



**“ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN”
FINAL REPORTING – RWANDA
REPORTING PERIOD: 10/2014 TO 06/2021**

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programme Title: <i>Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Rwanda</i> ● MPTF Office Project Reference Number:¹ 00092006 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area (s) / Strategic Results</p> <p><i>RWANDA, Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyaruguru, Kamonyi, Kayonza, Rubavu, Nyagatare, and Musanze districts</i></p> <p><i>The strategic result is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</i></p> <p align="center">Programme Beneficiaries</p> <p>Beneficiaries: Direct: 18,275 (10,406 women and 7,869 men). Indirect²: 87,446 (46,853 women and 40,583 men).</p>
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FAO, IFAD, UN WOMEN, WFP 	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) ● Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) ● Local Government ● INADES Formation Rwanda (IFR), ● Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), ● Association pour le Développement du Peuple (ADEPE),

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

² Indirect beneficiaries are calculated based on the average number of the JP-RWEE household members.

- Sustainable Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Development (SAFE)
- Community Vision Initiative (CVI)
- Duterimbere NGO
- Imbuto Foundation
- CARE International,
- OXFAM
- BAIR,
- DUHAMIC-ADRI
- NILE BASIN Club

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)

Total approved budget as per project document:
MPTF Contribution: **US\$ 4,333,256**

● *by Agency (if applicable)*
Agency Contribution

● *by Agency (if applicable)*
Government Contribution
(if applicable)

Other Contributions
(donors)
(if applicable):

TOTAL: US\$ 4,333,256

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.

Assessment/Review - if applicable *please attach*

Yes No Date: *5th May 2021*

– if applicable *please attach*

Yes No Date: *Mid-Term Evaluation (June 2019) and Final Evaluation Reports (May 2021)*

Programme Duration

Overall Duration *81.5 months*

Start Date *15 10 2014*

End Date *31 August 2021*

Report Submitted By

- Name: Edith Heines
- Title: Country Director and Representative
- Participating Organization (Lead): WFP
- Email address: edith.heines@wfp.org

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADEPE	Association pour le Développement du Peuple
CVI	Community Vision Initiative
ECD	Early Childhood Development Centers
IFR	INADES Formation Rwanda
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women Empowerment
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
JP RWEE	Joint Programme Rural Women Economic Empowerment
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
IPs	Implementing Partners
MFI	Micro Finance Institutions
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resource
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
NWC	National Women Council
NST	National Strategy for Transformation
PHHS	Post-Harvest, Handling and Storage
PSTA	Plan stratégique pour la transformation de l’agriculture (Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation)
RCA	Rwanda Cooperative Agency
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDF	Sustainable Development Fund
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SAFE	Sustainable Agriculture for Food Security and Economic Development
ToTs	Training of Trainers
UNDAP	United Nations Development Assistance Plan
VSLAs	Voluntary Saving and Loan Associations
WEAI	Women Empowerment Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association
NBC	NILE BASIN Club NGO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Rwanda, the Joint Programme ‘Accelerating Progress Towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women’ (JP RWEE) was implemented jointly by FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women from October 2014 to August 2020, in partnership with government and implementing partners.

The JP RWEE was implemented from 2014 in the Districts of Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyaruguru, Kamonyi, Kayonza, Rubavu, Nyagatare and Musanze. This was refined to Ngoma, Kirehe and Nyaruguru from 2017 based on the need to ensure the programme was not too widespread and reflected the availability of resources. The programme reached a total of 18,275 (10,406 women and 7,869 men) direct beneficiaries and 87,436 (46,853 women and 40,583 men) indirect beneficiaries³ grouped in 51 cooperatives/groups.

In Rwanda, more female headed households are classified as poor than male headed households, and women are more likely to be living in poverty than men. Furthermore, women are mainly involved in subsistence farming with limited access to improved agriculture inputs due to their low economic capacity. Before joining the programme, RWEE beneficiaries were more prone to food insecurity, had inadequate food consumption and were classified in the poorest “*Ubudehe*”⁴ categories. Beneficiaries also experienced: low participation in lucrative parts of agricultural-value chains; limited access to agriculture equipment due to lack of access and use of improved seeds and fertilizers; lack of access to financial services; limited access to knowledge and information and limited control and power over decisions on production, price negotiation and land use.

In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, the selection and enrollment of beneficiaries was a joint activity that was conducted under the leadership and guidance of local government. The key basis was to consider poor rural women in the first two categories of the poverty categorization system, survivors of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and teen mothers, poor genocide survivors and other marginalized groups including people living with HIV. The programme entry point was through women’s groups and cooperatives. The programme enhanced rural women’s access to economic and productive assets and 80% of beneficiaries confirmed that their production increased, especially for maize, beans, vegetables, and fruits. Moreover, 10 cooperatives of rural women (909 women members) accessed credit for the first time to expand their micro- and agri-business projects. The JP RWEE also enhanced a women-owned saving and lending culture, with 77 VSLAs created among the 19 groups and US\$ 103,411 mobilized as total savings from the VSLAs, providing a safety net to absorb livelihood shocks including the COVID-19-induced economic lockdown in 2020.

Furthermore, JP RWEE interventions have enhanced the confidence and leadership skills of rural women. 855 A total of (584 women and 271 men) champions were trained on the GALS methodology and subsequently disseminated the knowledge within their wider communities. Additionally, 8,150 (6,112 women and 2,038 men) beneficiaries now have a better understanding on land rights and land management. The programme enhanced rural women’s leadership skills and improved women’s voice in leadership and decision-making positions. In total, 83% of all supported farmer groups were led by women in the programme.

The JP RWEE also supported the development of a more gender responsive policy environment for rural women, providing technical support to policy development and legislation, including the National Gender Policy, and laws governing land, succession and property ownership.

³ Indirect beneficiaries are calculated based on the average number of household members.

⁴ *Ubudehe*: poverty/wealth categorization system.

I. Purpose

The overall strategic goal of the JP RWEE was to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development, through four outcomes: (1) improved food and nutrition security, (2) increased income to secure livelihoods, (3) enhanced leadership and participation in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies, and programs, and (4) gender responsive policy environment for the economic empowerment of rural women.

The JP RWEE's implementation in Rwanda was coordinated by WFP and jointly implemented with FAO, IFAD and UN Women in the 8 districts of Kirehe, Ngoma, Nyaruguru, Kamonyi, Kayonza, Rubavu, Nyagatare and Musanze. Implementation of the JP RWEE was informed by Rwanda's development priorities and, most recently, Rwanda's 'Vision 2020' and 'Vision 2050', the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1 2018 – 2024), the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA4 2018 – 2024), the Rwanda National Gender Policy, the Agriculture Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Strategy, and other local and decentralized guiding instruments that aim at moving from low productive and subsistence-based agriculture to a market oriented sector that improves rural incomes, addresses poverty and benefits women and men equally.

Results

II. Assessment of Programme Results

Outcome 1 Rural women have Improved food and nutrition security

The JP RWEE contributed to the increase of agricultural production of women farmers, with 80% of beneficiaries confirming that their production increased.⁵ In total, 18,275 (10,046 women and 7,869 men) beneficiaries accessed integrated services including agriculture extension services, financial services, health services, marketing services, business advisory services, and capacity building services. The JP RWEE facilitated rural women's training on advanced agriculture techniques and on the importance of accessing and using agri-inputs correctly and timely which, in turn, led to improved production. Through supporting farming productivity of horticulture (vegetables and fruits) and livestock production (e.g., cows, pigs, chicks, and rabbits), the programme contributed to enhanced food security, improved nutrition, and reduced expenditure on health services. As women's access to credit is an important component of interventions aimed at rural women's economic empowerment, 10 cooperatives of 909 rural women accessed credit to expand their micro and agri-business projects during the JP RWEE's implementation.

An assessment⁶ on women's participation in nutrient-rich food (N-RF) production, purchase and consumption revealed that 66% of women had knowledge of nutrient-rich foods and 63% considered them in farming activities. Women opt for producing their own nutrient rich food at household level as a mitigation measure against unaffordability of some needed food items which was confirmed to be attributed to the skills received from JP RWEE support. With the support from JP RWEE, the vast majority of women (78%) felt confident to have more opportunities to increase production, purchasing power and benefit from nutrient rich food. Important dietary changes relating to the consumption of nutrient rich foods for the last 3 to 5 years were reported by more than 75% of respondents in the study.

⁵ Simplified Impact Assessment (implementing partner, INADES), August 2021.

⁶ Women's participation in and benefits from nutrient-rich food production, purchase, and consumption (2021).

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

In total, 974 (782 women and 192 men) beneficiaries were supported in maintaining kitchen gardens at household and community levels in order to improve their nutrition status. Training was provided on the construction of kitchen gardens and vegetable seeds were distributed. The same households were also supported through access to small livestock: 1,008 households received pigs and 1,860 households received chickens. This small livestock enabled households and communities to produce manure (for organic fertilizers), generate revenue by selling piglets and chicken/eggs, and enhance food security and nutrition at the household level. Nutrition security was further complemented by the promotion of growing fortified crops (beans, sweet potatoes, and vegetables), which resulted in the production of more than 23 MT of biofortified beans. To maintain the diversification of production and consumption, beneficiaries from 10 cooperatives were supported in starting beekeeping businesses.

A total of 4,892 rural women accessed agricultural extension services. The JP RWEE contributed to nutrition improvement by distributing fruit tree seedlings (avocados and mangoes) to 2,956 households and providing onsite trainings on fruit trees grafting techniques and nursery bed management. The 60,457 trees produced through the learning process were distributed among the communities and, as a result, some beneficiaries have started their own nurseries to sell fruit trees in the community.

The programme contributed to increased access to resources and the 77 VSLAs created mobilized a total of US\$ 103,411 in savings.

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

To create food reserves at household level, hermetic storage bags and tarpaulins were distributed to 2,083 households. To increase yields and reduce post-harvest losses, 19 cooperatives/groups were supported to produce vegetables (including tomatoes) using climate smart technologies and agricultural techniques which have enhanced production. A total of 12 cooperatives were supported with the construction of drying sheds with a capacity of 25 tons per cooperative and 2 cooperatives now possess equipment for maize and cassava/sorghum transformation (milling machines).

JP RWEE beneficiaries were trained through the Farmer Field and Life School (FFLS) approach⁷ and have adopted improved production techniques for beans and maize production to increase both the quality and quantity of production. This approach consists of training facilitators in running farmer schools for seasons varying in length depending on the crop or livestock identified. One facilitator can be responsible for one to three schools. In the framework of the JP RWEE, a total of 62 facilitators were trained and 70 FFLS groups were established. As a result, 5,537 (3,875 women and 1,662 men) beneficiaries acquired advanced skills to select better quality seeds, monitor their crops, harvest on time, and correctly store their production to reduce post-harvest losses.

In addition, 1,200 households were provided with fuel efficient stoves to contribute to reduction in cooking time and women's workload, as well as a safe environment. In order to ensure proper maintenance after the programme, 120 (85 women and 35 men) beneficiaries were trained as master trainers in the construction and maintenance of these stoves. The training made it possible to have technicians capable of constructing stoves in the community in the future. Furthermore, a total of 1,382 (923 women and 459 men) were supported in

⁷ The Farmer field and life school facilitates and provides farmers with proximity practical farming and agriculture (aimed at improving productivity) and life skills (enhancing nutrition, hygiene, and more).

maintaining rainwater harvesting systems and 42 (24 women and 18 men) facilitators/technicians were trained on rainwater collection techniques. The functioning of the water harvesting systems helped gain time for other activities, which is specifically valuable for women and children who are responsible for fetching water for the family. In addition, water harvesting systems represent an important support for the irrigation of households' kitchen gardens and the production of vegetables.

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

The JP RWEE supported the increase of income opportunities to secure livelihoods and access to decent work. Rural women have improved their livelihoods as a result of training on farming for business, improved agriculture practices, access to market, linkages to market and finance, access to new technologies, improved entrepreneurship and business skills, awareness-raising, and leadership capability. Saving groups and cooperatives increased their management capacity, skills and access to credit, and helped rural women to manage the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

The income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to WFP and other markets during the reporting period added up to more than US\$ 190,000. Furthermore, due to higher incomes, 18,275 (10,406 women and 7,869 men) beneficiaries were able to enroll in health insurance schemes. This resulted in enhanced access to healthcare services and reduced burdens of income shocks in case of family illness.

The creation of formal financial linkages, connecting rural women from 77 VSLAs to micro-finance institutions, led to the financing of women-owned micro-projects and, in turn, facilitated the increase of savings. Before the programme, beneficiaries did not have bank accounts and could not save or acquire loans, which made the prospect of them acquiring micro-investments slim. Now, women have both savings and bank accounts, which has enabled them to initiate micro-projects that are supporting their families.

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

Before the JP RWEE, rural women did not consider agriculture as a business opportunity, nor did they possess information on markets, finance and agri-business. In response, the JP RWEE supported the creation of 19 cooperatives that were composed of women and men from the first and second highest poverty categorization groups and trained their members on entrepreneurship skills and viable business plan development. Furthermore, the programme provided start-up capital and linked the cooperatives to financial institutions. A total of 3,094 beneficiaries (2,197 women and 897 men) directly benefited from the business advisory service and coaching. In addition, 532 rural women received training on entrepreneurship skills and value chains and 2,083 (1,713 women and 370 men) farmers directly benefited from finance service access through loans from financial institutions and start-up funds.

Supported cooperatives have been successfully linked to formal off-takers and agro-processors for maize and beans. This linkage enabled long term market relationships with buyers (private sector and those involved in FtMA) who, in 2020, offered price premiums (for quality produce) of up to 27% over local markets for maize. A total of 4 cooperatives were able to sell to large buyers as a results of this.

In total, 19 cooperatives/groups received training on entrepreneurship and business plan skills which, in turn, enabled 2,083 (1,713 women and 370 men) beneficiaries to benefit from credit access from SACCOs. Among them, 4 cooperatives procured agricultural products through home grown school meals.

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

To increase rural women's access to decent wage employment opportunities, the JP RWEE supported the employability of rural women. In total, 3,670 (2,606 women and 1,064 men) beneficiaries initiated self-employment activities, such as micro-business projects, small shops, and buying and selling crops at the community level. This has improved both their household and community socio-economic wellbeing.

Moreover, beneficiaries from the 19 supported cooperatives/groups have been provided with skills and trainings related to farming as a business, aggregation, collective selling and, most importantly, price/contract management. Subsequently, four cooperatives aggregated and sold grains to formal Kigali-based private sector buyers.

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

The JP RWEE enhanced rural women's leadership and participation in the communities and rural institutions. As a result, 83% of the women from the groups supported under the JP RWEE programme were elected to lead their respective groups. Women gained confidence in leadership and management and – through gender transformative approaches on topics such as income, entrepreneurship, investment, women's rights and social norms – collective change occurred. By participating in decision making at household and community levels, and by joining cooperatives/groups, women increased their status.

Under this outcome, 799 rural women were trained on leadership and participation in community decision making and 529 participants (375 women and 154 men) participated in exchange visits with other communities to increase their knowledge and share learning. A noteworthy result is that, since these trainings, 80% of the women participate in intrahousehold decision making and 53% of the women participate in decision making on choice of crops to grow or livestock to rear⁸. The JP RWEE supported agricultural groups and cooperatives in almost doubling (84%) the national average for women's participation in decision making bodies⁹, reflecting the gains made through programme implementation.

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

904 beneficiaries (786 women and 128 men) from the 19 established cooperatives participated in leadership discussions to encourage women's participation within leadership positions in their communities. This has resulted in women's enhanced involvement in decision-making and in governance processes.

84% of groups/cooperatives supported by the JP RWEE are currently led by women. Furthermore, 80% of the women involved in the JP RWEE participated in intrahousehold decision making.

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

As a result of the capacity building on cooperative management and governance, financial management, and conflict management, 9 cooperatives have been legally registered. This increased organizational capacity, in

⁸ Women participation in and benefits from nutrient-rich food production, purchase, and consumption (2021).

⁹ For example: National Women's Councils; village councils; cooperative committees; school parent committees.

turn, gives the cooperatives the possibility to access big markets, and lending and credits from financial institutions.

Furthermore, a total of 19 cooperatives/groups have adopted gender-responsive strategies and quota mechanisms as part of their leadership. This, too, increases rural women's organizational capacity to participate in cooperatives.

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

As a result of sensitization, awareness and empowerment sessions, rural women have increased their capacity to engage in politics. Currently, 100 (79 women and 21 men) beneficiaries are part of local governance structures at village, cell and sector levels, as well as in National Women's Council (NWC) leadership structures. This participation has increased rural women's voice in decision making.

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

As part of the programme's participatory and gender transformative methodologies, the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) was used. GALS is a key instrument which enables households to develop their own visions for their household. The methodology works as a development accelerator by empowering beneficiaries to make decisions over their own lives and take advantage of existing opportunities. GALS engages participants in open dialogues on inherent gender inequalities based on personal experiences. In total, 855 (584 women and 271 men) champions were trained on the GALS methodology and continuously disseminate their knowledge and skills to the wider community. Of these champions, 360 (290 women and 70 men) beneficiaries also received complementary training on nutrition and climate change. These complementary trainings, held before GALS training sessions, had the objective of providing champions with knowledge on nutrition and on how to promote mitigation and adaptation actions to climate change issues. Furthermore, 118 (59 couples) beneficiaries received a training of trainers (ToT) training on the *Men Care* methodology, which is a methodology that focuses on the engagement of men in gender promotion and women's empowerment. This training contributed to equal access and control of productive resources and economic opportunities, widened women's participation in leadership, and reduced women's burden of unpaid care work. As reported by the supported district, all these JP RWEE implemented initiatives have created positive impacts at both household and community level, as 8,150 (6,112 women and 2,038 men) beneficiaries were sensitized and, through the dissemination and distribution of the summarized booklets on the topic, strengthened their knowledge on key issues including land rights and land management. The booklets have been written in local language (Kinyarwanda) and the dissemination was conducted both at cooperative and community levels.

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

As gaps in gender responsive policies, laws and strategies persist in Rwanda, the JP RWEE contributed to supporting gender-sensitive integration across productive sectors and planning through policy dialogue and discussions in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources. For example, the New Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Strategy in Agriculture was developed (2019-2024) to guide the implementation of the 4th National Strategy for Agriculture Transformation. Over the reporting period, 5 laws and 5 strategies to secure rural women's ownership over productive resources were strengthened. This included the National Gender Policy, the

Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Agriculture (which seeks to institutionalize gender equality in the agriculture sector), the Law on Prevention of Gender Based Violence, and the Law on Matrimonial Regimes and Succession on Property. As a result, women now have equal rights to succession and inheritance on property, and women are significantly contributing to economic production.

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

To inform policy makers, several studies were carried out and widely disseminated at national and subnational levels¹⁰, providing key recommendations for the empowerment of rural women. These studies included a gender analysis of the beans value chain, a study on women's access to value chain finance, and a study on women's access to labour saving technology. A total of 799 (502 women and 297 men) local authorities increased their capacity on gender-responsive planning through awareness raising and training. To increase sustainability and promote a conducive policy environment, participating agencies worked with various government bodies and other key stakeholders¹¹ through policy dialogues on the National Agriculture Policy (NAP) and its nexus with gender equality and the Malabo Declaration. The policy briefs and recommendations that were produced were translated into Kinyarwanda and disseminated to rural women.

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

The JP RWEE (in collaboration with other partners) supported technically and financially the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) in conducting the Women Economic Agriculture Index (WEAI). This tool provided the government and its partners with evidence-based data to better track gender transformation within the agricultural sector. Moreover, the JP RWEE supported the development and dissemination of abridged booklets on gender and youth mainstreaming strategies in agriculture. These provided access to a set of crucial data and tools which support women in augmenting and transforming agricultural production and address nutrition and food security for households and the economy at large.

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

The JP RWEE facilitated policy dialogues on agriculture, gender, rural development and land management, in which 1,533 women participated. In addition to facilitating these policy dialogues and disseminating policies and strategies for the economic empowerment of rural women, the JP RWEE worked closely together with MINAGRI on the development of the five-year Agriculture Gender Strategy (AGS). Both the strategy and the initiatives enhanced rural women's knowledge and increased their participation and involvement in land use and land management. Furthermore, it created a conducive environment that allowed the equal participation of both men and women in decision making at household levels. This increased the level of women's representation and influenced and positioned the adoption of gender responsive actions at both cooperative/groups levels and at household/community levels.

¹⁰ Among government partners, stakeholders, development partners, women organization and councils and government institutions as well as women.

¹¹ Participants included: Members of Parliament, officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Monitoring Office, Representatives of National Women Council, and representatives of NGOs.

Qualitative assessment

Partnership was key to the programme's achievements. The building of synergies between the participating agencies led to enhanced gains in gender equality, women's empowerment, and food security for rural women beneficiaries. The JP RWEE's efforts to position itself, its partnerships, and align its implementation and strategic priorities in the different development frameworks (NSTI, UNDAP II, and other Agriculture and Gender guiding instruments) all represent best practices and provide good opportunities for engaging with local authorities and other partners in supporting women.

Women's participation and active involvement in taking ownership has been significant during the programme's implementation period. Furthermore, the involvement of men did not only create inclusive engagement, but also represented a strong pillar for women's empowerment at the JP RWEE group/cooperative level, as well as at household and community levels. The JP RWEE had a positive impact in both the private and professional spheres of its beneficiaries. According to the final evaluation,¹² women feel more confident both in developing businesses and in consulting with husbands and male relatives – particularly on household spending.

COVID-19 struck during the final year of implementation, resulting in confinement, unnecessary travel/movements restrictions, a restriction on some businesses, and a ban on public gatherings. This generated some distress for the beneficiaries' food value chains and microbusinesses. The pandemic had a negative impact on rural women and increased the likelihood of disruptions, causing a fear of food insecurity. However, JP RWEE's support (in the form of savings, food reserves, micro-projects, and attained skills) contributed to rural women's ability to respond to the diverse effects of the pandemic in a resilient manner. This caused JP RWEE households to be food secure throughout the pandemic, and, additionally, support and contribute to the pandemic response in their communities.

Over the implementation period in Rwanda, the JP RWEE enhanced its partnership with the government. Initially, the JP RWEE partnered with the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), but in later years also with the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) and local government institutions, strengthening collaboration on the ground. This included complementary activities with other donor funded initiatives, such as the Norway-funded GCCAS mentioned in the section above.

To obtain a more complete understanding of the programme, implementation status, and effectiveness of implementation arrangements, a joint technical team was established, comprised of the four implementing agencies, government focal points, and implementing partners (IPs), who attended as needed. The technical working group reported to the steering committee which comprised the Heads of Implementing Agencies, the Minister of Agriculture, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, and representatives of IPs (who were invited to meetings as needed). The steering committee meeting managed all programme oversight and provided strategic guidance on programme implementation.

At the local operational level, the implementation of the JP RWEE was successful due to the partnerships with the decentralized platforms such as the District Joint Action Development Forum (JADF), enhancing collaboration with implementing partners, and creating working relationships with key private sector players (mostly those involved in agri-business and financial services).

¹² FAO, IFAD, UN Women, WFP and Mokoro, 2021. Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda from 2014 to 2020: Final evaluation, Rome.

Based on one of the key recommendations from the 2019 programme review, there has been an increased focus on strengthening access to markets and value addition, while also ensuring a stronger role for the private sector as part of the joint programme. In support of this focus, a working relationship was established between four JP RWEE supported cooperatives; Africa Improved Foods (AIF), a public private partnership (PPP) established in Rwanda aimed at increasing access to nutritious foods in the region; and East Africa Exchange (EAX), a regional food commodities trader. As a result, approximately US\$ 40,000 in grain was sold by JP RWEE supported groups to these formal buyers, allowing farmers to earn significant premiums for producing quality maize compared to local market prices, through which they previously sold produce.

As a key joint programme registered under the United Nations Development Assistance Programme (UNDAP), part of the One UN network in Rwanda, the JP RWEE was successful in attracting approximately US\$ 1,200,000 in complementary funding through external funding, allowing a scaling-up of activities in this first phase. The funds received through the MPTF played a critical and catalytic role in attracting this complementary funding, as a minimum funding level for a Joint Programme to be eligible for additional funding through the UNDAP is required. Moreover, given the success of the programme in aligning with local government priorities, complementary resources from local districts have also been provided to the programme, including contributions from the Ngoma District government to scale-up activities through the provision of land as well as resources to support irrigation activities for JP RWEE beneficiaries.

At the macro level, several studies were carried out (as mentioned in the previous section) that have enabled a more evidence-based contribution to policy discussions, influencing the programme design of a number of initiatives outside of the JP RWEE (e.g., WFP's wider engagement with smallholder farmers). This, in addition to the joint efforts to establish the WEAI, provides the analytical base that will support government priorities beyond the implementation period of the programme.

	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
Outcome 1 Rural women have improved food and nutrition security			
Indicator 1.1.1: Increase of agricultural production of women farmers Baseline: 30% Planned Target: 75%	80 % of beneficiaries surveyed confirmed that their production increased ¹³	Partnerships have facilitated to attain skills provided, so farmers had the know how to apply agriculture techniques and are aware of the importance of using agri-inputs correctly and timely, all this led to improved production	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2: Evidence of improvement of rural women dietary diversity and consumption patterns (women dietary diversity score) Baseline: 3.7% (National) Target: 4.7%	12% of households consume animal proteins, 13% consume vegetables and 13% consume fruits at least 3 times a week.	The indicator used to evidence of consumption patterns is a bit different.	Comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis 2018 report (stands at 18%-national level); Women participation in and benefits from nutrient-rich food production, purchase, and consumption (2021).
Output 1.1 Rural women have increased access to resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security			
Indicator 1.1.1 a: Number of rural women's cooperatives accessing credit Baseline: 24% of coops (5 cooperatives) Target: 55% of coops (10 cooperatives)	10 cooperatives of rural women accessed credit to expand their micro and agri-business projects	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.1 b: Number of rural women in targeted areas accessing credit disaggregated by individual Baseline: 300 women Target: 642 women	909 rural women accessed credit	The reason for the increase is attributed to women embracing VSLAs and taking up individual decision to access credits for their micro/agribusiness projects such as buying and selling crops, rearing chicken, small shops, etc.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.1 c: Amount of savings by rural women in targeted areas (% change over baseline) Baseline: US\$ 7,434 Target: US\$ 56,689	US\$ 103,411 have been recorded as total savings from the VSLAs (82% increase over the target)	Target overachieved due to more women-owned saving and lending culture, 77 VSLAs created among the 19 groups, and this resulted in more women joining from the same community and hence increased savings	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE annual Reports (2015-2020) VSLA MIS Report (2018-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2a: Number of rural women accessing integrated services Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 18,275	18,275 (10,046 women and 7,869 men) rural women accessed integrated services ¹⁴	Implemented as planned (2015-2020)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹³ Vegetables include: tomatoes, cabbages, onions, beetroots, carrots, amaranthus. Fruits include: avocados, tree tomatoes, mangoes

¹⁴ Integrated service means that at least beneficiaries received more than one of the following services, provided through cooperatives and groups: Agriculture Extension service, financial service, health service, marketing services, business advisory service and capacity building services.

Indicator 1.1.2 b: Number of rural women accessing extension services Baseline: 974 Target: 2,604 women	4,892 rural women have accessed extension services	Extension service was initially planned for few piloted women beneficiaries and later scaled up in partnership with implementing partners and local government, using complementary funding	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2 c: Number of Household producing biofortified crops Baseline: 0 Target: 600	974 households supported to produce biofortified beans and orange fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSPs)	The prices for the biofortified crops/seeds were lower than what was planned and hence reaching more beneficiaries	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2 d: Number of JP RWEE beneficiaries supported with nutrition start-up kits Baseline: 0 Target: 2,083	1,941 (1,378 women and 563 men) beneficiaries were supported with nutrition start-up kits	A small number of beneficiaries dropped out from the cooperatives at the time of rolling out this activity	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2 e: Number of participants ¹⁵ that attended the nutrition awareness workshops including on Infant and Youth Child Feeding (IYCF) at the district level bringing together all stakeholders Baseline: 0 Target: 300	296 (145 women and 151 men) participated in IYCF workshops	Implemented as planned (99% participation)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2 f: Number of beneficiaries attending food hygiene awareness sessions to safeguard nutrition (environmental hygiene promotion and support for domestic hygiene) Baseline: 0 Target: 925 (765 women and 160)	882 (769 women and 113 men) attended hygiene awareness sessions organized in 19 cooperatives/groups	A small number of beneficiaries dropped out from the cooperative at the time of rolling out this activity	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.2. j: Number of studies conducted on women participation in and benefits from nutrient -rich foods production, purchase and consumption patterns Baseline: 0 Target: 1	One study was developed	Achieved as planned	The study report on women participation in and benefits from nutrient -rich foods production, purchase and consumption (2021)
Indicator 1.1.3 a: Number of rural women utilizing improved production techniques Baseline: 0 Target: 600	3,901 (3,316 women and 685 men) utilize improved food production	The number of participants (direct and indirect has increased over the years), non-financial partnerships facilitated to reach more beneficiaries (mobilization etc.)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹⁵ Participants include: local leaders, JP RWEE beneficiaries, representatives of NGOs and community health workers.

<p>Indicator 1.1.3 b Number of cooperatives supported with small-scale irrigation</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 4</p>	6 cooperatives/groups have been supported on small scale irrigation	<p>Implemented as planned</p> <p>(However, there was additional funding secured within the implementing UN Agencies in 2017 and 2021 that facilitated to reach all the groups/cooperatives).</p>	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 c: Number of vulnerable rural households supported to access small livestock (pigs)</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 600</p>	974 (782 women and 192 men) households were supported with 1,008 pigs	The budget accommodated and allowed to buy more pigs than what was initially planned (prices were slightly lower)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 d: Number of vulnerable rural households supported to access small livestock (Chicken)</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 600</p>	880 households supported with 1,760 chicken and 2 MT of start-up feeds	The price on market and budget available facilitated to support more households with chicken	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 e: Number of vulnerable rural households Supported to develop kitchen garden</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 600</p>	974 (782 women and 192 man) households supported to produce vegetables on kitchen garden	The support and partnership with local authorities allowed to reach more households (this is non-financial support: Technical support and mobilizations hence supported women supporting other women to have kitchen gardens)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 f: Number of cooperatives supported with beekeeping equipment and Knowledge/skills on bee keeping business</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 3</p>	10 cooperatives supported to start of beekeeping initiatives/businesses	Expenditure Balances of other JP RWEE activities were allocated to this important activity hence more cooperatives/groups were supported	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 h: Number of cooperatives trained on fruit grafting and nursery bed management</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 4</p>	19 cooperatives trained on fruit grafting techniques and nursery bed management	This was identified as a great need to respond to food security and nutrition and hence the number of cooperatives participating in the activity increased over the years and the main reason for increase in numbers is attributed to good partnership with local government and other partners.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 i: Number of Households supported to access fruit tree seedlings</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 974</p>	2,956 households supported to access and plant fruits (avocado and mangoes)	The activity and distribution started with selected direct beneficiaries and was later extended to other beneficiaries and farmers in the community-hence reaching bigger numbers	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 1.1.3 j: Number of Fruit seedlings produced and distributed</p> <p>Baseline: 0</p> <p>Target: 1,948</p>	60,457 seedlings were produced and distributed	The variance was the result of best practices and ownership of cooperative members and local authorities and better handling of the nursery beds that kept on multiplying	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

Indicator 1.1.3.k: Number of Trainers trained on Compost production Baseline: 0 Target: 100	175 Trainers (ToT) trained on compost production	The trainers managed to scale up the initiatives to more beneficiaries beyond planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.4: Number of farmers reached by piloted interventions to address gaps for women participation in the lucrative part of the bean value chain Baseline: 0 Target: 1,000	370 (302 women and 68 men) beneficiaries have been reached by the pilot interventions	The available budget facilitated to reach a pilot of 370 beneficiaries and interventions will continue to be scaled up as part of the UN agencies' other programmes in more cooperatives in partnership with implementing partners and local government. (There was an over estimation on the initial target vs the budget)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.1.5: The number of good practices identified through the study on women-friendly labour saving technologies Baseline: 0 Target: 5	5 good practices ¹⁶ have been identified/documented	Implemented as planned	Assessing agriculture labor saving technologies for women in Rwanda
Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves			
Indicator 1.2.1 a: Number of sustainable women led and managed local food security reserves Baseline:0 Target: 2,083	2,083 household reserves established; hermetic storage bags and tarpaulins were provided and allowed women to create food security reserves at household level	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.1 b: Number of rural women accessing extension services (% of increase over baseline) Baseline: 974 Target: 3,578	4,892 women are accessing extension services (134% of increase over the baseline)	Innovative approaches for facilitating women's access extension services including information and best agricultural practices sharing as well as engagement of other service providers and partners mostly the support of local government enabled to reach more beneficiaries.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.1 c: Number of Farmer Field School facilitators trained Baseline: 0 Target: 24	62 Farmer Field Schools facilitators have been trained	The number of beneficiaries increased over the years due to the support for selection and mobilization of beneficiaries from local government	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.1 d: Number of Farmer Field School created Baseline: 0	70 FFS groups have been put in place and helps farmers to learn good agricultural practices	Beneficiaries of the piloted FFS facilitated to reach out to more beneficiaries, thanks to the Ownership of the	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹⁶ Good practices include: drip irrigation, water harvesting technologies, shelling machines, hermetic storage bags, efficient (energy saving) stoves.

Target: 24		first trained members who transferred knowledge to neighboring community	
Indicator 1.2.2 a: Number of rural women cooperatives accessing innovative food processing plants ¹⁷ Baseline: 0 Target: 2	2 cooperatives have been supported to obtain equipment for maize and cassava/sorghum transformation (Milling Machines)	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.2 b: Number of cooperatives in the targeted areas utilizing the drying shades as a post-harvest technology Baseline: 0 Target: 10	12 cooperatives supported to have drying shade with a capacity of 25 Tons each	There was additional budget from MPTF global (AWP-2020) that facilitated more cooperatives	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator:1.2.2.c: Number of rural women-led groups utilizing climate-smart technologies (ex. Greenhouse) Baseline: 1 Target: 19	19 cooperatives supported to start vegetable production in Greenhouses	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.3. d: Number of Trainers (TOTs) trained on techniques of rainwater Harvesting Baseline: 0 Target: 20	42 (24 women and 18 men) Facilitators/technicians trained on rainwater collection techniques	As a result of partnership and support of the local government, more beneficiaries have been reached (technical support and mobilizations hence supported women supporting other women to have kitchen gardens)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.3 e: Number of beneficiaries Supported in rainwater harvesting through the construction of water harvesting system Baseline: 0 Target: 350	1,382 (923 women and 459 men) beneficiaries supported to construct rainwater harvesting system	As a result of partnership and support of the local government, more beneficiaries have been reached and the number of beneficiaries has increased over the years. (Technical support: mobilizing and sensitizing RWEE beneficiaries to put in their contributions like manpower as well as subsidies on water equipment which made the planned costs go down and this facilitated to reach a bigger number of beneficiaries)	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.4: Number of women supported with water harvesting/tanks Baseline: 0 Target: 152	152 households headed by women supported with water harvesting/tanks	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 1.2.5: Number of Households supported with Energy-saving stoves Baseline: 0	1,200 households were supported with Energy Saving stoves	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹⁷ Rwanda has done the processing unit for maize

Target: 1,200			
Indicator 1.2.6: Number of Trainers (ToTs) trained on Construction of Labor-Saving Stoves Baseline: 0 Target: 120	120 beneficiaries (85 women and 35 men) have been trained as technicians to support other farmers in construction of Labor savings stoves	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods			
Indicator 2.1: Income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to WFP and other markets Baseline: 0 Planned Target: US\$ 100,000	US\$ 198,707 have been generated from sales of maize, beans, horticulture and processed products	Income generated by women keep raising over the period of time	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.2: Evidence of better quality of life and status or rural women Baseline: 0 (Not available) Planned Target: 1,000	18,275 (10,406 women and 7,869 men) are in health insurance scheme	The current Government policy on mutual health insurance also supported to reach a wider coverage	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Output 2.1: Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products			
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of rural women's cooperatives procuring agricultural products and homegrown school meals through WFP programmes Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 4	532 rural women form 4 cooperatives ¹⁸ managed to procure agricultural products through home grown school meals	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020) Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA) sales records.
Indicator 2.1.1: Number of cooperatives supported to start income generating activities Baseline: 0 Target: 4	19 cooperatives have been supported to have income generating activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial service products were diversified during programme implementation, including financial institutions loans and start-up capital by the program while in the planing phase only one financial product was considered The programme equipped cooperatives through viable business plan development and provided 	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹⁸ Cooperatives: Huguka Ukore, Nkabikorera Kibimba, Tuzamurane Kigoma and Twitezimbere Kiyonza.

		<p>start-up capital and linked them to financial institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual and group initiatives were initiated/encouraged and expanded as result of entrepreneurship and business plan skills provided 	
<p>Indicator 2.1.1 c Total number of women and men farmers directly benefiting from loans from SACCOs or other financial institutions and banks through start-up funds</p> <p>Baseline: 70 Target: 1,200</p>	2,083 (1,713 women and 370 men)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The group/cooperative approach was the best practice to reach a big number of women rather than targeting individuals VSLAs impacted and facilitate to reach more women than what was initially planned. 	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 2.1.1 d: Number of rural women trained in Entrepreneurship skills and value chains</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 300</p>	532 rural women trained in entrepreneurship skills and value chains	The trainings took place at cooperative level and reduced costs ¹⁹ and more beneficiaries were reached.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020).
<p>Indicator 2.1.1.e: Number of women participating in study tours and Agri shows</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 300</p>	378 women have been supported to participate in study tours and agri-shows	The JP RWEE supported beneficiaries to participate to other learning events such as regional exhibitions which were not initially planned yet were found useful for beneficiaries	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 2.1.1.e: Number of women and Men participating in a study tour on agro-processing</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 15</p>	93 (75 women and 18 men) participated and benefited from study tours on agro-processing	Study tours on other themes such as gender, good governance etc. were also directed to agro-processing cooperatives.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 2.1.1 f: Number of Open days organized</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 3</p>	3 open days were organized and conducted	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
<p>Indicator 2.1.1 g: Number of cooperatives supported in agriculture product packaging</p> <p>Baseline: 0 Target: 1</p>	1 cooperative ²⁰ has been supported to package maize flour for the market	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

¹⁹ Reduced costs for renting the venues, transportation, and other logistical costs.

²⁰ Urumuri-Cyahinda in Nyaruguru district was supported.

Indicator 2.1.2 a: Number of cooperatives and groups receiving coaching and business advisory services Baseline: 0 Target: 19	19 cooperatives/groups have received coaching and business advisory services	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.2 b: Number of women and men directly benefiting from the coaching Baseline: 0 Target: 2,083	3,094 (2,197 women and 897 men) directly benefited from the business advisory service and coaching	The result was achieved in partnership with implementing partners reached and group approach helped to reach more beneficiaries.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.2 c: Number of rural women's cooperatives and women groups with agriculture production sales to markets Baseline: 0 Target: 19	19 cooperatives with agriculture production sales to the market	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.3: Number of saving groups members linked and working with financial institutions (SACCOs, commercial Banks or MFIs) Baseline: 0 Target: 50	77 VSLAs linked to financial institutions	The increase was result of joint effort with local government to sensitize more women to join the VSLA as an integrated approach of holistic development at community level.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.4: Number of rural women participating in new agribusiness projects Baseline: 0 Target: 2,083	2,083 beneficiaries (1713 women, 370 men) have been supported.	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.5: Number of farmers trained on Gender in Agribusiness leadership and Governance Baseline: 0 Target: 171	171 women have been trained	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.6: Number of rural women/leaders who have participated in ToTs for leadership skills Baseline: 0 Target: 152	152 (106 women and 46 men)	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.1.7: Number of cooperatives able to aggregate their produce after training in aggregation, collective selling, pricing and contract management	4 cooperatives/groups were able to aggregate and sell grains to off-takers.	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

Baseline: 0 Target: 4			
Indicator 2.1.8: Number of cooperatives supported to develop quality business plans to ensure sustainable business management. Baseline: 0 Target: 19	19 cooperatives have been supported on designing and developing viable business plans	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020) and business plan documents.
2.1.10: Number of cooperatives with new or improved business activities as a result of introducing GALS main tools Baseline: 0 Target: 19	19 cooperatives/groups have been supported.	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities			
Indicator 2.2.1: Number of cooperatives involved in agro-processing and other value adding or innovative agribusiness activities. Baseline: 0 Target: 2	2 cooperatives have been supported to process maize and cassava products into consumable flour	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 2.2.2: Number of rural women's cooperatives providing paid ecological services ²¹ Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Indicator 2.2.3: Number of women employed who entered the formal labour market or initiated self-employment activities. Baseline: 1,000 Target: 2,500	3,670 beneficiaries (2,606 women, 1,064 men) initiated self-employment activities.	Implemented as planned Skills & knowledge acquired from JP RWEE and small startups obtained mostly from VSLAs accelerated job creation hence benefiting more people than what was initially planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Outcome 3: Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes			
Indicator 3.1a: Proportion of rural women elected representatives in rural councils Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 50%	83% of women from groups supported under the programme were elected in their respective groups	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.1b:	N/A	N/A	N/A

²¹ Rwanda JP RWEE did not have interventions on paid ecological services.

Proportion of rural women who are members of land committees ²² Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A			
Indicator 3.1c: Proportion of POs led by women Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 85%	Overall 84% ²³ (16 cooperatives) of supported 19 cooperatives are led by women.	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.1d: Evidence of rural women's empowerment in intrahousehold decision making Baseline: 30% of the participating women Planned Target: 75% of the participating women	80% households of JP RWEE participate in intrahousehold decision making ²⁴ 53% of women participate in decision making on choice of crops to grow or livestock to rear.	Implemented as planned	Women participation in and benefits from nutrient-rich food production, purchase, and consumption (2021).
Output 3.1: Rural women, including young women, have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance			
Indicator 3.1.1: Number of rural girls enrolled in secondary education ²⁵ Baseline: N/A Planned Target: N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Indicator 3.1.2: Number of women trained on leadership involvement in management Baseline: 0 Target: 500	799 women trained on leadership involvement in management	Training included training of trainers who roll-out the training to more beneficiaries.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.1.3: Number of farmers participating in exchange visits Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 500	529 (375 women and 154 men) beneficiaries have participated in exchange visits	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.1.4: Number of women participating in Leadership Panel discussions Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 600	904 (women 786 and 128 men) participated in panel discussions	Involvement of men was crucial, and this have led to increased numbers	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Output 3.2: Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions			

²² Rwanda does not have land committees in the local structures.

²³ In the remaining three cooperatives (16%) also women are playing key leadership roles as vice president of the cooperatives.

²⁴ Main empowerment has been through GALS, Men Engage Approach, Household Performance Contract (Imihigo).

²⁵ Rwanda JP-RWEE did not have interventions on this indicator

<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 Target: 12</p>	<p>19 cooperatives/groups have adopted the gender-responsive strategies and a quota mechanism in leadership positions.</p>	<p>The increase in participation was attributed to good partnership and cooperation amongst all partners</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)</p>
<p>Indicator 3.2.1: Number of informal rural women groups that join formally registered POs, cooperatives and unions Baseline: 0 Target: 4</p>	<p>9 cooperatives are legally registered</p>	<p>The variance was result of great commitment of government and ownership of the cooperatives to meet all required standards to get certification and more efforts and support are ongoing to have more cooperatives registered</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020) Rwanda Cooperative Agency Certificates</p>
<p>Indicator 3.2.3. Number of stakeholders reached that can now enhance their capacities to effectively mainstream gender Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 19</p>	<p>19 cooperatives were enhanced their capacities to effectively mainstream gender at cooperative level</p>	<p>Achieved as planned</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)</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: 0 Planned Target: 45% of Women Coalitions</p>	<p>JP RWEE has been working together with NGM²⁶ institutions to have policy briefs</p>	<p>Implemented as planned</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)</p>
<p>Indicator 3.3.2: The number of women with leadership roles other than cooperative roles (Village councils, National women council, etc....) Baseline: 0 Target: 90</p>	<p>100 (79 women and 21 men) are part of local governance structures (Village, cell, sector and NWC leadership structures)</p>	<p>Sensitization, awareness and empowerment sessions facilitated more women to join local leadership structures</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)</p>
<p>Output 3.4: Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.</p>			
<p>Indicator 3.4.1: Number of rural women and youth participating in community listening clubs Baseline: Planned Target:</p>	<p>855 Champions (584 Women and 271 men) have been trained on GALS methodology</p>	<p>Champions are extending skills acquired to other beneficiaries</p>	<p>Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)</p>

²⁶ The National Gender Machinery Institutions are Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), National Women Council (NWC), Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and Forum for Female Parliamentarians (FFRP).

Indicator 3.3.2: Number of champions who are being trained on GALS methodology plus nutrition and climate change Baseline: 0 Target: 360	360 ²⁷ (290 women and 70 men) have been trained on GALS methodology plus nutrition and climate change	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.4.3: Number of Gender accountability day organized Baseline: 0 Target: 1	1 gender accountability day was conducted in Nyaruguru District	High level authority in the country participated in the event	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.4.4: Number of rural women and men who have strengthened their knowledge on land rights and land management Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 1000	8,150 (6112 women and 2038 men) were sensitized and their knowledge strengthened on land rights and land management through dissemination and distribution of the summarized booklets on land rights	The increase in numbers resulted from strong partnership with Government (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, National Women Council) Districts/local Government and conducting sessions at decentralized levels reduced the budgets.	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 3.3.5: Number of women and men trained on Men care methodology Baseline: 0 Target: 120	118 (59 couples) trained as Trainers on Men care Methodology	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Outcome 4: A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women			
Indicator 4.1.a: Proportion of government budgets and donor funding allocated to programmes benefitting rural women Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 30%	GoR 25% Compliancy	There have been some budget deficits over the years	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 4.1b: Number of laws to secure rural women's ownership over productive resources Baseline: 3 Planned Target: 10	10 (5 laws and 5 strategies) to secure rural women's ownership over productive resources were strengthened where National Laws, policies and institutional mechanisms have been implemented to promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment including the National Gender Policy and the	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

²⁷ Some GALS Champions who were selected did not participate due to different reasons, such as most of the sessions taking place during COVID-19 period. The target was 360 champions (290 women, and 70 men).

	Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Agriculture that seeks to institutionalize gender equality in the agriculture sector, the Law on Prevention of GBV.		
Output 4.1: Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets			
Indicator 4.1.1a: Number of Policy dialogue on the National Agriculture Policy (NAP) and its nexus with gender equality, Malabo Declaration and the SDGs for a Climate Smart Agriculture was organized Baseline: 0 Target: 1	1 policy dialogue was organized and conducted	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 4.1.1 b: The extent to which national land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies, and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment Baseline: 5 Planned Target: 10	10 (five laws and five strategies) to secure rural women's ownership over productive resources were strengthened where National Laws, policies and institutional mechanisms have been implemented to promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment including the National Gender Policy and the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy in Agriculture that seeks to institutionalize gender equality in the agriculture sector, the Law on Prevention.	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 4.1.1.c: Number of dissemination workshops for JP RWEE studies organized Baseline: 0 Target: 1	2 dissemination workshops were conducted for the women in value chain finance and gender analysis of the beans value chain	Partnerships have been key to over attain the set targets	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 4.1.2d: Agriculture and Youth Mainstreaming Gender Strategy adapted to the New PSTA ²⁸ 4 Produced Baseline: 0 Target: 1	1 gender strategy adapted to the new PSTA available	Implemented as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

²⁸ PSTA: plan stratégique pour la transformation de l'agriculture (Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation-4th version).

Indicator 4.1.3e: Number of local authorities with increased capacity on gender-responsive planning Baseline: 0 Planned Target: 600	799 (502 women and 297 men) local authorities increased their capacity on gender-responsive planning through awareness and training	The variance was due to the need for more women in leadership positions as well as local government willingness to empower more women	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Output 4.2: Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women			
Indicator 4.2.1: “Women’s empowerment in agriculture index” (WEAI) is piloted or mainstreamed in National Statistics Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index has been established nationally	Many partners including RWEE project supported technically and financially MINAGRI to conduct the WEAI ²⁹	WEAI Report (Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index Study: Baseline Report, 2020)
Indicator 4.2.2: Number of assessments realized on dairy value chain realized Baseline: 0 Target: 1	1 analysis of limiting factors for women’s participation in the lucrative nodes of the dairy value chain conducted	The analysis realized in collaboration with MINAGRI	FAO report
Indicator 4.2.3: Number of documentary films on women empowerment produced Baseline: 0 Target: 1	1 documentary film on women empowerment realization have been produced	Rural women and local authorities participated in this activity	Documentary film available
Output 4.3: An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women’s priorities in regional policy processes.			
Indicator 4.3.1: Number of regional dialogue mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women’s groups Baseline: 1,285 Planned Target: 1,627	1,533 women participated in dialogues on agriculture, rural development and land	Achieved as planned	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)
Indicator 4.3.2: Evidence of a quality implementable gender strategy Baseline: 0 Target: 2	2. JP RWEE worked closely with MINAGRI on development of the 5 years Agriculture Gender Strategy (AGS), the strategy is available and supported in the dissemination of the strategy through	Achieved as planned	Strategy in agriculture 2019-2025 and Summarized booklet of the gender strategy in agriculture

²⁹ WEAI: Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index

	summarized booklet and printed booklet for rural women farmers		
Indicator 4.3.3: Number of staff who complete the module on Gender and Youth Mainstreaming in agriculture Baseline: 0 Target: 50	Not done	This activity was not achieved due to Covid-19 grouping restrictions, which did not allow for face-to-face training. The process of updating the online course platform which will be integrated with MINAGRI Website took more time than expected. The trainings are scheduled to be conducted in year 2022 and JP RWEE will continue to partner with MINAGRI in these capacity building initiatives	Implementing Partners and JP RWEE Annual Reports (2015-2020)

iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

Evaluation, assessments and studies

From 2014 to 2017, the programme had a wide geographic area with limited complementarity activities between implementing partners. Following the recommendation of a 2016 review, the JP RWEE focused on three districts and enhanced the level of coordination and cooperation among agencies to ensure that the same beneficiaries were targeted. This led to significant improvement in programme delivery, recognized as a key factor in the 2019 JP RWEE review, the key findings of which are summarized below:

1. Implementation should focus on a smaller geographical area and the number of groups should be scaled down;
2. Monitoring and evaluation must be strengthened;
3. Focus on the kitchen garden intervention for household-level food and nutrition security while also working with cooperatives on formal market linkages should continue; and
4. Integrating men into the programme's activities should continue.

Final Evaluation Findings

GALS Endline Assessment

In addition, several studies were conducted to better inform the technical design of the programme, as well as to provide inputs for other programmes:

- 1) **Gender based value chain analysis for the bean value chain in Rwanda:** The study identified the relationships and functions of the actors in the bean value chain in Rwanda, analyzed the gender dynamics, assessed constraints, opportunities, and gender-based power relationships along the bean value chain. The findings have been useful in informing and guiding gender transformative programmatic interventions in the bean value chain, which have informed WFP's design of smallholder-facing projects including the Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA). Implementation of the recommendations will enhance market access for RWEE beneficiaries and create more opportunities for women involved in the bean value chain.
- 2) **Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index study (WEAI):** WEAI for Rwanda provided data and information on women in five domains of empowerment in agriculture: production, resources, income, leadership, and time. The findings serve as benchmarks against which the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) and other partners use to gauge their progress and implement mechanisms increasing women's empowerment in the agriculture sector. The JP RWEE provided both technical and financial support during the development of WEAI and supported in its dissemination. Partnership will continue in the development and implementation of future actions, guided by study findings.

- 3) **Assessing agriculture labor saving technologies for women in Rwanda:** The main study's findings indicated that there is limited equipment available for women in relation to labour saving technologies. The study found that there is a prevalence of traditional farming methods, and that the labour-saving technologies that are available are difficult for rural women to access, including due to cultural reasons. Findings from this study have directly contributed to a follow-up project (outside the JP RWEE programme) to promote formal financial linkages between women farmers and micro-finance institutions financing such technology.
- 4) **Study on Women's participation in value chain finance in Rwanda:** this study analyzed key constraints and recommended strategic actions leading towards women's access to finance, resources, and assets – such as land and equipment – as well as for agricultural and financial services, which again informed the above-mentioned initiative.

Best practices and lessons learned

Government Engagement - During the final two years of implementation, a much stronger government engagement strategy was put in place, which led to a higher degree of national ownership of the programme. Recognizing the value and contribution of the JP RWEE, the Minister of State at MINAGRI took a direct interest in the project, acting as the co-chair of the steering committee. The enhanced government engagement was further strengthened by the establishment of a direct working relationship with the Ministry for Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), used specifically to leverage the Norway-funded engagement as part of the Gender Climate Change Agriculture Support (GCCAS).

Building Local Capacity - At an operational level, engaging with local NGOs (as opposed to international NGOs) has been prioritized, not only to ensure cost-efficiency, but also to build the capacity of local players in rural women's empowerment – approaches to be used beyond JP RWEE implementation. Moreover, using a cascade training approach (i.e., via GALS champions and lead farmers) ensured sustainability by keeping knowledge within the community.

Experience Sharing - Peer to Peer learning exchange sessions provided an important opportunity for rural women farmers to exchange knowledge, experience, innovations, and challenges in a user-friendly language and a similar context, helping them to gain expertise.

Gender Transformative Approaches - GALS was a critical methodology used to achieve more gender equitable relations at household level. As a result of using this approach, male members of households involved in the programme no longer think that there are activities reserved only for women. Agriculture production has also increased, especially for maize crops and vegetables, by family members engaging in a more equitable sharing of workloads.

Increasing Production Through Greenhouses - The use of greenhouses was established as a best practice by the programme. Whereas non-greenhouse vegetables – mainly tomatoes grown on bare land – provide only two harvests per year, greenhouse tomatoes can be harvested three to four times. Secondly the vegetables in the greenhouses can be planted at any time of year, which is not the case for the open gardens. Moreover, soils in the greenhouse can be changed after a single harvest, allowing new soils with fresh nutrients for the next season.

Adapting to COVID-19 - One of the best practices observed during the national COVID-19 lockdown was the remote supervision of the programme through mobile phone calls and social media (e.g., Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, etc.) to maintain lines of communication with beneficiaries at the household and community levels.

Nonetheless, there were connectivity issues at times and not all women had access to these technologies, which was a challenge. The use of community grain reserves – developed under the programme – proved to be a key coping strategy during the COVID-19 crisis for the women beneficiaries. The reserves provided the farmers with the capacity to overcome unusually high rainfall and high temperatures, which affected agricultural production, as well as helping them to withstand the impact of COVID-19, while also creating value addition for their food products.

Lessons Learned

Partnerships - The implementation of the JP RWEE in Rwanda serves as an excellent example of how UN agencies can jointly apply and leverage expertise from agencies' respective comparative strengths and bring together a broad range of partners towards a common goal. The level of jointness improved over the years of implementation. During the first two years of implementation a strong level of jointness was lacking but over time, a heightened level of synergy led to strong results. Coupled with close collaboration with national and local government, as outlined above, as well as with implementing partners, one of the major lessons learned was that partnerships, at all levels, proved key for facilitating smooth and successful programme implementation.

Resilience - During the final year and a half of implementation, JP RWEE beneficiaries demonstrated resilience to the social and economic shocks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They were able to use food reserves to sustain their households and support community members. Furthermore, they used their savings from saving groups to provide for household basic needs during lockdowns and acted as agents of change by sensitizing their communities on preventive measures for COVID-19. This served as a lesson learned on the importance of prioritizing resilience in rural women to be able to withstand the impact of shocks.

Engaging Men - Another key lesson learned was the importance of engaging men in the economic empowerment of women both at household and community levels. Involving men as beneficiaries created a conducive environment and reduced GBV and conflicts. In turn, households collectively perceived the programme as a solution to the improvement of their socio-economic well-being.

iv) A Specific Story

“I used to be very shy. I wasn’t able to talk in front of the people, especially at the presence of men,” recalls Marie-Rose, a member of B’impinduka-Nyagisozi, a women’s cooperative in Nyaruguru district in Southern Rwanda. *“Now I feel more empowered and confident.”*



Marie-Rose, a member of the National Women’s Council and member of B’impinduka-Nyagisozi women’s cooperative displaying her grafted fruit trees. Photo: WFP/JohnPaul Sesonga

Through her participation in the JP RWEE, Marie-Rose was trained on leadership and good governance. With her new skills, she took the initiative to campaign locally, and was successfully elected as a member of the National Women’s Council within her sector. She also acquired the technical knowledge to be able to graft fruit trees; including mangoes, avocados, tree tomatoes, passion fruits, and oranges. *“As a member of the Women’s Council, I am able to use this platform to*

share knowledge of planting across the district and also teach community members on the importance of eating fruits to help reduce malnutrition,” she said proudly. *“I am also earning money with my grafting business, and have been able to buy my own cow, and pay for my family’s medical insurance,”* Marie-Rose added.



Anastasia, president of B’impunduka-Nyagisozi women’s cooperative displays tomatoes grown by her cooperative. Photo: WFP/JohnPaul Sesonga

Anastasia, president of B’impunduka-Nyagisozi women’s cooperative, has seen noticeable improvements in nutrition within her community since her cooperative was formed in 2017. *“We grow tomatoes, beetroots, carrots, cabbages and bell peppers that are distributed to markets throughout the district,”* she explained. *“This has made fresh vegetables more accessible to families throughout the district and has also lowered their cost helping families to eat diverse food,”* Anastasia added. The increased sales of fresh vegetables have also led to increased income for cooperative members.

JP RWEE is also inspiring women and men from participating communities to start their own businesses. *“I saw those chickens from JP RWEE cooperative members were laying many eggs,”* said Anastasia, a mother of six living nearby and a part of the Abahangudushya Womens cooperative, *“this inspired me to buy my own chickens' farmers and to start my own*

home business. I now have enough eggs to feed my children which has improved their nutrition and I am also earning money, helping me pay for my family's medical insurance," she said proudly, overseeing her new pen of chickens.



Anastasia, who was inspired by other RWEE cooperative members, displaying her poultry farm. Photo: WFP/JohnPaul Sesonga