2015 is estimated at US\$ 112,690 (62,931,000 CFA francs), used in large part to initiate or strengthen income-generating activities at the community level. Access to credit for rural women was facilitated by the programme in collaboration with the NGO ‘Diko’. In addition, the Dimitra Clubs set up their own “savings and loan activities” from the start, for solidarity purposes and for community initiatives.

Access to improved seeds

This support started in 2016, with enhanced monitoring and supervision in 2017 and 2018. A total of 54.2 tons of improved seeds and 11.75 tons of fertilizers were distributed to 2,200 beneficiaries (500 in 2015, 700 in 2016 and 1,000 in 2017-2018), including 1,718 women and 482 men from vulnerable households in the intervention villages. The capacities of women beneficiaries were built on farming techniques and practices, in collaboration with the NGO ‘Himma’ in 2016 and with the Departmental Directorate of Agriculture in Loga. An average of 86% of supported women producers increased their agricultural production.

Access to and control of pastoral kits

The JP RWEE implemented the pastoral kits activity in collaboration with the NGO ASADI in the Maradi region and in collaboration with the *Cadre de Collaboration et de Dialogue des Organisations Paysannes* (CCD/OPRD) in the Dosso region. The kits were distributed gradually to 1,050 vulnerable women to build their productive capital. From 2016 to 2020, the JP RWEE provided 1,920 small ruminants, 105 tons of livestock feed and set up a livestock feed bank in the 4 communes. After 4 years of intervention, the number of small ruminants currently available is 3,196 (this excludes births, mortalities, losses, donations, retrocessions, sales, slaughters, and others). All stages of implementation were carried out in an inclusive manner with all members

⁶ FAO Dimitra Clubs in Niger: An Impact Study, Version 2.1, by Sabrina Aguiari, PhD, January 2019, Page 5 (unpublished).

of the community/stakeholders (women beneficiaries, men, local leaders, etc.) who were strongly involved and took ownership of the reassignment process, notably through the Dimitra Clubs. Beneficiaries' capacity in livestock management, health care and animal feeding was also strengthened.

Access to and control over land

Generally, in Niger, individual women can access small plots of land at household level (e.g. by using a plot belonging to their husband), but control of and/or access to large areas of land requires being influential and/or having financial resources. In the communes of Falwel and Sokorbé, for example, women rarely inherit land, but, through distributed inputs, they negotiate land access through several channels. From 2016 to 2021, several awareness-raising activities (focusing on purchasing to build up one's own resources and inheritance rights) have been conducted within Producers' Organizations (POs) and the Dimitra Clubs to strengthen women's access to and control over land. Based on data collected by the NGO implementing partner Diko, this has enabled 2,731 women to access land through various means (rental, loan, grant/donation, heritage, purchase, etc.). Of these, 515 women reported having purchased or inherited land.

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education activities evolved differently in terms of target groups and the programme training strategy across communes between 2016 and 2019. However, the same package was applied in all of the communes of intervention and included: a baseline study, training, awareness raising, cooking demonstrations using local products, and an endline survey at least six months after awareness raising.

The baseline studies and evaluations were conducted until 2019 by the *Centre Régional d'Enseignement Spécialisé en Agriculture* (CRESA) and then by INTES, a research firm. These surveys, called "KAP- Dietary Diversity Score (DDS)"⁷ focused on nutritional knowledge, attitudes, and practices within households. Nutrition training/awareness-raising was developed based on the gaps identified by the baseline studies. The surveys showed an average of increase in the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) ranging from 3.49 in base line to 4.84 in endline, which is very close to the target of 5. The small gap observed is due to some deeply entrenched food taboos that are gradually changing and the impact of COVID-19 (no market access to diversified foods). Awareness raising, training, and cooking demonstrations were conducted in partnership with the NGO "Women United against Malnutrition" (Kundji Fondo).

The JP RWEE nutrition strategy was revised in accordance with the revised National Nutrition Strategy, and now aims at integrating nutrition in all its activities, in four main steps: (1) identification of nutrition themes and guides (2) training of implementing partners and local stakeholders on the integration of nutrition sensitive approaches (3) training of the leaders of community organizations and beneficiaries on nutrition (4) identification of recipes based on high nutritional value foods. A total of 482 leaders, including 380 women, participated in the trainings. Each group (School Management Committees, Dimitra Clubs, Canteen schools) received teaching aids to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge to the community. Finally, they shared the knowledge acquired to other members of their structures. As a result, 4,119 beneficiaries, including 2,850 women, have adopted improved nutrition practices, while approximately 4,279 (of whom 3,081 women) participated in nutrition discussion sessions and cooking demonstrations. 16,800 people have been sensitized at village level. Some 50 community discussions and cooking demonstrations (15 in Falwel, 15 in Djirataoua, 10 in Sokorbé and 10 in Guidan Amomoune) were organized to show that it is possible to have a balanced diet based on local products. A compendium was prepared based on the recipes identified (see Appendix 1 of this report).

⁷ The Household Dietary Diversity score (HDDS) is meant to reflect, in a snapshot, the economic ability of a household to access a variety of foods. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/wa_workshop/docs/FAO-guidelines-dietary-diversity2011.pdf. As a reminder, household dietary diversity is the number of different food groups consumed over a given reference period.

An endline KAP survey of the nutrition education activities was conducted in 2021. The survey revealed the following results in terms of knowledge and practices.

Indicators/knowledge per area:		Average baseline	Endline	There is an average step increase across the zone that ranges from 11 points for "age of introduction of complementary food" to 55 points for knowledge of "key handwashing moments". This is likely because the knowledge regarding washing hands was reinforced by sensitization on COVID-19. Exclusive immediate breastfeeding also showed a marked change, while the change in latrine use needs to be reinforced, especially in Falwel.
Breastfeeding and infant feeding	Immediate Breastfeeding	83%	96%	
	Age of introduction of supplemental food	80%	91%	
	Exclusive breastfeeding	63%	87%	
Malnutrition	Insufficient food	59%	87%	
	Diseases	31%	45%	
Fruit and vegetable consumption		62%	78%	
Water, Hygiene and Sanitation	Key handwashing time	42%	97%	
	Latrine use	19%	39%	

Based on the results of the initial surveys and the endline KAP survey carried out in the intervention communes, considerable progress was made among the beneficiaries in terms of knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding nutrition, health, hygiene, and sanitation. A total of 96% of the beneficiaries now practice immediate breastfeeding, compared to an average of 83% at the start of the programme. The rate of exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months increased from 63% to 87%. There has been a clear improvement in knowledge of the age of introduction of complementary foods, from 80% in the baseline study to 91% in the endline. In the 24 hours prior to the survey, approximately 66% of children aged 6-23 months had been fed more than three times. The consumption of fruits and vegetables increased from an average of 62% to 78% of households, despite the scarcity of this type of food and the lack of financial means in the communities.

Output 1.2: Rural women have increased capacity to strengthen and monitor local food security reserves

The JP RWEE aimed to build the capacity of rural women in terms of food production, processing, and storage, using innovative, productive, culturally, and environmentally acceptable technologies. This output has been almost fully achieved (7 of the 8 indicators met), as only one target (a smaller than planned number of FFS) was not fully reached.

Agricultural training for women and men in Farmer Field Schools (FFS)

The learning process on agricultural production techniques was carried out through Farmer Field Schools (FFS), in collaboration with the decentralized services of the MAGEL In 2016-2017, 2018 and 2020 plans, 41 FFS had been planned, but only 29 were installed for the benefit of 568 women and 263 men due to poor performance by 12 of the FFS. Learning themes included climate smart practices such as soil reclamation techniques, the production and use of bio-pesticides, field preparation and weeding techniques. This knowledge has been multiplied at the community level via the Dimitra Clubs. However, the 2016 annual review and successive follow-ups showed that the FFS process had weaknesses, especially in Djirataoua, due to the late arrival of inputs and insufficient follow-up resources for the local FFS facilitators. The FFS that did not meet their objectives sufficiently were not counted. To overcome the issue, the JP RWEE collaborated with PRODAF (Family Farming Development Programme funded by IFAD) that set up farmers field schools in the villages of the Maradi region in 2018.

Processing kits and training

From 2019 until 2021, to support the processing of agro-sylvo-pastoral products, the JP RWEE and its partners provided 20 villages, in the four communes of the regions of Dosso and Maradi, with kits for processing agricultural products. The activity was conducted in partnership with Diko, the *Institute of National Recherche in Agronomy of Niger* and the “Groupement Lakalkaney”. These kits benefited 682 women, in addition to 402 women who were trained at the time of their introduction (totaling 1,084 women). In the absence of production statistics, the quantity of groundnuts crushed was difficult to assess. This lack of statistics reflects the urgency and relevance of capacity building in management and balance sheet, i.e., entrepreneurship development.

JP RWEE’s interventions fostered the emergence of rural microenterprises that process agro-pastoral products, particularly groundnuts and cowpeas. This activity has a great potential to increase income in rural areas. The option of providing dynamic microenterprises with equipment to improve their performance is a credible alternative for exploiting this potential. In 2021, the JP RWEE rewarded (with appropriate equipment) the best eight microenterprises that had been created/boosted as a result of the Dimitra Clubs’ efforts (two per municipality). The selection of the micro-enterprises was made by several members of the JP National Steering Committee during the communal Dimitra Clubs forums. The Committee used the same criteria as those used by the government during the Agricultural Fair (a fair of agro pastoral and artisanal products). The criteria included, among others, the level of innovation, the level of improvement of an already existing product, the easiness to use and conserve the product for one year, and the level of replicability at a larger scale. The Committee also analyzed the benefits prospects as per the presentation sheet of the micro-enterprises, the number of people (men and women) working in the micro-enterprises, the indirect jobs created, the ability of the product to emerge in urban areas, and the existence of a marketing plan.

Training of trainers on food storage and conservation

Two training sessions on food storage and conservation techniques were held in 2019 for community trainers. The objective was both to ensure the nutritional quality of the cereal stocks of the members of the Dimitra Clubs and POs, and to minimize the losses related to the storage and conservation of cereal products. To ensure better ownership of the knowledge acquired in building the capacities of the members of farmers' organizations, the activity was conducted in collaboration with the decentralized services of the DAC/POR (MAG/EL), which oversee farmers' organizations in Niger.

The training of trainers enabled the maximizing of local expertise that can be leveraged to members of formal and informal community organizations, and therefore reach a larger number of targets. A total of 60 community trainers were trained in 2019, including 46 women and 14 men, and they successively delivered the training content to 1,211 people, including 921 women members from 41 grassroots organizations. The PO training package was evaluated in 2020 (see evaluation section at the bottom of this report).

The community trainers include members of the POs and Dimitra Clubs, technicians from the decentralized technical services and members of the NGO partners implementing the JP RWEE. The involvement of representatives of technical services and NGOs not only aims to support and facilitate the restitution of the training content at the community level, but also to strengthen the capacities of these agents to consolidate what has been learned through their continuous support.

Strengthening the Guidan Wari cereal bank (CB)

At the request of rural women, the JP RWEE supported the construction of a cereal storage warehouse with a capacity of 25 tons for the Women's Union GAFEMMES of Guidan Wari (rural Commune of Guidan Amoumoune). The Union is composed of 11 grassroots POs, with a total of 311 members. The process began late 2018 with the construction of the bank, and ended in 2020 with the support of seven tons of rice and 25 pallets. Millet was initially requested by the women, but the high cost of grain due to COVID-19 restrictions implied a change and only rice could be delivered. The 2021 follow-up showed that the Union sold the 7 tons of rice received and purchased 10 tons of millet.

Support for the Saidou Goulla feed bank (Guidan Amoumoune commune)

The creation of the feed bank (BAB) was in response to a need expressed by three villages (Guidan wari, Saidou Goulla and Dan Mallam mai Rakouma) in the rural commune of Guidan Amoumoune to support their livestock activities and generate income. The BAB was set up in Saidou Goulla, a village with available premises and 10.3 tons of local inputs (cowpea pods, peanut hulls, millet bran) worth 800,000 FCFA (US\$ 1,400). The activity emphasized the importance of sustainability and locally available inputs, and enabled women beneficiaries to supply themselves. If they had opted for conventional inputs (wheat bran and cotton cake), not only would they have been forced to buy their supplies at high prices, but they would also have faced unfair competition in view of the moderate prices offered by the government through the technical services of the livestock sector and its partners. The other important aspect that accompanied the sustainability of the feed bank was the technological training package around the management system (animal feed in the Sahel context; strategic complementation; associative life and management). It is also important to emphasize the participation and proximity of the communal livestock service and the city hall in monitoring and supporting the achievements. In addition, this also contributed to income generation for these women's groups.

Installation of labour-saving equipment and training of women beneficiaries

In accordance with the national strategy for women's empowerment, the JP RWEE supported rural women with labour-saving equipment, including 14 multifunctional platforms (PTFM), 124 donkey and cattle carts, 27 kits for processing agricultural products, 7 standpipes and 9 pulleys installed on community wells. This equipment has made it possible to considerably reduce several household tasks, such as fetching water and firewood. The time saved is devoted to income-generating activities and participation in community activities, thus contributing to strengthening their economic empowerment and achieving gender equality. According to focus group discussions with women beneficiaries, the time spent for water collection has been reduced from 5 to 1.5 hours. To ensure sustainable management and to compensate for possible equipment breakdowns, the JP RWEE has strengthened the capacities of 366 women and 150 men on the management of standpipes, platforms, and carts, through training and organized exchange meetings between the intervention villages.

Promotion of community market gardening

This activity contributed to improved food production and diversification. In 2017, 9 groups in Dikki (rural commune of Sokorbé) were supported with vegetable seeds and 3 motor pumps to facilitate the watering of their community market garden site, which directly benefited 209 women. Between 2017 and 2020, three market garden sites with a total area of 3 hectares, one in Madou (rural commune of Sokorbé) and one in Téhoizé Koira (rural commune of Falwel) totaling 543 women, were developed in collaboration with the Departmental Directorate of Agriculture of Loga. This activity was carried out with resources from the JP RWEE and with US\$ 8,500 mobilized from TELEFOOD funds. The seeds and motor pump were selected after a participatory

process that involved the beneficiaries and the Loga Departmental Director of Agriculture. As part of post-harvest activities, targeted rural women in the four communes mobilized cereal stocks during the harvest period, which were resold during the lean season. A total of 2,131 millet bags of 100 kg, 725 bags of cowpeas, 75 bags of stumps and 147 bags of groundnuts were stored for resale throughout the years.

Outcome 2: Rural women's increased incomes to secure their livelihoods

To achieve this outcome, JP RWEE Niger supported local purchases to supply school canteens and rural women's Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs). It also introduced labour-saving technologies as described in outcome 1 which enabled women to save time and have resources to initiate income-generating activities.

The programme aimed to measure the achievement of this outcome using the following three main indicators: (i) the variation of income generated by women and/or their organizations through their sale to WFP and other markets; (ii) the proportion of rural women who are self-reliant in resource control, as measured by the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index; (iii) evidence of Improving the Quality of Life of Rural Women.

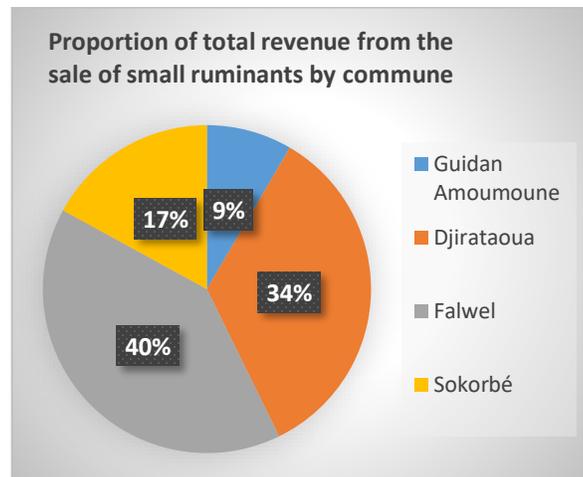
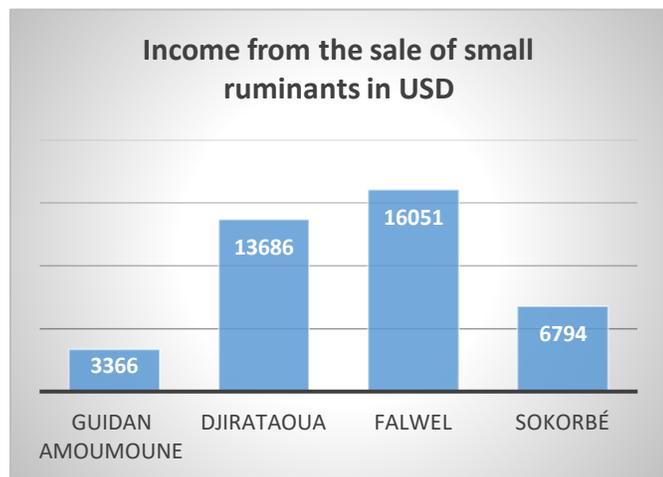
All targets for these indicators were met. The total income generated by rural women from selling their produce to supply school canteens increased eight-fold from US\$ 83,090.65 in 2016 to US\$ 682,171.83 in 2021. The target was a 15% increase (US\$ 62,317.98) from baseline per year, or US\$ 145,408.63 over the programme duration. The report of the final study using the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) showed that the percentage of self-reliant rural women in resource control increased from 1.6% from the baseline study to 2% in the final evaluation. This rate would likely have been higher had data collection not been limited by COVID-19 movement restrictions.

Empowering extremely vulnerable women takes significant time and the contribution of the activities implemented under outcome 2 to achieving long term change evolved over time. Until 2018, rural women commonly cited small ruminant kits as an activity that significantly increased the incomes of vulnerable women. Then, from 2019-2020, the contribution of their individual and collective micro-enterprises and the VSLAs to increasing women's income was cited. The final evaluation indicated that, as a consequence of the JP RWEE, the impact of COVID-19 was mitigated. In Niger, for example, micro-enterprises processing agricultural products, based on an estimate of the total amount of groundnuts processed or crushed, could produce products worth approximately CFA 48,780,000 or US\$ 96,467.35.

According to women beneficiaries interviewed in Niger, the resources acquired helped to reduce the initial negative impact on the local economy of the floods, the measures taken to curb the spread of COVID-19 and to increase security. Through their participation in JP RWEE, rural women had access to diversified sources of income and cash, enabling them to support their households. As said by Badjé Djibo, a male beneficiary from the Tegoize Koira Zeno village in the Falwel municipality: *"The series of activities (Dimitra Clubs, workload reduction, goat kits, school kits, market gardening seeds, and cash for work) have allowed people to stay and work in their own fields instead of going to work as hired labour and abandoning their land, which has improved our agricultural production. It has also allowed the women not to migrate and to live a harmonious life in their households."*

In addition, social networking, strengthened social cohesion and solidarity have enabled people to provide support to each other. Cereal stocks and grain banks have also dampened the impact on household nutrition during the last difficult period. Many small ruminants have been sold to secure livelihoods. Thus, the total

registered revenue from sales of small ruminants from the four municipalities amounts to 27,780,000XOF, equivalent to US\$ 51,520, broken down as shown in the figures below. The two communes of Falwel and Djirataoua where the activity began in 2016 and 2017, accumulate 40% and 34% of the total revenue respectively.



Output 2.1: Rural women have improved their entrepreneurial skills and value chains to access markets with their products

This output was achieved through facilitating increased access to markets for women and men through partnership with WFP's school feeding programme, and training of women and POs on organizational capacities and rural entrepreneurship. All planned target for indicators under this output were either reached or overreached.

Participation of rural women in the WFP purchase for progress programme to supply school canteens

This activity was implemented in collaboration with the NGO Kaidiya and the decentralized services of the Ministry of National Education, under the coordination of the 3N Initiative. It linked school feeding with local agricultural production, through the commune's farmers' organizations. The process started with a pilot school voucher initiative in 2016 and continued until 2019. At the end of 2019, a new mechanism was piloted via cash transfer to the schools, who bought food from local farmer organizations and suppliers. This process incorporated an innovative feature that involved a financial partner (*Niger Poste*) to facilitate the transfer of funds, the training of local actors on the modus operandi, the appointment of trustees and the implementation of a data collection system. In order to bring more women into local procurement processes, the JP RWEE supported women's POs to form unions and meet the requirements for partnering with WFP in local procurement. From 2016 to date, these WFP sales have enabled the targeted rural women's Unions to generate an estimated US\$ 682,171.83. A total of 4,292 women and 3,911 men from 32 unions have participated in this mechanism.

Training of women from formal and informal groups and Producer Organizations on agricultural entrepreneurship

The JP RWEE improved the entrepreneurial skills of rural women to facilitate their access to the market, sell their products and increase their income. It was initially planned to train 8,774 individual members of formal and informal POs (5,824 women and 2,950 men) on entrepreneurship, but 11,109 people were trained (8,362 women and 2,747 men), which represents 136% of the initial target. This result was possible thanks to the

leveraging of several trainings by the trainers, such as those on "governance of POs for the development of market services" and "quality control".

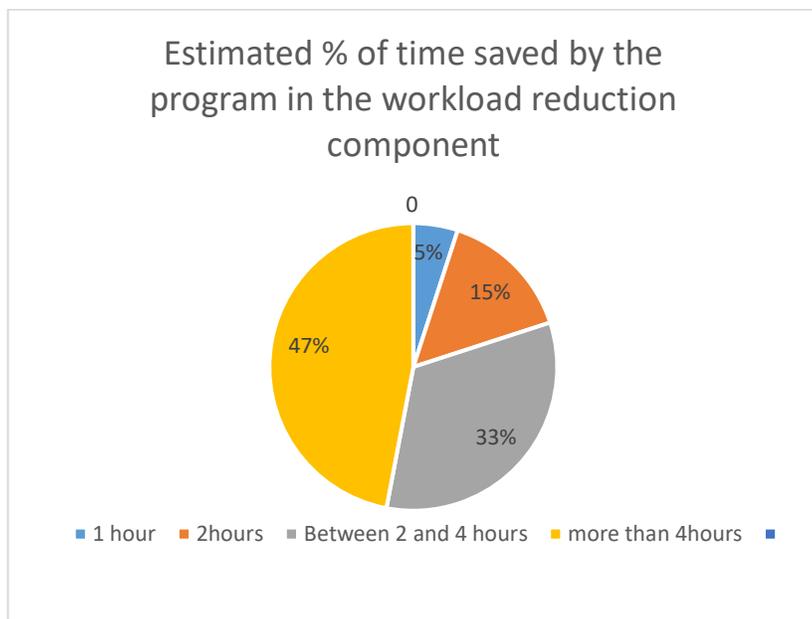
Output 2.2: Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities

To achieve this output, the JP RWEE supported POs to become formal groups in order to access better economic opportunities and worked towards alleviating women's daily tasks so that they could initiate income-generating activities.

Workload reduction for rural women

In line with the national strategy for women's empowerment, the JP RWEE supported workload reduction and start up equipment for income-generation of targeted rural women. The implementation of this equipment (outlined under outcome 1 above) and the coaching of beneficiaries around its management was initiated in 2015 in the commune of Falwel. In 2018, this package of activities was assessed and showed positive results in terms of time-saving and use of time saved for income generation. Through the analysis of this assessment, 97% of the 184 women interviewed declared that their daily living conditions had improved.

Time saving: 47% of the women who benefited from this component managed to save more than 4 hours per day of time, 33% between 2 and 4 hours and 15% of the women save 2 hours per day as illustrated below:



Use of time saved: among the modalities most cited by women, which received the highest scores, were:

- (i) Household maintenance, cited by 77% of respondents.
- (ii) Childcare, cited by 54%.
- (iii) Conducting income-generating activities to help meet daily expenses, cited by 53%.
- (iv) Improving living conditions with spouses, cited by 46%; hygiene, cited by 42%; and
- (v) Attendance at health centers, cited by 39% of respondents (several modalities could be mentioned by the same woman).

Some 1,720 women out of the 1,000 targeted under the JP RWEE have initiated IGAs, often in the agri-food sector (processing peanuts into oil, selling fritters and cooked dishes, for example).

In addition to mobilizing their own savings, most of the formal and informal rural women's groups mobilized cereal stocks from their own funds during the harvest period and sold them during the lean season in order to mitigate against the impact of shocks. The monetary value of the cereal stock mobilized by the women over the course of the programme amounted to XOF 44,170,000 (US\$ 76,155). Within the VSLAs created, the amount of savings totalled (XOF 62,931,000 (US\$ 126,000)).

Training of young women to boost existing small businesses

Discussions within the Dimitra Clubs led to the creation of community social enterprises led by young women. A framework was created to support groups of young women willing to boost their small businesses and start developing business plans. Two hundred and ninety-three (293) women from 40 micro-entreprises were supported by the Dimitra clubs themselves (for example, through advice, financial contributions, mentoring) and by the JP RWEE and each developed a business plan. Communal forums (one per commune) were held to evaluate the performance of the micro-enterprises. The business plans submitted by the micro-enterprises were analyzed by members of the JP RWEE Technical Committee and designated representatives of the Steering Committee, based on criteria used at the national level. The 8 top performing received in-kind rewards (three tons of raw materials and eight processing kits).

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

To achieve this outcome, the JP RWEE strengthened the leadership of rural women and girls, their organizations, and their active participation in decision-making bodies within households, organizations and communities. Planned indicator targets were achieved for the most part, although the shocks of 2020 affected the achievement of targets for two of the six indicators.

The proportion of women elected as local councilors increased from 13% at the start of the programme (7 women elected out of 55 local councilors) to 26% (19 women elected out of 73 local councilors) at the end, exceeding the target by 15%.

The proportion of rural women on basic land commissions increased from 10% (18 women) at the outset to 18% (32 women) at the end of the programme. The target of 22% was not achieved due to the fact that several women who left the committees for personal reasons were not systematically replaced.

The proportion of agricultural producer organizations (POs) headed by women increased from 0 percent at the beginning of the programme to 79.6%, in line with the programme's target of 80%.

The proportion of self-reliant rural women in leadership, as measured by the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, increased from 20% in the baseline study to 16.5%. This rate does not reflect what is observed in the field and the testimonies of beneficiaries. The team believes that the difference may be due to the period during which the data collection for this final assessment using the WEAI tool was conducted in the field. Indeed, the study took place while measures to counteract the COVID-19 pandemic were in place, such as a ban on gatherings. In addition, it was the pre-election period and there were tensions country wide, which it is believed could have affected the results.

The school attendance rate of girls also increased steadily until 2020, when a drop was observed in the Maradi region. The average rate increased from 92% to 97% for Dosso and 85% for Maradi. This reduction in attendance rate in Maradi region was attributed to the combined effects of the pandemic restrictions and population movements caused by insecurity.

The improvement of rural women's decision-making power in households, organizations and communities was most evident in the emergence of 160 women Dimitra Club leaders, out of a total of 240 leaders. The four community networks of the Dimitra clubs facilitated exchanges not only between the intervention villages, but also between the intervention villages and the town halls (commune level). The changes observed, the irreversible dynamics within the clubs and networks of Dimitra clubs, and the conclusions of the global evaluation, all testify towards the likelihood of sustainability in relation to the gains achieved under this result. In 2020, which was a year of multiple shocks in Niger, rural women's leadership was particularly strong during

the aftermath of devastating floods, in raising awareness of communities about the prevention of COVID-19, and in preparing for the country's general elections.

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

This involved working to strengthen the confidence and leadership skills of rural women and girls to participate in local governance. Several tools were used: training, exchange trips, awareness raising, active participation in public meetings through the Dimitra Clubs, thematic debates, support for school attendance and retention of girls in secondary school, supported by access to and control of resources described above. The JP RWEE in Niger supported the enrollment of girls and boys in school, literacy training for women and girls, supported women to stand as candidates in local elections, and provided training in gender and leadership.

The training in participatory communication and leadership involved 240 Dimitra Clubs' leaders (160 women and 80 men). The women leaders subsequently trained some 2,400 women from 120 Dimitra Clubs. The objective was to develop the leaders' capacities to support their club in identifying and analyzing the common problems as experienced by the women and men of their community, in order to find solutions to be implemented using their own resources. The leaders also developed active listening skills and improved their oral language skills throughout the process as well as their self-confidence. The training was a starting point but the most powerful aspect was the application of the skills learned, their role in the life of the Dimitra Clubs, and the methodology which involved all the members in an empowerment process.

Literacy for rural women and girls

To enable them to better manage their economic activities and have access to education, the JP RWEE in Niger used two complementary literacy approaches: (i) functional literacy until 2017 and (ii) community-based literacy as from 2018. In the first case, 16 literacy centers were set up in four communes with 25 people per center, including 22 women and 3 men. The installation, facilitation and monitoring of these centers were carried out in collaboration with the local authorities and technical literacy services. In the second case, community-based literacy training was conducted by a few ("literate") members of the community, at no cost and on a voluntary basis, and thus by using the existing human capital. The system has made it possible to train 245 people as local literacy facilitators (104 women and 141 men) in their local language (Hausa in Maradi and Zarma in Dosso) and as promoters of the written use of the local language in the 20 villages. They subsequently enrolled and gave literacy classes to 1,830 people (1,159 women and 671 men). A total of 2,075 beneficiaries (1,263 women and 812 men) were taught to read and write. Being able to read and write has allowed the women to improve their confidence, but also keep records of micro-businesses and income-generating activities, take notes during meetings, and make better use of their cell phones.

Support to the schooling of young girls and boys

Through the links with school feeding, whose objective is to ensure that children of all school-age, girls and boys, do not drop out of school and are well nourished in order to focus on lessons, a cumulative 14,070 children, including 6,264 girls from 71 schools in the intervention zone, were supported. Activities were implemented through school vegetable gardens, school herds and grain mills (mentioned above). In 2020, given the pandemic, an operational adjustment made it possible to replace hot meals with the distribution of dry rations for home use. Hygiene kits were also distributed for the prevention of COVID-19 in all targeted schools.

Scholarships for girls to continue their secondary education

A total of 1,222 girls in the four intervention communes received scholarships to encourage them to continue their education. These girls were enrolled in primary school and secondary school and received US\$ 12; US\$ 24 and US\$ 36 per quarter, respectively. The targeted schools and villages also received sensitization sessions

for behavioral change through themes on early marriage, the importance of schooling for young girls, and nutrition education.

Output 3.2: Rural women have increased organizational capacities to form, maintain and participate in producers' organizations, cooperatives and unions

This output aimed to strengthen rural women's collective capacity through the creation and structuring of women's groups and training in organizational management. It was implemented in partnership with the NGO DIKO and carried out in collaboration with the Regional Directorates of Cooperative Action and Promotion of Rural Organizations in Dosso and Maradi (ACPOR).

Stimulating women's candidacies for local elections

Women's awareness-raising for their full involvement in local governance was conducted within Dimitra Clubs and women's groups. A total of 422 candidates at the elections were registered at the municipalities of intervention level.

Creation of and support to women's groups

The creation of and support to women's groups was carried out in collaboration with the implementing partner Diko. In total, 523 women's groups and 3 unions were created and supported by JP RWEE.

Strengthening of women and men POs

A total of 380 community trainers (212 women and 168 men) from 167 POs were trained on several topics: (i) gender-sensitive organizational analysis; (ii) good governance, gender and effectiveness of POs; (iii) procedures for the creation and operating rules of a farmers' organization, according to the Uniform Act on the Law of Cooperative Societies (OHADA); (iv) storage and conservation of agricultural products; and (iv) marketing techniques for grain products: warrantage (warehouse receipt system, i.e. granting credit with grain as collateral in secure warehouses where a third independent party holds the collateral on behalf of both the creditor and the debtor), and institutional markets/tenders. Through training and sensitization, all the POs in the intervention area are now registered according to the OHADA law. With the restitution of the trainings in their own PO, a total of 167 POs (25 in Falwel, 43 in Sokorbé, 40 in Djirataoua and 59 in Guidan Amoumoune), accounting for 5,397 members (including 4,277 women), have been sensitized on the main themes mentioned above.

Output 3.3: Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence political forums at the national and regional levels

This output involved supporting the networking of rural communities and their organizations, training POs and supporting women in conducting their advocacy initiatives.

Networking of rural communities

In partnership with the local implementing partner AEDL, the joint programme accompanied the process of setting up the "Dimitra Clubs Communal Network". The clubs demonstrated a strong capacity for community engagement, social mobilization, and influence in all the actions they undertake with their partners. Four communal Dimitra Club's networks (representing all the villages of the JP RWEE) were created and supported in order to reduce the distance between the commune and village levels, and provide women and young people with roles and responsibilities in local governance outside the village. These networks will be key for the post-project follow-up in the intervention area. A "WhatsApp group" has been created which includes the participating agencies, implementing partner and the mayors of the intervention communes, and has continued to operate beyond the end of the programme. The Dimitra Club networks will continue to exist beyond the programme. In collaboration with the implementing partner Diko, the JP RWEE has supported the establishment of three networks of women's groups in Namaroua and Guidan Amoumoune.

Gender training for rural women in POs at the apex level

A total of 9 POs and 3 Women's Unions were trained on (i) "Procedures for the creation and operating rules of a farmer organization"; (ii) "governance and equity within FOs"; and (iii) "participation of women and FOs in dialogue spaces and platforms".

Support rural women's advocacy initiatives during the International Day of Rural Women

From 2016 to 2021, the JP RWEE supported rural women in participating and mobilizing for the International Day of Rural Women and in advocating for the improvement of their conditions and status. Five advocacy initiatives were supported, including two in Dosso, one in Maradi, one in Tahoua and one in Zinder.

Local level exchange visits on the management of installed multifunctional platforms

In 2021, a total of 48 beneficiaries, including 32 women and 16 men, benefitted from two local-level exchange visits on the management of installed multifunctional platforms.

Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women, are more aware of their rights in an enabling community/local environment

Creation and supervision of Dimitra Clubs

A total of 120 Dimitra Clubs, including 3,600 members (2,400 are women and girls), were established and supported by the JP RWEE. The clubs developed village action plans that they implemented themselves without external support. These plans are developed based on themes of interest to the community and common problems (ranging from food security and nutrition to climate change, disaster risk reduction, early marriage, girls schooling, etc.) that are then discussed during the clubs' weekly meetings. The clubs have brought about significant changes at village level, including behaviour changes. For example, women are now allowed to take the floor during public meetings and their advice is taken into account; widows have the right to get married again; and new food habits have been introduced in households following discussions in the Dimitra Clubs. Solutions to problems are identified and implemented by the clubs and/or the community. Community radio stations were important partners in the scaling up of good practices.

The Dimitra Clubs have particularly improved women and youth's capacities for analysis, reflection, speaking out and decision-making, as reflected in the following testimony of Mrs. Aissa Sina, of Tégouzé koira (Falwel rural commune): *"I am particularly pleased as I was chosen to be the head of the Communal Network of the Dimitra Clubs. The network links the five villages of the Joint Programme in the commune of Falwel. It has given me the opportunity for the first time to exchange with the communal authorities on the activities that the Dimitra Clubs are carrying out."*

The impact evaluation of Dimitra Clubs in Niger showed the importance of this approach for local governance as everyone has a voice in local decision-making.

The Dimitra Clubs also work on sensitive issues such as schooling for children, especially young girls (to stop forced marriages), and the Koranic school for women (so that they themselves can learn to read the Koran, and in the long run be protected from misinterpretations). Many constructive ideas are discussed in village assemblies, as shown in the following example from the Dimitra Clubs' impact⁸ study. *"The women's clubs have brought thematic issues such as sanitation, birth spacing, and reducing domestic tasks. Our club has approved these issues during the village assembly of the clubs. Women are right, because they suffer from these"* (Leader of the young men's club of Malam Koira)

⁸ FAO DIMITRA CLUBS IN NIGER: AN IMPACT STUDY, /Version 2.1/ Sabrina Aguiari, PhD/ January 2019.

Initiatives developed by Dimitra clubs and their networks

The Dimitra clubs have developed many initiatives at the level of the intervention villages, which can be classified into 4 areas: (i) human rights (e.g. the remarriage of widows); (ii) awareness raising on several themes (early and forced marriages, nutrition, COVID-19); (iii) community physical achievements (construction of classes and housing for the promotion of schooling for girls and boys, construction of delivery room for women,); and (iv) concerted collective decisions on collective economic activities: collective fields, purchase of collective land in the form of Economic Interest Groups.

Outcome 4: A more gender-sensitive policy environment for rural women's economic empowerment is created

The objective of outcome 4 was to contribute to a more gender-sensitive policy environment that values rural women's economic empowerment and makes tools available to measure progress. The original design of the programme provides for capacity building of parliamentarians and policymakers to enable them to integrate the gender approach into strategies and policies relating to land, food, agricultural and nutrition, including gender responsive budgeting.

At the outset of the programme, it was decided as a strategic choice to work first on the ground (in view of the mobilization of resources) and take a bottom-up approach, focusing on capacity building of targeted vulnerable rural women. This would enable them to make strategic choices based on their priorities and to take part in the development of local laws.

The programme aimed to measure the achievement of this outcome using the following three main indicators:

- Number of countries passing laws to secure rural women's land ownership
- Percentage of municipal budget allocated to programmes that benefit the empowerment of rural women in targeted municipalities
- Percentage of the national budget allocated to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection.

Niger's land policy was adopted in 2021. The JP RWEE made a technical contribution to ensure that gender was better reflected in its formulation. The JP RWEE also provided technical support to the advocacy organized on March 12, 2020 by the women of the farmers platform for the adoption of this policy. Technical support was also provided to the National Gender Policy and National Nutrition security policy by ensuring that gender was better reflected in the policies' formulations.

The net national budget allocated to the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Child Protection increased steadily from the start to the end of the programme, but its share of the national budget remained stagnant at 0.01%.

The average municipal budget allocated to programmes that benefit rural women's empowerment in the targeted municipalities increased from 12% at the start of JP RWEE to 26.5 % at the end of Phase I. The following outputs contributed to the achievement of this outcome.

Output 4.1: Policymakers and parliamentarians have increased capacity to effectively integrate gender into land budgets, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies and laws

The JP RWEE worked on two main lines of action: (i) technical support for mainstreaming gender in the development and or revision of policies, strategies; and (ii) capacity development of decision makers on gender-responsive planning and budgeting.

Technical support in the integration of gender into the development and/or revision of policies and strategies

In 2016, the JP RWEE contributed technically to the review of the national nutrition security policy in which clear results in favor of women's rights were integrated¹. In 2017, the revision of the national strategy for women's empowerment was supported through participation in the Ministry-led technical committee. JP RWEE activities were included in the planning efforts for implementing the National Gender Policy and the National Strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment. The Land Policy was adopted in 2021 as mentioned previously.

Capacity development for decision makers on gender-responsive planning and budgeting

Three training sessions on gender-responsive planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation were conducted in 2019 for local and national decision makers. The first one focused on Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB) for the benefit of 20 (7 women) key local actors from the 4 communes (Falwel, Sokorbé, Djirataoua and Guidan Amoumoune) of intervention. The last two sessions were directed at the central, regional, and departmental senior staff of the Agriculture and Livestock Ministry (MAGEL). The topics covered were as follows: (i) gender analysis of agricultural policies, programmes and projects for national level managers and members of the MAGEL gender unit (26 women and 8 men trained); and (ii) gender-sensitive data collection, gender analysis of data and production of gender-sensitive reports in the framework of national agricultural surveys. The training was provided to 26 men and 7 women, all of whom are agricultural statistics managers. A total of 33 women and 34 men were trained and provided with training materials.

Technicians, technical services and NGOs trained to support the POs (gender, governance, equity, dialogue platform, law OHADA etc.)

A total of 45 technicians including 12 from NGOs (4 women), 28 technical staff (6 women) and 4 staff from district authorities (1 women) were regularly trained on all of these thematic areas.

Ownership of the Commemoration of the International Day of Rural Women by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Protection of the child

The JP RWEE supported the Ministry for Women's Promotion and Child's Protection in institutionalizing the organization of the International Day of Rural Women in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Livestock and the Office of the High Commissioner for the 3Ns Initiative. A national preparatory committee was established by order of the Ministry for Women's promotion and Child's Protection, thus creating the space for the promotion of leadership and the defense of rural women's rights on this annual day.

Output 4.2 Increased availability of tools and data to monitor the progress of rural women's economic empowerment is promoted

Several studies were conducted over the course of the programme:

Baseline study and final evaluation using the WEAI tools

In Niger, the WEAI tool was selected by the four agencies to measure progress in women's empowerment in agriculture in the five intervention villages and five control villages in the commune of Falwel. The baseline survey was conducted in 2016 and the final assessment took place in 2020.

National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Niger registered in 2018 to present its first national voluntary report to the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) 2018, whose theme was *Transformation towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies*. The National Voluntary Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was conducted in a participatory manner by the Ministry of Planning, which set up a Technical Supervisory Committee that includes the Directorate General for Planning and Forecasting, the National Institute of Statistics, the Executive Secretariat of the National Council for Environment and Sustainable Development (CNEED), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and

agencies from the United Nations system (UNEP, WFP, UNICEF). This first National Voluntary Review report highlights the extent to which the SDGs have been taken into account in the strategy for shaping a better developed Niger by 2035.

Generally, the report notes a contrasting trend in progress towards the Goals, and, more particularly, those considered by the High-level Political Forum in July 2018, namely SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17. It is clear that Niger needs to increase efforts to achieve universal access to drinking water, capitalize on its energy potential (especially solar) and make it accessible to all, reduce the proportion of households living in poorly serviced cities and in inadequate housing, and scale up successful experiences and good practices in the sustainable management of land and land ecosystems.

In 2020, **the 2nd voluntary review** was made and showed that acceleration measures are needed to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Acceleration actions have been identified for each of the three areas of sustainable development and governance. For example:

Social area: The actions to be implemented relate to SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10 and will have a direct impact on SDGs 8, 9 and 16. These are:

Population: the aim is to: (i) bring about a change in pro-natalist behavior; (ii) encourage the use of modern methods of contraception; and (iii) develop specific measures to promote the schooling of girls.

Equity and Gender: actions will focus on: (i) promoting gender equality and equity at all levels; (ii) promote the empowerment of women and girls; and (iii) promote positive sociocultural values.

Education: (i) promote quality education; (ii) diversify vocational training courses; (iii) promote educational innovations for out-of-school and out-of-school children; (iv) increase mass functional literacy; (v) increase access to and accessibility of education; and (vi) promote the enrolment of girls in school.

Agricultural productivity: (i) facilitating access to land, inputs and seeds for vulnerable groups; (ii) capacity building of farmers and producers; and (iii) development of value chains

Health and Nutrition: actions will be: (i) improving the supply and quality of health care and services; (ii) strengthening health information; (iii) improving the use of health services; (iv) ensure integrated management of acute malnutrition; (v) increase nutrition-sensitive actions in different sectors; and (vi) promote good practices in early childhood feeding.

Social protection: actions will aim at: (i) facilitating access to social services for vulnerable groups; and (ii) establishing a social protection floor.

Human capital development: (i) strengthen the technical capabilities of producers; and (ii) strengthen the technical and managerial capabilities of private sector actors.

Environment: Actions relate to SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13 and 15 and have a direct impact on SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9.

Sustainable land management: Actions are aimed at: (i) rehabilitation and restoration of the potential of agricultural land; (ii) secure land resources; and (iii) manage natural forests, agroforestry parks and forest-pastoral areas;

• **Adaptation/mitigation of the effects of climate change:** (i) increase the resilience of production systems to climate change; (ii) improving people's resilience to climate change; and (iii) strengthening natural disaster prevention and management

• **Sustainable management of biodiversity:** (i) preserve and restore biodiversity; (ii) strengthen wood and non-wood forest products chains; and (iii) sustainable management of fisheries resources (at pond level, river level)

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

Upon request of the Ministry for Women's Promotion and Child Protection, the JP RWEE provided technical support to contribute to the preparation of the 62 and 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The delegation of Niger prepared several presentations in order to facilitate or attend panel discussions, including on labour saving technologies and income generation. During the celebration of May 13, 2019, the National Women's Day, a film was made about multifunctional platforms provided under the JP RWEE.

Women beneficiaries participated in the African Union Women peace and security mechanism in 2018.

A total of 17 platforms listed at regional, departmental, and municipal level over 20 mechanisms of regional rural development dialogues involving groups and rural women POs.

Two sessions of thematic debate were organized to stimulate the participation of women and the PO in dialogue's spaces and platforms (one per municipality). The debates also took place within the Dimitra Club's village assemblies.

Qualitative assessment:

In 2015 and 2016, qualitative assessments in the form of annual review workshops were conducted (reports in annex 4). The annual assessments were based on the Dimitra Clubs' village assembly self-assessments whose data were then presented and analyzed at communal level and finally a national workshop was organized. These participatory self-assessment meetings made it possible to highlight the strengths, changes obtained, points of consideration, and recommendations for improving the implementation of the JP RWEE. The implementation success of identified measures for improvement were confirmed in successive years through joint supervision, exchange meetings with partners, workshops, and self-evaluation forums at different levels:

Strengths and changes: (i) improved social cohesion and sanitation in the intervention villages; (ii) emergence of a spirit of creativity and local initiatives within the communities to acquire productive resources (e.g. construction of social infrastructure, purchase or rental of land for community work such as collective fields or market gardens); (iii) strengthening of self-confidence; (iv) improved attendance at health centers and girls' schooling; (v) mobilizing internal resources through contributions from group members; (vi) grain storage; and (vii) intra-household understanding.

The JP RWEE has enabled villages to strengthen their resilience to shocks and unforeseen events, thanks to the organizational capacities developed and the diversification of income sources. For example, the promotion of women's collective microenterprises by the Dimitra Clubs has had a great impact during COVID-19. It generated income and facilitated access to processed food products (peanut oil, oil cake, etc.).

During field visits to the intervention villages and discussions with the mayors in the intervention communes, several testimonies emerged. In 2019, for example, the Mayor of Falwel described the visible impacts of the JP RWEE as follows:

Impact 1 - Organizational level: the women organize themselves and are ahead of the other villages in terms of sanitation, which has improved a lot. This positive result is based on the sensitization and capacity building provided by the JP RWEE. It should be noted that women's participation in community decision-making has improved.

Impact 2 - Animal production: the success of the pastoral kit operation in the intervention area has enabled other implementing partners to purchase the breed from the beneficiaries and made it available to other vulnerable people who will benefit from the same type of intervention.

Impact 3 - Reduction of tasks and development of IGAs: Reduction of tasks through the establishment of multifunctional platforms. IGAs and pastoral kits have increased women's assets. The carts are also used to transport pregnant women to health centers, allowing them to have a better rate of births assisted by medical personnel and the registration of children on the birth register.

As for the recommendations, those formulated in 2015 concerned the need for ownership of the programme's philosophy by the various stakeholders and for building synergy. In 2016, the recommendations focused on the processes, implementation strategies of a few activities such as the FFS, local procurement, and multifunctional platforms. Joint missions of the United Nations within the framework of "One UN", also visited a few villages covered by the JP RWEE, including the village of Danja. The main recommendations from all the visits were (i) to strengthen the management capacities of the targeted women and (ii) to strengthen the visibility of JP RWEE actions in Niger. The NGO partners recommended timely disbursements and capacity building in gender.

In 2020, an analysis of the situation of the beneficiaries, based on simple questions asked in six separate focus groups of 8-12 men and women, provided an overview of the impact of floods and COVID-19 on the beneficiaries. The exercise highlighted impacts including a decrease in income generation activities due to reduced mobility and scarcity of raw materials; increased violence against women; and increased workload. On the positive side, there was also evidence of increased women's leadership in raising awareness within households and in community level pandemic response where they were at the forefront of sensitization through the Dimitra Club networks and in women's groups.

KAP studies and Dietary Diversity Score

The JP RWEE baseline and endline "Knowledge, Attitude and Practices" (KAP) surveys and the Dietary Diversity Score (DDS), as evidenced in the narrative reporting on results.

Monitoring the impact of the training of POs and collecting new needs

This monitoring was conducted in collaboration with the technical services of cooperative action and promotion of rural organizations at the national level (not involved in the implementation). The analysis focused on Dimitra Clubs as informal structures and formal POs. A notable development was that most Dimitra Clubs have structured themselves as cooperative societies, while remaining members of their respective clubs.

For POs, the study showed that the total number increased from 266 to 706 between 2017 and 2021 and highlighted the following:

Strengths: the structuring of Dimitra Clubs in cooperatives (SCOOPS); social cohesion; awareness ("awakening"); mutual help; reducing social barriers and the uses/customs; gender mainstreaming in organizations; increased economic power of women; reduced exodus; and increased hygiene.

Weaknesses: application of the OHADA statutes and standard rules of procedure; the establishment and strengthening of management and control bodies; the strengthening; and development of partnerships for access to financing.

Coordination mechanisms

Coordination mechanisms for the programme were established at the end of 2015 and consisted of a National Steering Committee (NSC), a Technical Committee and a National Coordinator. In 2016, a platform for exchange with NGO partners was also launched. The National Coordinator coordinated programme activities,

facilitated the circulation of information among stakeholders, ensured greater synergy between implementing stakeholders, and helped with the mobilization of resources. The Technical Committee met on a monthly basis and was made up of technical experts from the four participating agencies and the MoA and Livestock; a representative of the Directorate for Women's Economic Empowerment at the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Protection of Children; and a representative of the High Commission of the 3N Initiative. The committee developed the activity plans and budget, ensured regular monitoring of programme activities, promoted synergies and produced recommendations to stakeholders for achieving objectives. The committee conducted two joint supervisory missions per year with subsequent recommendations and follow-up.

The National Steering Committee is chaired by the Secretary General of the MoA and Livestock and composed of representatives from the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Protection of Children, the Secretary General of the High Commission of the 3N Initiative, the Director of Women's Economic Empowerment in Niger; a representative of the gender unit at the MAGEL; representatives from the four participating agencies; and two rural women representatives for each municipality. The committee's main role is to give strategic guidance to the Joint Programme, validate its annual plan for activities and budgets, help in mobilizing resources, increase levels of programme activities being carried out, and draw up recommendations for smooth operation. The National Steering Committee met on an annual basis and an ad hoc basis as needed.

The platform for exchange with NGO partners: Following recommendations made during the 2015 annual review process, a multi-partner platform was established to enable the exchange of mutual experiences and the promotion of synergies. The platform met twice a year, coupled with joint supervisory missions, and reviewed progress in relation to recommendations from previous missions. The platform proved to be extremely effective in addressing challenges and enhancing implementation through collaboration, as found by the final evaluation.

ii) **Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

	<u>Achieved Indicator Targets</u>	<u>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</u>	<u>Source of Verification</u>
Outcome 1: Rural women have improved food and nutrition security			
<p>Indicator 1.1.: Increase of agricultural production of women farmers (plant/vegetal and animal production) Baseline: 0% /Groundnut: 185.5kg/ha cowpeas: 259 kg/ha; Sesame: 300kg/ha and AP: 0% Planned Target: Increase plant production for 50% of 1,000 rural women; increase Animal production for 1,050 beneficiaries</p> <p>Indicator 1.2: Evidence of improvement of rural women dietary diversity and consumption patterns Baseline: Average of 3.49 Planned Target: 5</p>	<p>Plant production (PP): groundnut 634kg/ha (53% from baseline and +14% to last year) cowpeas: 486kg/ha (34% from baseline and +33,8% to last year) Sesame: 429kg/ha (29% from baseline and +2,06% to last year); Millet: 543g/ha (+9%) from baseline and +15,7% to last year) Animal production (AP): Average increase of 126,8% for 1,050 beneficiaries</p> <p>Average of 4.84 for Food Diversity Score</p>	<p>No defined target for this indicator due to the dependence of climate related events</p> <p>Use of animals to mitigate 2020 crisis' impact on plant production</p> <p>The small gap observed is due to several food taboos that are gradually changing and the impact of COVID-19 (no access to market to diversify food)</p>	<p>IFAD report/data from National NGOs Himma (PP), AREN and ASADI (AP) with technical support of MoA at regional level; Local government report</p> <p>INTES'S Final KAP Nutrition Evaluation Report</p>
Output 1.1: Rural women have increased access to resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security.			
<p>Indicator 1.1.1: Number of rural women's cooperatives accessing credit Baseline: 256 women from 16 women's groups Planned Target: 342 women's groups</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2 a: Number of rural women accessing integrated services Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 3,600</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2 b: Number of women who have access to information and participatory communication Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 3,600 direct beneficiaries and 12,000 indirect beneficiaries</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2 c: Number of women who adopted improved nutrition practices Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 3,600</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.2 d: Improved knowledge and good practices/improved percentage compared to basic food survey</p>	<p>345 women's groups (11,145 women) accessed US\$ 112, 690, used in large part to initiate, or strengthen income-generating activities at community level</p> <p>3,600 women accessing integrated services</p> <p>3,600 women direct beneficiaries and 12,000 women indirect beneficiaries</p> <p>38 supervisors from partner NGOs (7 women) and 482 leaders from Dimitra clubs (380 women) were directly trained and subsequently trained 4,119 beneficiaries, including 2,850 women out of the 2,400 women planned. 50 sessions of nutrition discussions and cooking demonstrations were conducted with 4,279 participants, including 3,081 women. Also, a total of 50 community discussions and cooking demonstrations (15 in Falwel, 15 in Djirataoua, 10 in Sokorbé and 10 in Guidan Amomoune) were organized to show that it is possible to have a balanced diet using local products. A collection of culinary recipes was realized.</p>	<p>Access to loans is voluntary and based on the capacity of women to engage in IGAs</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>The overachievement is due to a strategic revision of all activities to be nutrition-sensitive</p>	<p>UN Women's report</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p> <p>FAO's progress reports</p> <p>FAO, CRESA and INTES reports</p>

Baseline: 0

Indicators/knowledge on		Baseline data
Breastfeeding and infant feeding	Immediate breastfeeding	83%
	Age of introduction of supplemental food	80%
	Exclusive breastfeeding	63%
Malnutrition	Insufficient food	59%
	Diseases	31%
Fruit and vegetable consumption		62%
Water, Hygiene and Sanitation	Key handwashing time	42%
	Latrine use	19%

Indicator 1.1.3: Number of rural women utilizing improved production techniques

Baseline: 0

Planned Target: 3,325

Indicator 1.1.4: Decrease in the rate of malnutrition in the area / Decrease in the rate of malnutrition compared to that of the basic survey

Baseline: Maradi 57,4%; and Dosso :36,8%

Planned Target: 30% / 60 members of Dimitra clubs (43 women and 27 men) + 60 women (food processors) + 30 women and 15 men (45 school canteens and stand manager) total 195 who will in turn train 900 people (600 women and girls and 300 men and boys) / they are all new beneficiaries for this activity

Indicator 1.1.5: Mode of access to the land affected by the program and the number of women accessing this mode

Baseline: On a sample of 996 women surveyed to Djirataoua: 56 3by heritage; 275 by purchase; 96 by gage; 61 by rental, 105 by the loan, and 215 by donation

Planned Target: All the beneficiaries of improved seeds (2,000 women)

Indicator 1.1.6: Number of women and men who have received training in the use of labour-saving technology

Baseline: 0

Planned Target: 350 women and 150 men

Indicators/knowledge on		End line data
Breastfeeding and infant feeding	Immediate breastfeeding	96%
	Age of introduction of supplemental food	91%
	Exclusive breastfeeding	87%
Malnutrition	Insufficient food	87%
	Diseases	45%
Fruit and vegetable consumption		70%
Water, Hygiene and Sanitation	Key handwashing time	97%
	Latrine use	39%

3,112 women adopted improved production techniques

Maradi region: 58%.
DOSSO region: 34,1%
197 leaders of whom 169 women; they trained 1,419 beneficiaries of whom 600 adopted nutrition practices

2,731 women accessed land in different way and 515 of them have reported to have acquired land (heritage and purchase)

366 women and 150 men received training in the use of labour saving

The step of progression varies from 11 (Age of introduction of supplemental food) to 55 points (Key handwashing time)

The gap is because some Farmers Field Schools were not set up as planned

The increase in malnutrition rate in Maradi region is due to the impact of COVID-19, especially the closure of the borders and terrorist attacks that have caused the movement of people

All women have access to land when they wish. Land ownership is diversely appreciated depending on the communes; for example, in Sokorbé and Falwel, women do not inherit land; however, in Djirataoua and Guidan Amoumoune, they do so; the purchase and renting are much more frequent in the targeted villages of the Maradi region than in Dosso

Target achieved

INTES'S Final KAP Nutrition Evaluation Report

FAO and IFAD report

FAO Report and national survey

FAO, IFAD and UN Women report

UN Women

<p>Indicator 1.1.7: Quantity of improved seeds and fertilizers distributed to rural women and men from vulnerable households Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 50 tons</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.8: Number of COVID-19 kits purchased and made available to rural women Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Kits for 20 villages</p>	<p>A total of 54.2 tons of improved seeds and 11.75 tons of fertilizers were distributed to 2,200 beneficiaries (500 in 2015, 700 in 2016 and 1,000 in 2017-2018), including 1,718 women and 482 men from vulnerable households</p> <p>Kits for 20 villages including 2,200 masques 100 cartons of soap, 80 hand washing kits are intended for direct beneficiaries of the programme</p>	<p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>Programme's progress report</p> <p>FAO and IFAD report</p> <p>FAO and UN Women reports</p>
<p>Output 1.2: Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves.</p>			
<p>Indicator 1.2.1: Number of sustainable women led and managed local food security reserves Baseline: 150 Planned Target: 14,705 women beneficiaries of the platforms and kits for processing agro-pastoral products</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.2: Number of rural women accessing innovative food processing plants Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 400 women</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.3: Number of rural women accessing innovative food technologies Baseline: 150 Planned Target: 14,705 beneficiaries of the platforms and kits for processing agro-pastoral products and technologies:</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.4: Quantity of cereal stock mobilized by rural women Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Quantity of cereal stock mobilized by rural women of 342 women groups</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.5: Quantity of raw material purchased and distributed Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2 tons of raw materials</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.6: Number of Famers Field Schools installed Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 41</p>	<p>A total of 14,705 women led and managed, cereal bank, platforms, and kits for processing agro-pastoral products stocks</p> <p>402 rural women accessing innovative food processing plants</p> <p>14,705 target is reached in 2017 the new ones are for the same target (49 carts, 9 pulleys, 36 processing kits)</p> <p>2,131 bags of 100 Kg of millet, 725 bags of cowpeas, 75 bags of stumps and 147 bags of peanuts were mobilized by to be resold throughout the duration of the programme</p> <p>2 tons of millet and 800kg of groundnuts</p> <p>29 Farmers Field Schools</p>	<p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>The overall target has been achieved</p> <p>It is the stocks mobilized on their own funds, different from their individual production.</p> <p>Additional US\$ 30,000 received in 2021 allowed to buy 2,800 tons</p> <p>Some FFS did not work as planned. Follow-up showed that the process had weaknesses regarding the FFS installed in 2016, especially in Djirataoua due to the late arrival of inputs and insufficient follow-up</p>	<p>Programme's progress reports</p> <p>IFAD's Report</p> <p>Programme's progress reports IFAD's Report, UN Women's and DIKO's report</p> <p>Report of FAO and UN Women</p> <p>FAO's reports</p> <p>FAO's reports</p>

<p>Indicator 1.2.7: Number and type of labour-saving equipment installed Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 14 multifunctional platforms (PTFM), 124 donkey and cattle carts, 27 kits for processing agricultural products, 7 standpipes and 9 pulleys installed on community wells</p> <p>Indicator 1.2.8: Number of community market gardening supported Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 3</p>	<p>Labour-saving equipment, including 14 multifunctional platforms (PTFM), 124 donkey and cattle carts, 27 kits for processing agricultural products, 7 standpipes and 9 pulleys installed on community wells</p> <p>3 community market gardening were supported</p>	<p>resources for the local FFS facilitators</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>UN Women's Report</p> <p>FAO and UN Women reports</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.</p>			
<p>Indicator 2.1.: Income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to WFP and other markets Baseline: US\$ 83,090.65 Planned Target: 145,408.63 increase of 15% of baseline by year (62,317.98)</p> <p>Indicator 2.2: Evidence of better quality of life and status of rural women Baseline: Planned Target: provide asset for 1,000 vulnerable women</p> <p>2020, 2019, 2018, 2017 Indicator 2.2: Proportion of rural women with empowerment in the income domain of the WEAI (control over use of income) Baseline: 1,6% Planned Target: 2%</p>	<p>Income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to WFP and other markets amounts to US\$ 682,171.83.</p> <p>See also, video called "our lives changed". 515 women have reported that they have acquired land (heritage and purchase); 1,050 vulnerable women have animals and they sell some of them to satisfy their needs. "The series of activities (Dimitra Clubs, workload reduction, goat kits, school kits, market gardening seeds, and cash for work) have allowed people to stay and work in their own fields instead of going to work and abandoning their land, which has improved our agricultural production. It has also allowed the women not to migrate and to live a harmonious life in their households." Badjé Djibo, Tegoize Koira Zeno village, Falwel</p> <p>2%</p>	<p>Target is overachieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>Reports of WFP on school feeding programmes, Programme's progress reports</p> <p>Video and films</p> <p>IFAD 's WEAI end line study report</p>
<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 rural women’s cooperatives procuring agricultural products and home-grown school meals through WFP programmes Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 32 women’s cooperatives</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.2: Number of women of formal and informal groups/POs who received training on entrepreneurship and improvement of agricultural techniques Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 5,824 women and 2,950 men</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.3: Number of young women who received training on economic and financial literacy Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 80</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.4: Number of women supported to develop their business plans Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 80</p>	<p>32 women’s cooperatives procuring agricultural products and home-grown school meals through WFP programmes:</p> <p>8,362 women and 2,747 men of those groups/POs received training on entrepreneurship and improvement of agricultural techniques.</p> <p>200 rural young women received training on economic and financial literacy and have initiated and/or strengthened self-employment activities to support their livelihood</p> <p>293 Women and girls supported to develop their business plans.</p>	<p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target overachieved</p> <p>The overachieved target of women is because great beneficiaries’ interest and the possibility to provide extra training with the resources available</p> <p>Number of women participating in collective enterprises resulted in a greater reach of beneficiaries</p>	<p>Reports of WFP on school feeding programmes, Programme’s progress reports</p> <p>Reports of WFP on school feeding programmes</p> <p>FAO and AEDL report</p> <p>FAO, AEDL, and UN Women’s report</p>
<p>Output 2.2: Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities</p>			
<p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of rural women’s cooperatives providing paid ecological services Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1: Number of rural women who initiated income generating activities Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,000</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.2: Value of the stock mobilized by women on their own resources Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Monetary value of stock</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.3: Amount of savings mobilized by women through savings and credit unions Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Amount of savings mobilized by members of 342 women’s groups</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.8: Evidence of alleviation of the burden of rural women's work Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Provide equipment to reduce household chores for 6,500 rural women reduce time spent on domestic activities (water supply)</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>1,720 rural Women initiated income generated activities</p> <p>Monetary value of the cereal stock mobilized by women from own funds was a total of 44,170,000 XOF/ US\$ 76,155</p> <p>Amount of savings mobilized by women through saving and credit Unions was 62.931.000 XOF about US\$ 126,000</p> <p>From 2015 to date, 14 Multifunctional Platforms (PTFM), 124 animals’ carts, 33 agricultural processing kits, 7 standpipes and 9 pulleys are installed by JP RWEE, to reduce, not only the arduousness of household chores but also a saving of time used to strengthen IGA. Testimonies collected from the women beneficiaries made it possible by way of illustration to understand that the time spent on water supply is reduced from 5 hours to 1.5 hours</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>UN Women’s reports</p> <p>UN Women’s reports</p> <p>UN Women’s reports</p> <p>UN Women’s reports</p>

<p>Indicator 2.2.9: Tangible evidence of improvement of access and control of land (testimonies, stories, etc.) Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 3 testimonies of rural women on ownership of land</p>	<p>“Now I hold my certificate of customary ownership of my field obtained by inheritance, which the basic land commission of the village of Danja issued to me... This started from the awareness-raising work and the dialogue within the Dimitra clubs. We then agreed within our family to make all the attestations to the heirs of our Dad... Now I'm free to manage my field”. <i>Mrs. Indo Garba, 45 years old</i></p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO, IFAD, and UN Women report</p>									
<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>Indicator 3.1: Proportion of rural women elected representatives in rural councils Baseline: 13% (7women over 55 elected) Planned Target: 15% as said by the law</p> <p>Indicator 3.2: Proportion of rural women who are members of land committees Baseline: 10% (18 women) Planned Target: 22% (40 women)</p> <p>2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016: Indicator 3.3: Proportion of POs led by women Baseline: 0% Planned Target: 80%</p> <p>Indicator 3.4: Evidence of rural women’s empowerment in intra-household decision making Baseline: N/A Planned Target:</p> <p>Indicator: 3.5: % / Proportion of rural women with empowerment in the leadership domain of the WEAI Baseline: Speaking in public 19,50% and group membership 19,54% Planned Target: 20%</p> <p>Indicator 3.6: Increase in the attendance rate of girls through school canteens Baseline: 92% Planned Target: 98%</p>	<p>26% (19 women over 73 elected) of the representatives in rural councils in the target area are women</p> <p>18% (32 women of Falwel Sokorbé, Djirataoua and Guidan Amoumoune) are members of land committees</p> <p>131+5(5 created in 2020) = 136 OP /172= 79,6%</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>Speaking in public 17%; Group membership 16%; Average 16.5%</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="894 1333 1430 1463"> <tr> <td colspan="3">Average rate of 92% and (14,070) children, including 6,264 girls are supported</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dosso</td> <td>97.42%</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maradi</td> <td>85.47%</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Average rate of 92% and (14,070) children, including 6,264 girls are supported			Dosso	97.42%		Maradi	85.47%		<p>Target overachieved</p> <p>The 20 villages have land commissions; the gap is due to the fact that some women died / left the village and have not yet been replaced.</p> <p>Target is almost reached</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>The gap observed is due to the context in which data collection was made. COVID -19 and security restrictions such as the ban on meetings.</p> <p>In Maradi it is rather a dropdown that is observed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and security issues. The average rate for the two regions remained stable</p>	<p>Result of local council elections</p> <p>Programme’s progress reports</p> <p>Programme’s progress reports</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>IFAD ‘s WEAI baseline and end line study report</p> <p>WFP’s report</p>
Average rate of 92% and (14,070) children, including 6,264 girls are supported												
Dosso	97.42%											
Maradi	85.47%											
<p>Output 3.1: Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance</p>												

<p>Indicator 3.1.1: Number of rural girls enrolled in secondary education Baseline: Planned Target: 970</p>	<p>1,204 were enrolled in secondary education</p>	<p>Target is overachieved</p>	<p>Reports of the ministries of education WFP activity reports</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.1 a: Number of rural girls from school canteens who received a scholarship to continue secondary Baseline: Planned Target: 970 girls' beneficiaries</p>	<p>1,222 girls received scholarships over the three terms of the school year</p>	<p>Target is overachieved</p>	<p>Programme's progress reports</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.1 b: Number/Proportion of rural women/girls enrolled in literacy courses Baseline: Planned Target: 275</p>	<p>1,263 women and 812 men enrolled in literacy courses</p>	<p>Target is overachieved. Through the literacy strategy led by the communities, 104 women facilitators and 141 men facilitators trained the participants in the literacy courses.</p>	<p>WFP's report</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.3 a: Number of women members of formal and informal groups who received training in gender, participatory communication, good governance, and leadership Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1,350</p>	<p>1,335 women members of formal and informal groups received training in gender, participatory communication, good governance, and leadership.</p>	<p>Target is almost reached, 15 women did not attend training sessions</p>	<p>FAO report and UN Women's reports</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.3 b: Number of rural women who were trained in participatory communication and women' leadership Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 160</p>	<p>240 leaders (160 women and 80 men). The 160 women leaders trained and have then trained 2,400 women from 120 Dimitra Clubs /</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO and UN Women's reports</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.2: Number of women candidates for elections in rural councils Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 400</p>	<p>422 women candidates for elections in rural councils</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO's report</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.4: Number of Fora held Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 4</p>	<p>4 Fora held as planned (one each municipality)</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>AEDL and DIKO report</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.5: Evidence of improved self-confidence and self-esteem of rural women Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 160 leaders (100 women and 60 men)</p>	<p>240 local leaders (160 women and 80 men)</p>	<p>Target overachieved thanks to additional US\$30,000</p>	<p>FAO and AEDL reports</p>
<p>Indicator 3.1.5: Number of women and women groups who received gratification</p>		<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO and AEDL report</p>

<p>Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 4 women's groups (one each municipality)</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.4: Number of members of the informal groups of women who received formal training in gender, participatory communication, good governance and leadership Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 160 leaders</p>	<p>40 members of 8 groups from the 4 municipalities (2 prices each municipality)</p> <p>160 women leaders of formal and informal trained and who have trained the 25,200 members of the 120 Dimitra Clubs</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO report</p>
<p>Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.2.1: Number of informal rural women's groups who join formally registered POs, cooperatives, and unions Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 342 women's groups</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.2: Number of POs, cooperatives and unions that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 34</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.2: Number of women and women groups strengthened Planned Target: 179 women POs</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.3: Number of rural women from POs who received training in gender, good governance, and efficiency Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 208 members of 167 POs from 4 JP RWEE intervention districts</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.4: Tangible evidence of rural women who have increased their capacities to organize and collectively intervene at community level Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 40 collective fields (2 per village) exploited by women</p>	<p>345 women's groups and 3 women's groups unions join formally registered POs</p> <p>34 POs, and unions adopted a women's quota for their board</p> <p>179 POs from Districts of Falwel (25), Sokorbé (43) Djirataoua (40) and Guidan Amoumoune (59) regrouping 5,397 members (4,277 women) 46 (18 in Falwel and 28 in Djirataoua) for a total membership of 1,549 people+ 56 PO of Falwel and Djirataoua municipalities</p> <p>34 women members from 67 PO from the districts of Falwel and Djirataoua have benefitted from training on governance and performance in POs during 3 training sessions for 79 participants. The 34 women trainees have then trained 1,549 women.</p> <p>Tangible evidence of rural women who have increased their capacities to organize and collectively intervene at community level is the 80 women and girls' clubs created, who do regular meetings to discuss on life issues. 50 collective fields initiated and exploited by women; 3 women groups union created</p>	<p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO and UN Women's reports</p> <p>FAO and UN Women's reports</p> <p>FAO and UN UNWOMEN's reports</p> <p>FAO and UNWOMEN's reports</p> <p>FAO and UN Women reports</p>

<p>2021, 2016, 2015: Indicator 3.2.5: Number of male and female Producer Organizations that have been reinforced Baseline: 0 Planned Target: All organizations of producers of the target area of the programme; 5397 members of whom 4277 women</p> <p>Indicator 3.2.6: Evidence of informal groups of women who become formal Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 15 informal groups</p>	<p>organised collectively to sell their crop to the school feeding programme of WFP</p> <p>167 POs (5397 members of whom 4277 women) are reinforced</p> <p>19 informal POs became formal (including 295 women and 95 men).</p>	<p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>FAO, AEDL and UN Women report</p> <p>FAO and UN Women reports</p>
<p>Output 3.3: Rural women, including young women, have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.3.1: Extent to which rural women’s coalitions adopt common positions to influence national and regional policy forums on the Post MDG Plus 15 and Rio Plus 20 follow up Baseline: Planned Target: N/A</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.1: Number of POS at apex level trained in gender and equity Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 6 PO at the apex level</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.2: Evidence of an improvement in the decision-making power of rural women within the household, organizations, and communities Baseline: 0 Planned Target: Not defined in advance</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.5: Number of advocacy efforts initiated by rural women 15 October Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 6</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.6: Local level exchange visits with 48 beneficiaries on the management of installed multifunctional platforms Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2 visits for 48 beneficiaries including 32 Women and 16 Men</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>6 PO at the apex level (67 PO de base) were trained in gender and equity, 79 participants of whom 34 women have benefitted from training on governance and performance in POs during 3 training sessions. The 34 women trainers have then trained 1,549 women. They are members of 67 PO from the districts of Falwel and Djirataoua</p> <p>240 local leaders (160 women and 80 men) enhanced leadership skills and decision-making power, participated in decision making at local level; 4 Dimitra clubs network created text</p> <p>4 advocacy initiatives conducted supported by local authorities by Falwel and Djirataoua, in Sokorbé, councils in 2016, 2017 and 2018 of the rural women's day editions.</p> <p>48 beneficiaries including 32 Women and 16 Men benefit of two local level exchange visits with the management of installed multifunctional platforms</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>The gap is due to the change of IRWD celebration mode decided by authorities because of COVID-19 and floods</p> <p>Target achieved</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Programme’s progress reports</p> <p>Programme’s progress reports</p> <p>UN Women report</p> <p>UN Women reports</p>

Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.			
<p>Indicator 3.4.1: Number of rural women and youth participating in community listening clubs Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 2,400 women and girls;600 boys</p>	2,400 women and girls;1200 men and boys are participating in community listening clubs	Target achieved	Reports of the FAO Dimitra Programme Programme's progress reports
<p>Indicator 3.4.2: Number of villages/communities that appropriated the approach of the Clubs Dimitra Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 20</p>	20 villages of communes of Falwel Sokorbé, Djirataoua and Guidan Amoumoune	Target achieved	Reports of the FAO Dimitra Programme Programme's progress reports
<p>Indicator 3.4.3: Number of men and women sensitized on COVID-19 Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 15,291 women and 1,500 men</p>	15,291 women +1,500 men were sensitized on COVID-19	Target achieved	AEDL report
<p>Indicator 3.3.4: Number of youth Dimitra club's networks implemented and supervised Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 4</p>	Four (4) youth Dimitra club's networks were implemented and were operational	Target achieved	AEDL report
<p>Indicator 3.3.5: Number and type of own initiatives developed by Dimitra club's and their networks Baseline: 0 Planned Target: TBD</p>	<p>4 types of initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defense of human rights: for example, the remarriage of widows 2. Awareness raising on several themes (early and forced marriages, nutrition, COVID-19 etc. 3. Community physical achievements (construction of classes and housing for the promotion of schooling for girls and boys, construction of delivery room for women) 4. Collective decisions on collective economic activities: collective fields, purchase of collective land in the form of Economic Interest Groups 	No Gap	AEDL report
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
<p>Indicator 4.1: Proportion of government budgets and donor funding allocated to programmes benefitting rural women Baseline: Planned Target:</p>	Niger's land policy is adopted in 2021 with technical contribution of JP RWEE	Target achieved	FAO, IFAD, and UN Women report
<p>Indicator 4.2: Number of countries passing laws to secure rural women's land ownership Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1</p>			

<p>Indicator 4.3: Percentage of the municipal budget allocated to programmes that benefit to the empowerment of rural women in the targeted councils Baseline: 12% Planned Target: 30%</p> <p>Indicator 4.4: Percentage of the national Budget allocated to the Ministry of promoting women and protecting child Baseline: 0,01% Planned Target: 0,02%</p>	<p>Average of 26.5%</p> <p>0.01% on the overall period</p>	<p>The average in the 4 councils showed a decline in the percentage of the budget allocated to women's empowerment because of the closure of some projects,</p> <p>The total amount has increased, but did not affect the percentage of the overall budget, which also increased every year; but target is not reached because large amount goes to security</p>	<p>Data on budget implementation of Councils</p> <p>Follow-up report of the Directorate of studies and programming of the Ministry for the advancement of women and the protection of the child and government report</p>
<p>Output 4.1: Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets.</p>			
<p>Indicator 4.1.1: Extent to which national land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies, and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment Baseline: There is a national gender policy revised 2017 Planned Target: To take into account of actions and good practices of the JP RWEE in at least these two national documents (National gender policy action plan and the national strategy of women economic empowerment's action plan)</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.2: Number of technicians, technical services and NGOs trained to support the PO (gender, governance, equity, dialogue platform, law OHADA etc.) Baseline: 8 Planned Target: 20</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.3: Ownership of the commemoration of the 15 October by the Ministry for the advancement of women and the Protection of the child (reduction in the number of JIFR the commemoration coordinated through the JP RWEE staff Baseline: 3 Planned Target: 0 from 2018</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.4: Number of senior staff at central, and communal levels trained on PBSG Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 90</p>	<p>In 2016 the JP RWEE contributed technically to the review of the national nutrition security policy in which clear results in favour of women's rights were integrated. The national gender policy has been revised in 2017, all agencies have contributed. The National Coordinator has facilitated the process for the development of the national strategy of economic empowerment of women in Niger. JP RWEE activities are included in the plans of implementation of the national gender policy and of national strategy of women economic empowerment. Land policy was adopted in 2021.</p> <p>45 technicians of which 12 NGOs (4 women); 28 technical staff (6 women); 4 district authorities (1 women); (1 Project) were regularly trained on all these thematic areas</p> <p>Done as planned The goal is ownership by the Government so that October 15 is the space for rural women for their advocacy efforts</p> <p>A total of 97 senior staff at central, and communal levels trained on PBSG Staff at communal level: 7 women and 13 men Staff at central level: 33 women and 34 men</p>	<p>No gap. The JP RWEE contributed to the collective effort</p> <p>Target is overachieved because partners request to be involved more to avoid turnover of their staff</p> <p>Target achieved</p> <p>Target is overachieved because the MoA's gender Unit invited to the training all its members</p>	<p>Government report Action plan of implementing national gender policy, action plan of implementing national strategy of women's economic empowerment</p> <p>Training report of FAO</p> <p>Programme's progress reports, national women day commemoration reports</p> <p>Programme's progress reports, FAO and UN Women training report's</p>

Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women			
<p>Indicator 4.2.1: Number of countries where the women’s empowerment in agriculture index is piloted Baseline: Planned Target: 1</p>	<p>The women’s empowerment in agriculture index is piloted in Niger</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>Programme’s progress reports</p>
<p>Indicator 4.2.2: Number of studies carried out to provide evidence Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 6</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WEAI baseline and end line studies 2. Nutrition base line and end line studies by municipalities and nutrition global end line 3. Impact assessment of the small ruminants’ kits on beneficiaries. 4. Study on the labour force requirements of the agricultural sector in the regions of Dosso and Maradi 5. Study on women’s contributions in the household economy and market economy in the regions of Dosso and Maradi 6. Monitoring of POs training impact and new needs collection, SDG’s voluntary review 	<p>Target is overachieved because of thematic studies carried out. Video materials were also done to collect evidence</p>	<p>Programme’s studies progress reports</p>
Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.			
<p>Indicator 4.3.1: Number of regional dialogue mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1</p>	<p>African Union Women peace and security mechanism</p>	<p>Target achieved</p>	<p>African Union invitation letter</p>
<p>Indicator 4.3.1: Number of mechanisms of regional rural development dialogues involving groups and rural women POs Baseline: 8 Planned Target: 20</p>	<p>17 platforms listed at regional, departmental, and municipal level</p>	<p>No regional mechanism identified because the programme worked at a local level</p>	<p>Programme’s report</p>
<p>Indicator 4.3.2: Number of sessions of thematic debate organized to stimulate the participation of women and the PO in the spaces and dialogue platforms Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 4</p>	<p>2 sessions of thematic debate were organized to stimulate the participation of women and the PO in dialogue’s spaces and platforms (one per municipality)</p>	<p>The debates took place within the Dimitra Club’s village assemblies</p>	<p>Programme’s report</p>

iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Evaluation

Although the mid-term evaluation, scheduled to take place in 2018, could not be conducted due to its under-budgeting, several actions were carried out to assess the level of progress and take corrective measures. The various packages of activities were reviewed (lightening of tasks, pastoral kits, the pilot of the voucher in school, and nutrition studies) and two joint supervision missions per year were carried out. A qualitative evaluation using the WEAI tool was conducted in 2020, as well as the global final evaluation which included primary data collection in Niger.

Impact's study using WEAI

WEAI tools were used to analyze the effect of the JP RWEE in the Dosso Area. The following results were found:

In 2020, disempowerment for women was found to be around 77% in the intervention villages and 91% in the control villages. The main contributor to this disempowerment remains the leadership domain, for women, in both control and intervention villages. Yet, this contribution has decreased in both cases, at the expense of an increase in the contribution of input decision and workload in both cases. The resources domain still plays an important role for women's disempowerment, and excess workload remains more of an issue for men than for women. In the control villages, the leadership indicator showed an improvement compared to 2016, in which it largely contributed to the lack of empowerment because of the non-existence of collective groups (in particular, those implemented in the intervention) in some villages.

Data showed that the programme-based intervention positively affected the average adequacy level but not the probability to be empowered for both men and women. Specifically, being in one of the villages increases the level of adequacy by 4 percentage points, which is 6.6% with respect to the baseline adequacy level (61%). The effect is mainly driven by individuals with higher probability of being more empowered in the following domains: input in productive decisions, control over use of income, and workload. These latter domains were increased by the intervention by, respectively, 6%, 4% and 21% with respect to the 2016 probabilities in the control villages. Women improved the probability to be empowered in the ownership of assets and speaking in public domain by 7% and 70% with respect to the baseline probabilities in the control villages. Gender parity remains higher in the intervention village, where, on average, around 39.5% of dual-headed households have achieved gender parity, this number has slightly decreased with respect to the previous period (40% in 2016), yet this difference is not statistically significant. This share is now 28.1% in the control villages, up from 24.3% in 2016 and also for the control villages this increase is not statistically significant.

Several interactions with the JP RWEE team in Niger pointed to the fact that some results do not show in the data because of the restrictions taken by the government in relation to COVID-19. The attrition rate observed in the response rate could be linked to the fact that women were busy harvesting in the period of interviews in 2020. Villages in the control group were also treated by an intervention that started in 2019, financed by the Cooperation of Luxembourg. All these factors could downwardly bias the results. The intervention in the control villages could have increased empowerment also for non-treated group, again diluting the effect.

Global Final Evaluation

Some of the main findings of the evaluation in relation to the programme in Niger include:

- The JP RWEE is aligned with government priorities in nutrition, agriculture, and rural women's empowerment, as prioritized through the National 3N Policy ('les nigériens nourrissent les nigériens') which promotes food security in Niger. The Niger approach was centered on the empowerment of rural women at a strategic and practical level. Activities focus on needs and rights of women, e.g., land rights campaigns (strategic), and reducing women's work burden (practical).
- The JP RWEE is responsive to beneficiary/rights holders' needs, national and global development goals and policies.
- The approach followed by the JP is internally coherent, as each agency has focused on areas of interventions within their expertise.
- The complementary joint approach has mobilised two ministries (MoA and Ministry of Women and Children's Welfare) and other decentralised regional services to support the work of the agencies and vice versa.
- Bringing each agency's specialist knowledge and expertise together for a holistic programme has enabled them to benefit from learning that can be shared and applied elsewhere.
- The Dimitra Club strategy has been used to stimulate participation and dialogue in other non-related programmes.
- There have been clear behavioural and sociological changes as a result of the programme. Many testimonies confirm this change in behaviour and shift in social norms. For example, it is now possible to have women train in basic agricultural maintenance skills or women working late at night in public spaces. Men have testified that their wives are gaining economic autonomy which benefits social cohesion and reduces migration, especially of young women; the social empowerment of women is visible: women venture out of the house, engage in public space and in new employment areas. Economic empowerment is growing with women starting to take on more of the financial burden of the household.
- Annual funding cycles caused disrupted implementation (as service providers need to submit annual work plan), which also meant that activities were planned based on availability of funds.
- The evidence of transformational change in social and economic empowerment shows sustainability of the programme outcomes.
 - Despite increased economic activity, these are extremely poor communities. At this early stage, groups have not yet reached full financial autonomy.
 - Maintenance of equipment is expensive and agriculture production is dependent on climate.

Key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress

Contributing factors

- The participatory approach of decision making, planning and implementing utilising the existing Dimitra club structures.
- Effective national coordination and governance mechanisms
- The complementarity of interventions targeting the same beneficiaries
- Each woman having the same knowledge on the same subject enhanced beneficiary solidarity.

Inhibiting factors

- COVID-19 delayed some activities.
- There were delays to implementation caused by turnover of staff, slow recruitment, and establishing inter-agency methods of working.
- Unreliable agricultural seasons affected agricultural productivity.
- Reduction in funding or funding not matching the ambitions of the programme and the annual funding cycle.

Key lessons learned and recommendations⁹

Lesson for relevance:

- The participatory approach promoted through the clubs has allowed beneficiaries to identify and express their needs thus helping agencies to develop relevant interventions.

Lessons for coherence:

- The importance of good coordination between all players (UN agencies, service delivery partners, local authorities, line agencies).
- Promoting listening and talking through the clubs and between all actors.
- The importance of involving ministries, decentralized services, municipalities.
- Working together accelerates results.

Lessons for effectiveness

- The importance of good coordination between actors to deliver inputs in a sequential and logical way.
- The beneficiaries have the solutions to their problems; it suffices to empower them by developing dialogue and fostering reflection.
- Necessary to engage more actively from the beginning in learning and developing advocacy material to lobby at policy level.

Lessons for efficiency:

- Multi-year funding needs to be secured to ensure continued activities.

Lessons for sustainability

- The participation of key players at national level (local government, line agencies, and community-based organisations) is important for future adoption and/or scaling up.
- Reflecting and learning on which tools/approaches deliver best results will help consolidate programme outputs

Recommendations for future work

- Extend the area of intervention to more villages.
- Continue the focus on social-structural change.
- Conduct advocacy based on results of the programme and encourage fundraising at the national level.
- Secure multi-year funding to minimize delays and reduce administration.
- There is an insufficient level of visibility of these results in a wider context. There should be greater capitalization on successes.
- It is important to strengthen the communication between the villages and communes in order to share lessons and disseminate good practice.
- Micro enterprises need to be developed such as:
 - Capitalizing on goat milk production and further developing the value chain;
 - Raising quality of products and packaging;
 - Strengthening exchanges between women and women producers' groups to circulate savings and encourage investment.
- It is essential to include youth more specifically and address their needs by developing skills and creating opportunities to reduce migration.
- Climate change should be given a greater focus in the future.

⁹ Global End-term Evaluation of JP RWEE, Niger case-study.

Good Practices

Engaging men: The building and maintenance of self-confidence, popular legitimacy, recognition and appreciation of women's contribution to development cannot be sustainable without the support of members of the household and the community in which women live. For this reason, the JP RWEE worked with men and women to mitigate the risks of tensions or conflicts, which may be triggered because of women's improved economic situation, particularly domestic violence. With the Dimitra Clubs as an entry point at village level, the programme targeted two thirds women and one third men so that access to information and training, decision-making, thematic discussions on law and gender equality are shared resources.

Dimitra Listening Clubs:

The Dimitra Club approach facilitates the involvement of both sexes, young people and adults in the decision-making process at community level. The Dimitra Club approach was an entry point for the JP RWEE in the targeted communities and was critical to the attainment of programme results. Communities were able to discuss and solve local development challenges together, whilst the rights of women were increasingly recognized and changes to traditional practices to remove gender discrimination were agreed. Dimitra clubs also enabled the provision of knowledge on issues such as nutrition and resilience and also proved to be very effective in promoting collective microenterprises. They were also a means by which to encourage synergies to develop in the field, as well as the coordination of activities and involvement of men and women in the process of defining operational strategies for the programme.

Multifunctional platforms:

Multifunctional platforms which were distributed under the programme proved to have a huge impact on reducing women's workload. Multifunctional platforms, which are driven by a diesel engine, power devices such as shellers, flour machines, batteries and telephones. By providing multi-use energy, these platforms lighten domestic chores and allow women to generate income. In order to remove constraints such as the handling of alternators for starting up and the supply of spare parts which, community members were trained as maintenance workers alongside female millers, to be able to operate and maintain the machines and prevent their usage being affected.

Coordination Mechanisms:

Creating a framework for exchange with the implementing partners (local NGOs) allows them to develop a greater sense of ownership of the programme's theory of change and impacts, as well as enhancing local take-up. Setting in place a technical committee and a steering committee, both operational, in which all stakeholders are represented – government, agencies and implementing partners – has enabled joint decisions to be made throughout the programme cycle, during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, capitalization and knowledge management. This has resulted in better coordination of activities and greater ownership of the process by all actors. According to the final evaluation of the programme, synergies have been created more broadly with all development actors as a result of the programme's alignment with the "communes de convergence" approach (coming together in local municipalities) led by the Government in collaboration with the UN agencies. This approach ensures that all efforts by different actors are brought in the same prioritized vulnerable municipalities under leadership of the government, notably the High Commission for the 3N initiative.

iv) A Specific Story

Changes in the Village of El Kokia, from Food Taboos to Women's Leadership

Abou Yayaha, from the village of El kokia, in Maradi region, is only 30 years old and a mother of four children, but she is at the forefront of several key areas of her community. She is the Deputy President of the Dimitra Clubs' communal network of Djirataoua, the treasurer of the School Management Committee (COGES) in El

Kokia, the Secretary of the women's group who processes groundnuts into oil and cake, and the Secretary of the women groups' Union "Tachi, in tachché ki".

"Before the Joint Programme (RWEE) started its activities in our village, women were not allowed to eat eggs from the fifth month of their pregnancy. This is because people believed that eggs are responsible for child deformities and produce swollen areas on the child's head in the shape of an egg. Another belief was that eggs could make the child become a thief when he/she grows up. During pregnancy, we were not permitted to eat a lot from the sixth month onwards. People used to take away our meals because they did not want to see us eating. According to them, eating too much means having a big baby and a big baby gives complicated child delivery. It was also forbidden for women to eat meat and cane sugar because these foods are supposed to provoke a long and difficult childbirth.

About prenatal visits, it was believed that women who go to the health centers are lazy, unable to bear the minimum problem of pregnancy and only willing to incur unnecessary and additional expenses to her husband. You know, before the JP RWEE, we did not know that a pregnant woman needs to rest. If she'd ask to rest, we will tell her husband to take a second wife because that one is lazy.

When the Joint Programme started, it helped us to establish a Dimitra Club to facilitate dialogue between our community members and it organized training sessions and a sensitization campaign focusing on nutrition and good practices in eating behaviors, such as food diversity, and it also gave us seeds and showed us agricultural techniques. Now, we have achieved many changes in terms of knowledge and practices. Among those changes, we know that health consultations are important during the pregnancy period. Our husbands provide us with food even if it is not the rainy season. Now we know the three main food groups and make sure that the nutritious recipes are used in our households.

To summarize, we can say that we have acquired important knowledge on food groups and that we have learned new nutritious food recipes for adults and infants. For us now, there are behaviors that are key: immediate and exclusive breastfeeding, hygiene such as hands and body cleanness, use of latrines. Now, women go to pre- and post-natal consultations and ask for assisted delivery. Also, the food taboos for pregnant women have disappeared, such as eggs and sugar cane consumption, the right to rest, and physical violence in the household is reduced. The new behaviors we acquired through the Joint Programme interventions can help us to deal with many challenges such as the Covid-19 pandemic, food security and nutrition and other development issues. Now, we can promote women's leadership and economic empowerment.
