

ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN

BI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 30 JUNE 2025

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results
Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in (<i>Tanzania</i>) MPTF Office Project Reference Number: 00132320	Country: Tanzania Locality: Regions: Dodoma, Singida, Zanzibar - District: Chamwino in Dodoma, Ikungi in Singida and Unguja Kusini in Zanzibar Total programme beneficiaries: 8,000 (6,800 women, 1,200 men) Total programme Indirect beneficiaries: 32,000 Total annual beneficiaries target 2025 (without overlap): 4,000 (3,400 women, 600 men).¹ The strategic result is to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.
Participating Organization(s)	Implementing Partners
- FAO - IFAD - UN WOMEN - WFP	TAHA, Rikolto, Ikungi LGA, Chamwino LGA, Sundry Merchant, Zanzibar Maisha Bora Foundation, FAWE, Ministry of Agriculture, Zanzibar, TWCC.
Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	Programme Duration
MPTF Contribution for 2025: Total approved budget as per project document: USD 5,000,000 for 5 years - FAO: USD 189,860 - IFAD: USD 198,576 - UN Women: USD 198,076 - WFP: USD 257,618 Agency Contribution by Agency (if applicable) NA Government Contribution (if applicable) NA Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable) NA TOTAL: USD 844,130	Overall Duration 5 years Start Date (25/05/22) End Date (24/05/27)
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.	Report Submitted By
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i>² ☒ Yes ☐ No Date: May 2022-August 2025 Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> ☐ Yes ☒ No Date: dd.mm.yyyy	Name: Christine Mendes Title: WFP Deputy Country Director Participating Organization (Lead): World Food Programme Email address: christine.mendes@wfp.org

¹ Targets per outcome were adjusted to avoid overlaps in reporting. Initially targets seemed to be report both direct and indirect beneficiaries. The figures were based on the highest number of beneficiary reach in Mainland and Zanzibar.

² Mid Term Review (MTR) report (preliminary findings) will be reported and attached as annex to the annual Work Plan 2026. Final MTR report will be disclosed as annex to the Annual Report 2025.

ABBREVIATION & ACCRONYMES

BALI	Business Action Learning and Innovation
CCRO	Certificate of Customary Rights of Occupancy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JP RWEE	Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment
LGA	Local Government Authority
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
PPRA	Public Procurement Regulatory Authority
RIV	Rural Invest
SBC	Social Behaviour Change
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TAWJA	Tanzania Women Judges Association
TCB	Tanzania Commercial Bank
TAHA	Tanzania Horticultural Association
TWCC	Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VG GEWGE	Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WFP	World Food Programme
ZEEA	Zanzibar Economic Empowerment Agency
TZS	Tanzanian Shilling

NARRATIVE REPORT

I. Summary

Between January and June 2025, the JP RWEE in Tanzania progressed well and remained broadly on track, with 87% of scheduled activities initiated and 50% of the annual plan underway, including 26 of 30 carried-over activities. Of the 56 total activities for 2025, half had started by mid-year, and 30% of the budget was utilized, reflecting steady progress toward annual targets. Approximately 2,200 direct beneficiaries (85% women) and 129 groups were reached, representing approximately 50% of the overall annual target through integrated, community-responsive interventions. Outcome 1 (*food security and nutrition*) and Outcome 3 (*women's voice and agency*) recorded the highest beneficiary reach, achieving 54% and 50% of annual targets respectively. Of the 18 activities previously unimplemented in 2024, 13 have since begun reflecting improved delivery. The remaining five (5), primarily under Outcome 2 (entrepreneurship and market access) and Outcome 4 (policy engagement), are still pending, due to procurement delays, seasonal constraints, or coordination bottlenecks.

In Tanzania, over 5,000 direct and indirect beneficiaries had strengthened capacities on agronomy, land rights, post-harvest handling, financial literacy, and governance through community-responsive trainings. A total of 935 Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy (CCROs) are prioritized for issuance with increased women's visibility, in committees, cooperatives, and policy dialogues. Income and productivity increased driven by interventions such as mechanisation, kitchen gardens, livestock support, and seaweed value chains. TZS 68.9 million [approximately USD 28,000] in interest-free loans were disbursed, and 11 groups were digitally registered resulting from financial inclusion efforts. Policy gains reinforcing gender-responsive land governance were achieved through JP RWEE's engagement in the National Land Policy revision and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.a.2 implementation. Despite operational delays and cultural resistance to tools like Gender Action Learning System (GALS), adaptive delivery and peer-led approaches ensured uptake.

On the week of the 17th of March, the JP RWEE team hosted a donor's mission, to present the programme portfolio spanning policy to leadership and community based agri-food systems approaches which strengthen the economic empowerment of rural women in different contexts in Tanzania. It was also an opportunity to show the interagency collaboration, as a feasible means to reach tangible results.

Priorities for the next period include value addition, market access, Business Action Learning and Innovation (BALI) rollout, childcare scale-up, and youth and disability inclusion.

II. Results

Outcome 1: Improved food security and nutrition for rural women and their households that contribute to equitable and sustainable food systems (*Beneficiary Target 2025 – 4,000 Total – women 3,400 + men 600*) –54 % achieved.

By June, interventions under Outcome 1 advanced rural women's food security through climate-resilient agriculture, land rights, and nutrition support. Programme participants reached improved their food security and nutrition through increased access to climate-smart inputs, productive assets, post-harvest tools, and dietary training-boosting income, decision-making, and household nutrition.

In Ikungi and Chamwino, several developments were noted: 935 CCROs are planned for issuance (with a strong emphasis on women) following land rights awareness training targeting village government leaders, Ward Tribunals, Village Land Councils, and traditional leaders. Post-harvest management significantly reduced losses, improved farmer efficiency, and enabled women to engage in other socio-economic activities. Positive household nutrition Outcomes were also noted through Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) approaches in the three project areas.

In Zanzibar, eight (8) demonstration plots were established to support commercial banana production, benefiting 90 farmers with climate-resilient inputs and tools. Notably, there was increased vegetable production and food utilization in 326 households supported with kitchen garden inputs and training, as well as expanded household access to animal-source food through small livestock support. Maternal health and early childhood care were strengthened through 43 peer support learning circles across 37 villages.

Outcome 2: Rural women's income, decent work, and economic autonomy increased to secure their livelihoods and build resilience. *(Beneficiary Target 2025 – 2,000 Total – women 1,700 + men 300) – 30% achieved.*

By June 2025, Outcome 2 progressed steadily. Strategic investments in **Ikungi and Chamwino** led to the establishment of women-led business centres, enabling over 150 women to engage in value addition and formal markets. 40 Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)/Women's groups mobilized over TZS 500 million [*approximately USD 204,000*] in shares and loans, with 1,002 members accessing credit.

In Zanzibar, 411 seaweed farmers (88% women) tripled production and earnings through improved techniques, while 420 participants received digital financial literacy training, and 11 groups were registered on the *Kikoba* platform. Women reported increased income, leadership in cooperatives, and expanded access to financial systems, though credit readiness remains a challenge.

Priorities for the next period include scaling financial literacy, expanding market access and value addition, piloting childcare models, and rolling out the BALI approach to deepen entrepreneurship pathways.

Outcome 3: Rural women's voice and agency increased for full and equal participation and leadership in their households, communities, organizations, and governance systems. *(Beneficiary Target 2025 – 3,000 Total – women 2,550 + men 450) – 50% achieved.*

The JP RWEE implementation is advancing on the new activities from 2025 while continue implementing those from last year. However, with half of the beneficiary target achieved, some results are evident. It has been noted that rural women in **Ikungi, Chamwino, and South Unguja (Zanzibar)** are increasingly influencing decisions on climate action, agriculture, and resource access, serving in village councils, land committees, cooperatives, and leadership networks. At least 859 (85.6%) of GALs participants have either launched or strengthened small businesses, improved their income, and taken on leadership roles in their communities. This growing visibility reflects JP RWEE's impact in strengthening women's voice, agency, and leadership through targeted capacity building, peer support, and institutional linkages.

Groups supported under this outcome during the reporting period are now formally recognized as savings groups following efforts to facilitate registration with appropriate authorities. Continued support is expected

in the following quarters to ensure that groups are facilitated and supported by various government initiatives.

Outcome 4: Gender responsive legal frameworks, policies, and institutions strengthened to create an enabling environment for rural women to secure their livelihoods, rights, and resilience. *(Beneficiary Target 2025 – 800 Total – women 680 + men 120) – 48% achieved.*

By June 2025, planned activities under Outcome 4 had progressed and is expected to reach over 7,000 indirect beneficiaries by cascading key messages through targeted information and communication materials. While delivery was slower than expected, the JP RWEE made a major technical contribution to national frameworks, most notably through its engagement in the National Land Policy review. The revised policy now affirms equal land rights for women and men, mandates women's inclusion in land governance, and commits to shifting harmful norms. In recognition, the government formally requested JP RWEE's support in implementing the revised policy, affirming its role as a trusted technical partner.

Locally, nine (9) government officials (including three (3) women) in **Ikungi and Chamwino** strengthened their capacity to support women's economic empowerment following a training on mainstreaming the Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment (VG GEWGE). Legal literacy efforts delivered by the Tanzania Women Judges Association (TAWJA), enhanced community understanding of marriage rights, inheritance, land ownership, and protection from gender-based violence. Women gained visibility in governance spaces and strengthened awareness of their legal rights.

Priority actions for the next period include finalizing carried-over activities, expanding legal literacy outreach, and deepening institutional partnerships to accelerate delivery.

III. Delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned, successes

Delays in procurement and the roll out of BALI sessions led to delays in activities such as post-harvest management for sunflower and orange-fleshed sweet potatoes; market access; and participation in local governance and development of Rural Invest (RIV). These activities have been rescheduled to the second half of the year. The programme also faced environmental factors such as water scarcity and soil salinity, which affected kitchen garden productivity in selected areas. These were mitigated through localized hand irrigation and the use of organic manure.

During this first half of the year, **lessons** were already drawn from the implementation in different areas. Legal empowerment emerged as a catalyst for women's leadership. Women who gained legal knowledge were more likely to step into leadership roles, advocate for others, and influence community decision-making. Involving local leaders, religious figures, and law enforcement officials in training sessions helped legitimise women's leadership and reduced resistance within communities. Visual and simplified legal literacy materials, including brochures in local languages, enhanced understanding among women with limited formal education. More concretely, partnerships with credible institutions like TAWJA and paralegals expanded legal empowerment efforts. Distribution of legal literacy materials in local markets fostered broader community awareness and support for women's rights and leadership.

In the seaweed subsector, knowledge transfer was hindered by the age composition of participants, with elderly members often struggling to adopt new practices. JP RWEE's experience in the seaweed subsector

so far has reinforced the importance of adopting a holistic approach to women's economic empowerment, one that integrates production, value addition, financial literacy, and market linkages. By combining skills training and consumer engagement, the programme created a more enabling environment for rural women to move beyond subsistence activities. Moreover, combining technical training in post-harvest handling and nutrition, with community structures like VSLAs increases adoption and sustainability. For example, some of the VSLAs receive entrepreneurship training to help them establish income-generating activities. Notably, women's economic independence remains constrained by weak VSLA maturity and poor linkages to market and financial services. Some VSLA groups require intensive capacity-building support to access government financial services. Sensitization sessions play a significant role in shifting community attitudes on gender equality and nutrition with VSLAs enhancing information sharing. However, limited farmers' knowledge of chicken rearing led to 18% mortality rate among 990 distributed chickens, prompting capacity support by livestock officers. This reinforces the importance of pairing asset distribution with capacity building to safeguard livelihoods and strengthen women's economic empowerment.

Women's empowerment was one of the **key success factors**, with women's participation in project interventions significantly improving household nutrition and income. For instance, kitchen gardens emerged as a valuable income source, enhancing women's financial autonomy and bolstering household-level resilience. Furthermore, one of the most notable positive changes observed among GALS beneficiaries is the increase in women's financial independence. Women are now more empowered and confident in setting forward-looking goals and designing execution plans. Peer-to-peer learning has proven effective, with some indirect beneficiaries demonstrating a strong understanding and application of the methodology.

IV. Performance Indicator Table

Performance Result Indicators at outcome and output level are measured at the end of the year. Therefore, no changes will be reported bi-annually. For status of Performance Result Framework (PRF), please refer to [Tanzania Annual Country report 2024](#).