

**Accelerating Progress Toward Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE)  
MPTF OFFICE GENERIC ANNUAL PROGRAMME<sup>1</sup> NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT  
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2025**

<p align="center"><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Title: Accelerating Progress Toward Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in <b>Nepal</b></li> <li>• Programme Number <i>n/a</i></li> <li>• MPTFOffice Project Reference Number:<sup>3</sup> 00132318</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p>Country/Region: Nepal, Madhesh Province</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Saptari with rural municipalities of Tilathi Koiladi and Chhinnamasta</li> <li>• District Siraha, with urban municipality of Karjanha and rural municipalities of Laxmipur Patari and Sakhuwanankarkatti</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority area/ strategic results</b> Ensure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the SDGs.</p> <p align="center"><b>Programme Participants</b></p> <p><b>Number of Participants 2025</b> <b>Direct:</b> 3,060 (2,876 women, 184 men, 133 policymakers) <b>Indirect</b> 10,488 households</p> <p><b>Number of participants from the beginning of the JP</b> <b>Direct:</b> 5,715 (5,508 women and 207 men) <b>Indirect:</b> 18,574 households</p>																
<p align="center"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <p>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</li> <li>• International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)</li> <li>• United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)</li> <li>• United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <p><b>Government:</b> Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (Federal level), Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives (provincial level), Participating five Local Governments (Local Level)</p> <p><b>Civil Society:</b> DidiBahini (for UN Women), Support Activities for Poor Producers of Nepal (SAPPROS) (For IFAD and WFP)</p>																
<p align="center"><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Total Budget Provided till 2025</b></td> <td><b>MPTF Contribution for 2025:</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>FAO 879,840</td> <td>FAO 302,598</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IFAD 713,552</td> <td>IFAD 221,481</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UN Women 1,086,038</td> <td>UN Women 594,157</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WFP 589,823</td> <td>WFP 195,487</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Agency Contribution</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>by Agency (if applicable)</i></li> </ul>	<b>Total Budget Provided till 2025</b>	<b>MPTF Contribution for 2025:</b>	FAO 879,840	FAO 302,598	IFAD 713,552	IFAD 221,481	UN Women 1,086,038	UN Women 594,157	WFP 589,823	WFP 195,487	Agency Contribution	N/A	<p align="center"><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Overall Duration (<i>months</i>)</td> <td>5 Years</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Start Date<sup>4</sup> (<i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>)</td> <td>25/05/2022</td> </tr> </table>	Overall Duration ( <i>months</i> )	5 Years	Start Date <sup>4</sup> ( <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i> )	25/05/2022
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<sup>1</sup> The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>4</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

Government Contribution (if applicable)	N/A	Original End Date <sup>5</sup> (dd.mm.yyyy)	24/05/2027
Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable)	N/A	Current End date <sup>6</sup> (dd.mm.yyyy)	24/05/2027
<b>Total approved budget as per project document:</b>	<b>USD 5,000,000</b>	<b>Report Submitted By</b>	
<b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Name: Ms. Mehtap Tatar <input type="checkbox"/> Title: Deputy Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women, Nepal <input type="checkbox"/> Email address: <a href="mailto:mehtap.tatar@unwomen.org">mehtap.tatar@unwomen.org</a>	
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    Date: dd.mm.yyyy Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    Date: 30.12.2025			



Shubhakala Kumari Sah (in the center) the secretary of the Sitaram Women Farmers' Group, formed under the JP RWEE together with the group members. Photo: UN Women/Srijana Bhatta

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

## NARRATIVE REPORT

### **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

BALI	Business Action Learning Innovation
CIP	Comprehensive Implementation Plan
CHSC	Custom Hiring Service Center
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEBL	Financial Education and Business Literacy
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JP RWEE	Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment
MDD-W	Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NFS	Nutrition Field School
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organization
SuTRA	Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application System,
UN Women	United Nations Programme for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2025, the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) in Nepal saw significant gains in food security, climate resilience, women's incomes and agency, and gender-responsive governance despite climate shocks, Gen Z protests, and market constraints. These results signal a shift toward resilient, women-led, institutionally anchored livelihoods.

At the goal level, the programme achieved major reductions in food insecurity, exceeding 2025 targets at both household and individual levels. Household food insecurity declined by 13% compared to the previous year, exceeding the planned 9% reduction while individual food insecurity fell by 22%, more than double the annual target. Qualitative evidence corroborates these trends, with women reporting better dietary diversity, and a shift from reliance on purchased staples to producing surplus for household consumption and sale contributing to improved health, reduced illness and increased savings.

The programme also delivered significant gains in climate resilience. Community-level capacity to manage climate shocks improved well beyond targets, with the Climate Capacity Score increasing by nearly six points and the proportion of communities demonstrating improved climate capacity rose from 50% to 75%. Strongest gains were seen in access to climate information, resilient assets and climate-resilient practices, supported by Information, Communication and Technology (ICT)-based advisory services, resilient inputs and community infrastructure. However, limited uptake of insurance and formal risk-transfer mechanisms remains a key gap, highlighting the need for continued investment to safeguard livelihood gains.

A major shift was observed under Outcome 4, where sustained advocacy and policy support translated into institutionalized change. Local governments adopted gender-responsive agriculture and Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policies with comprehensive implementation plans (CIPs) and allocated NPR 5.61 million (USD 38,947) to agriculture, entrepreneurship and social protection with a specific focus on women. The introduction of GESI audits, improved gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) practices and increased use of sex-disaggregated data indicate growing accountability and systemic uptake. Importantly, rural women's participation in policy formulation and budgeting shifted from symbolic inclusion to substantive influence, creating positive ripple effects across outcomes.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) shows strong community-level uptake of JP RWEE approaches but highlights the need to strengthen institutional sustainability, particularly in GRB and GESI implementation. In 2026, the programme will focus on deepening system-level uptake, anchoring climate-resilient and gender-responsive practices within municipal systems and scaling women-led livelihoods to ensure durable impact.

### **I. Purpose**

The JP RWEE aims to secure rural women's livelihoods, rights, and resilience by addressing gender-based barriers across agriculture, economic participation, and governance systems. In line with project document, Nepal's 2025 Annual Workplan (AWP) and the global programme framework, programme supports implementation of Nepal's Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), particularly its GESI Strategy by strengthening climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive food systems through diversified inputs and ICT-based climate and market information. It further advances women's income and economic autonomy by expanding financial and business literacy, strengthening market linkages-including home grown school feeding and promoting gender responsive financial services, labour saving technologies, and social protection mechanisms. The programme also enhances rural women's leadership and voice through leadership and public speaking skills, Gender Action Learning System (GALS), Business Action Learning for Innovation (BALI), Financial Education and Business Literacy (FEBL) community dialogues, and




representation in local decision making spaces, thereby challenging discriminatory norms and expanding agency. Finally, it strengthens gender responsive policies and institutions through policy dialogues, GRB support, legal framework reviews, and multi tier government engagement to institutionalize gender transformative agriculture and social protection systems. Collectively, these efforts contribute to Nepal's ADS implementation while directly supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023–2027 priorities on inclusive economic transformation, climate resilient livelihoods, and gender equality.

Target beneficiaries for 2025 include marginalized rural women farmers—particularly smallholder and landless women, Dalit and Madhesi women—living in flood- and drought-prone lowland areas of Madhesh Province, primarily those engaged in JP RWEE-supported producer groups. The programme also engages men and household members, as well as community influencers such as local religious leaders, ward chairs, and political figures across both districts. Key institutional stakeholders include representatives from local, provincial, and federal governments (including JP RWEE local governments, MoLMAC, MoALD, Agriculture Knowledge Centers, and other line ministries), along with commercial banks and microfinance institutions operating at district and local levels.

## II. Results

Progress across all four outcomes shows a mutually reinforcing trajectory: higher yields and better diets strengthened incomes and economic autonomy; this empowered women’s leadership and collective voice, which in turn drove gender-responsive policies and budget commitments. While results were largely consistent across Siraha and Saptari districts, climate-related disruptions were less severe in Saptari, leading to higher uptake of climate-resilient inputs and diversification. Siraha showed stronger progress in leadership and governance participation due to more active municipal support. Together, these cross-district dynamics illustrate how JP RWEE components reinforce each other to advance women’s livelihoods and decision-making power.

### Outcome 1: Improved food security and nutrition for rural women and their households that contribute to equitable and sustainable food systems.

Participants	Target	Reached
 Total	3,000	3,000
 Women	2,760	2,858
 Men	240	142

Under Outcome 1, food security and nutrition continued to improve across both districts, with households reporting steadier food availability, more diverse diets and reduced vulnerability to climate and market shocks. Women shifted from monotonous, starch-heavy meals to more varied diets with greater consumption of home-grown vegetables, pulses and protein sources. Unlike 2024, when improvements were driven mainly by increased participation and early productivity gains, the 2025 results demonstrate a deeper transition, as women now sustain higher yields, diversify cropping systems and rely less on programme inputs by consistently applying climate-resilient and nature-based practices.

Productivity gains were substantial across major crops: vegetable yields rose by 351%, paddy by 44%, wheat by 76%, pulses by 213%, and nuts and seeds by 655%, far exceeding targets. Women attributed these improvements to better seed varieties, crop management and the use of organic fertilizer, mulching and weeding. Many shifted from being net buyers to surplus producers, meeting household needs and selling excess in local markets.

Dietary quality also improved. Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W) reached 82%, surpassing the target. Women reported moving from simple rice-based meals to more balanced diets with lentils, eggs, meat and a wider range of home-grown vegetables, noting better taste and nutrition for children, pregnant women and older family members. Household food affordability increased as the share of households spending a high portion of their budget on food fell by 18%. Women also reported a 37% reduction in post-harvest losses across major crops, helping stabilize food stocks.

District-level trends show Siraha recorded stronger production gains due to better irrigation and fewer monsoon shocks, while Saptari adopted more drought-tolerant crops and nature-based practices. Nutrition improvements were consistent, with Saptari showing a stronger shift to home-grown vegetables.

These outcome-level gains were underpinned by the full implementation of planned activities under Outputs in 2025. While all planned interventions were delivered and are now being scaled in 2026, a few activity-level targets remain outstanding and will be completed as part of ongoing work. A gradual transition is planned: technical skills will be handed over to trained lead farmers, while responsibilities for extension, market linkages and storage management will increasingly shift to municipalities, private sector actors and value-chain partners as part of the programme's exit strategy.

Under Output 1.1, access to climate-resilient agricultural resources increased substantially. A total of 4,455 women (81%) accessed high-yielding and climate-resilient inputs, including improved seeds for wheat, paddy, lentils, mustard and vegetables. Small-scale irrigation schemes benefitted 755 women farmers by providing year-round water access across 122 hectares of land, helping mitigate seasonal production constraints. For the remaining participants, the programme has consistently emphasized irrigation as a key priority and has been advocating for increased public financing to address this gap, as the programme alone cannot cover all participants due to resource constraints.

In parallel, 4,840 women adopted climate-resilient and nature-based practices-composting, bio-mulching, hot-bed nurseries, improved farmyard manure management and green manure, reducing climate risks and improving soil health. Collaboration with the Soil and Fertilizer Testing Laboratory enabled 323 soil tests and the distribution of soil health cards, allowing women to adjust fertilizer application and improve soil pH for better yields.

Productivity gains were reinforced by access to agricultural mechanization. Two Custom Hiring Service Centers (CHSCs) supported women in Chhinnamasta and Laxmipur Patari improving the timeliness of land preparation, planting and threshing while reducing drudgery. Access to time- and labour-saving tools - power tillers, tractors, threshers and others reached 31.2% of women (1,560 farmers), far exceeding the 5% target, and allowed women to manage larger plots more efficiently and with less physical strain.

Under Output 1.2, nutrition knowledge and food-utilization practices strengthened markedly. A total of 4,675 women (85%) reported improved understanding of balanced diets and nutrition-sensitive meal planning following structured training sessions, community awareness activities and nutrition field schools. Kitchen gardens expanded through the distribution of moringa saplings, vegetable seeds and fruit trees, supporting year-round household consumption. Special emphasis was placed on pregnant and lactating women and persons with disabilities<sup>7</sup>. As Satauni Sada from Maa Bhagwati Women Farmers' Group in

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<sup>7</sup> Project data indicate that they represent approximately 0.8% of the total project participants. As part of the accommodations for participants with disabilities, some activities include a provision for enabling measures that allows participants with disabilities to bring a caretaker when activities are conducted outside their community. Some trainings are also planned close to participants' homes to avoid the need for accommodation or additional support costs




Sakhuwanankarkatti, Ward 4, reflected, “*Before the nutrition training, my knowledge was limited. Through the sessions, I learned how small changes in food choices can support healthy child growth. I now prepare clean, balanced meals for my children every day.*”

Access to information and advisory services strengthened further, with 93% of women using extension services via mobile apps, radio and weather alerts to guide production, marketing and post-harvest decisions, significantly surpassing the 60% target. While digital engagement is increasing, only about 30% of female participants own a smartphone. Among those who do, approximately 50–60% regularly use mobile applications to access agricultural advisories, weather updates, and market information<sup>8</sup>. Adoption of improved post-harvest practices reached 28%, slightly below the 30% target, but still a substantial increase, benefitting approximately 1,540 women.

By mid-term, Outcome 1 is at an advanced stage, with most productivity and dietary diversity targets already surpassed due to strong uptake of climate-resilient practices and sustained nutrition behaviour change. However, key gaps remain uneven adoption of post-harvest handling, continued losses from limited surplus management, and low farmer investment in storage and value-chain infrastructure challenges compounded by recurring floods and dry spells.

The 2026 focus is therefore consolidation rather than expansion: scaling practical post-harvest skills, strengthening risk-management systems beyond household-level adaptation, and deepening market-oriented production so women can convert higher yields into more stable food availability and income.

**Outcome 2: Rural women’s income, decent work and economic autonomy are increased to secure their livelihoods and build resilience.**

Participants	Target	Reached
 Total	2,400	2,035
 Women	2,240	1,909
 Men	160	126

Progress under Outcome 2 continued to strengthen rural women’s income, decent work and economic autonomy. Women reported more predictable earnings, greater control over income, better household financial planning and increased engagement in farm and off-farm activities. Many diversified livelihoods, expanded market access and strengthened entrepreneurial skills.

Income gains were supported by sequenced GALS, FEBL and BALI sessions, which improved financial literacy, negotiation, business planning and household decision-making. Market linkages, particularly institutional procurement created steady demand, while greater access to social protection reduced vulnerability to shocks. Unlike 2024, when progress stemmed largely from business start-up and early gains, 2025 results reflect a deeper shift, with women reinvesting earnings, consolidating market ties and relying less on programme incentives as they transition toward independently managed, self-driven income generation.

Average annual farm income increased by 63% (USD 65), showing stronger returns from existing livelihood activities and improved capacity to convert production into income, complementing but not duplicating Outcome 1. Off-farm income rose by 14% (USD 42) demonstrating gradual diversification into wage-based and self-employment opportunities that help households manage climate and seasonal risks. More regular and predictable income flows strengthened resilience during periods of agricultural stress, improved household planning and reduced financial strain.

<sup>8</sup> Data Source: WFP Nepal Country Office

A total of 2,461 women (45%) started or scaled agribusinesses and self-employment, earning regular additional income, while 4,015 women (73%) participated in household income and expenditure decisions, reflecting greater economic agency. Household-level economic transformation processes enabled women and their families to jointly analyse incomes, agricultural outputs and business finances, plan together and adopt positive financial behaviours. Women reported reduced domestic disputes, improved family relationships and enhanced wellbeing, benefiting the sustainability of women-led businesses, particularly among marginalized groups. Testimonies, such as that of Radhawati Chaudhary from Siraha, underscore these social gains: *“By planning our aspirations and finances together and discussing every decision openly, we have become stronger partners, and our family feels happier, confident, and more secure. We value and respect each other.”*

Qualitative evidence confirms that income gains were accompanied by increased control by women over the use of income and a more equitable redistribution of unpaid care work, with greater engagement from male family members, indicating deeper progress in economic autonomy and intra-household decision-making that promote more equitable decision-making and sharing of roles within families.

District patterns show distinct trajectories: Siraha achieved stronger income gains through better market aggregation and reliable procurement under the School Feeding Programme, while Saptari, facing greater climate stress, saw faster diversification into mushrooms, floriculture and livestock. Social protection coverage increased more quickly in Siraha due to stronger coordination between women’s groups and municipalities enabled through programme-led sensitization on social protection schemes and provisions.

Outcome-level progress was largely driven by the implementation of 79% of planned activities across all outputs in 2025. While the care model pilot, design of gender-responsive financial products, and digital literacy training (e.g., GEO Krishi App for market access and mobile banking) have been carried forward into 2026, all other interventions are set for scale-up. Overall, 84% of the targeted participant coverage was achieved. To ensure service quality, participant numbers for the social protection orientations were intentionally standardized, and the remaining targets were carried forward to 2026—resulting in the 84% coverage rate. Although an immediate phase-out is not planned, a gradual transition will be undertaken in 2026. As part of the exit strategy, social protection referrals, insurance facilitation, and business-continuation support will progressively be handed over to community structures and municipalities.

Under Output 2.1, strengthened entrepreneurship skills, improved market access and integration into local value chains enabled rural women to generate and sustain income from new and existing businesses. As most income-generating activities remain informal microbusinesses, programme support centered on building practical business management skills. FEBL and BALI sessions helped participating women translate their entrepreneurial ideas into viable livelihoods. A total of 99 women applied BALI tools for business identification, planning and cashflow management; 29% launched new activities, 58% expanded existing businesses and 15% are preparing new ventures, demonstrating clear progress in diversification and growth. Most of these women are with limited or no access to land, have low literacy and previously limited mobility and market exposure.

Women’s physical access to markets, processing and storage facilities increased by 42% (2,310 women) exceeding the 18% target. Institutional procurement further strengthened demand: 38 women-led farmer groups supplied 37 public schools, with 1,120 women producing 425 MT of vegetables and generating NPR 21.2 million (USD 149,000) in sales. This progress was enabled by close coordination among schools,

municipal authorities and programme partners, demonstrating how local procurement strengthens women’s entrepreneurship and accountability in local markets.




Livelihood diversification deepened among 313 households, including single women, persons with disabilities (47 persons – 44 women) and households with limited land, through integrated support across agricultural and non-agricultural livelihoods, enabling participants to transition toward more stable and sustainable employment. In Chhinnamasta, 25 women shifted to commercial floriculture (increasing sales from NPR 5,041 to NPR 86,423), 76 women adopted mushroom cultivation (earning NPR 436,773), and labour-saving technologies strengthened traditional pottery for Kumal and Dome communities. Value-chain understanding and market relationships improved for 313 participants (303 women), enhancing confidence, price negotiation and access to services, with market actors increasingly adopting gender-responsive practices.

Under Output 2.2, access to decent work and social protection expanded significantly, strengthening women’s resilience to shocks. Social protection coverage reached 50% (approximately 2,750 women), far surpassing the 15% target. Participants accessed various government social security schemes, including nutrition allowances for pregnant women, disability and single-women allowances, and health insurance—with 303 women newly enrolled in government programmes. This progress was driven by sustained orientation and sensitization efforts on social protection schemes and government-provisioned support, aligned with Nepal’s Integrated Social Protection Framework. Climate-responsive social protection measures reached 731 participants (704 women) through preparedness packages that enhanced their capacity to manage floods and droughts. In addition, 380 women secured livestock insurance, and 37 received compensation totaling NPR 352,200 (USD 2,497).

Under Output 2.3, access to gender-responsive financial and business development services improved significantly. Use of savings, credit and insurance reached 36% (1,980 women) against a 4% target, with the strongest gains in savings and credit. Access to new business knowledge, services and technologies reached 57.4%, with 3,157 women using ICT tools and market information systems to strengthen their businesses. Community-based financial intermediation also grew, with 120 of 200 groups starting group savings triple the target, enhancing women’s collective economic resilience.

By mid-term, Outcome 2 is at an advanced stage, with most income, diversification and business indicators on track or surpassed. Nonetheless, structural constraints persist formal employment and registration remain unlikely given the micro-scale, home-based nature of businesses, low literacy and limited market depth; market power and contracting remain weak without deeper municipal engagement; and insurance uptake remains low due to affordability and unfamiliarity with claims. These gaps shape 2026 priorities, including enhancing market bargaining capacity, operationalizing gender-responsive procurement, strengthening financial and digital inclusion and expanding risk-management tools.

**Outcome 3: Rural women’s voices and agency are increased for full and equal participation and leadership in their households, communities, organizations and governance systems.**

Participants	Target	Reached
 Total	1,400	3,323
 Women	1,020	3,153
 Men	380	170

Steady progress was achieved under Outcome 3, with rural women demonstrating increased voice, agency and leadership in households, communities, organizations and local governance systems. Women’s participation in community groups, cooperatives and governance structures continued to rise in 2025, but in a more substantive and self-driven way than in 2024. While earlier progress centered on confidence-building and assisted participation, the 2025 results reflect more independent leadership: women now initiate

discussions in meetings, public hearings and policy dialogues, raise issues proactively and influence decisions without facilitation.

At household level, 355 women (6.4%) and their 1,740 family members (1,053 women) reported stronger participation in decision-making<sup>9</sup>. Women felt their opinions were more valued, communication improved, and they contributed more to financial and livelihood decisions. With men increasingly sharing responsibilities and supporting women's mobility as part of normal routines, this indicates a shift in intra-household power dynamics.

Transformative change was further reinforced by GALS. Women started applying autonomously GALS diagrams at home, led group discussions and mentored peers. Longitudinal analysis of 400 women participating in the “*Happy Family Review – Achievement Journey*”<sup>10</sup> showed sustained outcomes: across 11 thematic areas, 83% of jointly defined actions were completed and 14% were in progress, demonstrating capacity to translate vision into action through shared planning, accountability and cooperation.

Participation in community and governance spaces expanded, with 52% of women (2,860) active in community-based organizations, cooperatives, *Aama Samuha*<sup>11</sup>, rights-defender networks and civic groups. These platforms enabled women to engage beyond the household and strengthened collective voice. Leadership influence also grew: 550 women now hold decision-making roles such as chairperson, secretary or treasurer, marking progress in shifting gendered power relations. Testimonies, such as that of Lalita Chaudhary, Chairperson from Durga Mai Women Farmers Group illustrate increased confidence and ability to represent others. *“Before joining the women’s leadership school, I was an ordinary rural woman. Today, I serve as the Chair of our farmer group and lead the Mauli Microfinance Committee. The training equipped me with the confidence and skills to manage finances and to speak up on behalf of others.”* Women leaders submitted development proposals to ward offices focusing on income generation and community infrastructure which were acknowledged and integrated for budgeting, reflecting growing institutional recognition.

District-level patterns varied. Siraha demonstrated faster progress, supported by proactive deputy mayors and stronger municipal engagement, while Saptari faced more restrictive norms but showed stronger household-level leadership gains. Despite increased openness, representation in municipal spaces remains limited, signaling the need for deeper norm change and stronger institutional practice.

Outcome level progress was strengthened by the completion of all planned activities in 2025. All interventions are set for scaleup in 2026, with only a few new initiatives added. Several activities including peer exchanges and orientation on network strengthening were phased out in 2024, while exposure visits and GALS Training of Trainers (ToT) workshops concluded in 2025. The target was surpassed threefold because the programme accelerated the mobilisation of trained community catalysts—already capacitated through ToT and refresher training, allowing wide group coverage, sustained delivery of leadership sessions, and increased reach at very low additional cost. As part of the 2026 transition and exit strategy, community dialogues, leadership handover processes and engagement across women's groups, cooperatives and committees will increasingly be led by community structures and municipalities.

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<sup>9</sup> Data from Implementing Partners

<sup>10</sup> The Happy Family Review (HFR) is a GALS tool used to review households' one-year progress on their Achievement Journey.

<sup>11</sup> **Aama Samuha** ([lit.](#) 'Mothers' Group') is a Nepalese [voluntary group](#) formed to raise awareness about [gender equality](#), issues affecting women and [social issues](#).

Leadership capacities were strengthened at scale, with 3,119 women enhancing governance and decision-making skills. Women reported greater confidence to speak in public, contribute to collective discussions and advocate for gender-responsive policies. Their engagement supported the development of GESI policies and comprehensive implementation plans that address intersecting vulnerabilities. Cascade leadership processes led by local women catalysts reinforced peer learning and sustainability.

Efforts to transform discriminatory social norms were strengthened through community platforms engaging men and boys using structured men’s engagement discussion approach, rather than the Men Engage model. Fifteen community dialogues reached 706 participants, fostering recognition of women as economic and social actors. Seven targeted dialogues involving 265 mostly male leaders prompted reflection on discriminatory norms and unpaid care distribution work using a structured *Engaging Men Discussion Guide*<sup>12</sup> to prompt reflection on discriminatory norms and unequal unpaid care responsibilities, generating increased willingness to support women’s education, livelihoods and leadership.







Household-level dialogues engaging 441 participants (281 women) resulted in tangible improvements in shared decision-making and collaboration. Facilitated through self-reflective, participatory and visual tools, these sessions culminated in 83 couples publicly testifying to enhanced communication, stronger joint planning and more equitable distribution of responsibilities.

Under Output 3.2, organizational and institutional capacities of women’s producer groups improved markedly. A total of 2,122 women benefited from 80 group-management trainings. Of 169 farmer groups formally registered with municipalities, 49 registered in 2025, improving access to services and strengthening collective action. Ten cooperatives advanced GESI strategies, identifying pathways to increase women’s participation in boards and decision-making bodies.

By mid-term, Outcome 3 is well advanced, with community-level leadership gains surpassing interim targets, reflecting faster-than-expected behaviour change rather than programme completion. However, these gains remain largely localized, and women’s influence within municipal structures is still uneven due to discriminatory social norms and limited institutional capacity. In 2026, the programme will prioritise consolidation: shifting women from community voice to institutional influence; strengthening linkages with networks and local committees; expanding peer mentorship; and embedding leadership pathways into routine planning and monitoring. System level integration of gender-transformative approaches and stronger platforms for collective advocacy will be essential for sustainability.

**Outcome 4: Gender-responsive legal frameworks, policies and institutions are strengthened to create an enabling environment for rural women to secure their livelihoods, rights and resilience.**

During the reporting period, Outcome 4 demonstrated deeper institutional progress compared to 2024, transitioning from initial awareness to agriculture and GESI policy support in 2025 and entering the early stages of consistent implementation and system uptake. In 2024, municipalities were largely familiarizing themselves with GRB concepts, understanding why local policies must be inclusive, and expressing commitment through the action plans developed during introductory GRB and GESI trainings. In 2025, this

	Target	Reached
Participants		
 Total	1,900	1,268
 Women	1,800	1,134
 Men	100	134
Of which		
 Policymakers (total)		133
 Policymakers (women)		32
 Policymakers (men)		101

<sup>12</sup> The Discussion Guide for Engaging Men, developed by UN Women Nepal (2022), is a facilitation resource designed to support structured dialogues with men and boys on gender equality and positive masculinities.

shifted towards operationalization, with local governments beginning to apply gender responsive tools such as GESI audits, gender responsive and climate resilient agriculture policies, and GRB practices more systematically in their annual planning, budgeting and monitoring processes. Municipalities allocated dedicated budgets for women focused priorities, signaling early institutional ownership and a gradual reduction in reliance on programme led facilitation.

However, this does not yet imply full independence from programme support. Municipalities continue to require robust technical backstopping, hands-on coaching and coordination support to fully implement GRB, execute CIP-linked policies and strengthen monitoring mechanisms. The progress made in 2025 reflects a transition phase less dependent compared to last year, but still requiring sustained programme engagement to consolidate institutional practices and ensure they become embedded in municipal systems over the long term. Likewise, the programme provided technical support to key national institutions—Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, the National Planning Commission, and the National Statistics Office—through the *Women’s Empowerment – Integrating Metrics and Policy Advocacy for Change Together (WE IMPACT)* fellowship, hosted by JP RWEE and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). This initiative strengthened foundational skills in applying the WEAI indicators to measure women’s empowerment in agriculture.

Progress under this outcome is demonstrated through the development of five local policy instruments at the local government level—two gender-responsive, climate-resilient agriculture policies<sup>13</sup> and three GESI policies, each accompanied by (CIPs)<sup>14</sup>, alongside one standalone CIP in Karjanha. These instruments embed GESI principles across municipal policies, plans and budgets, helping local governments address women’s economic priorities and strengthen inclusive decision making. The CIPs outline roles, timelines and monitoring arrangements, reinforcing accountability and supporting early translation of commitments into action.

The agriculture policies guide municipalities to integrate gender equality, social inclusion, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction and social protection into sectoral planning, providing clear operational direction and strengthening local capacity to respond to the intersecting risks faced by rural women farmers. Reflecting this increased commitment, municipalities allocated NPR 5,610,000 (USD 38,947<sup>15</sup>) for agriculture, social protection and entrepreneurship initiatives with a focus on women, marking an initial but important shift from policy development to resource backed implementation and signaling emerging institutional ownership.

District-level patterns varied. Siraha exhibited stronger institutionalization of gender-responsive governance, with more consistent GRB practice, Sub-National Treasury Regulatory Application System (SuTRA) application and uptake of GESI policy processes. This reflects the relatively higher administrative capacity and coordinated municipal engagement observed in municipalities such as Laxmipur Patari and Karjanha, where co-financing, clearer institutional roles, and more systematic policy work were documented. Saptari, by contrast, showed greater progress in GESI audits and women’s participation in

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<sup>13</sup> Agriculture Policy 2025 provides a strategic local framework that strengthens food systems against climate risks and supports equitable access and participation for farmers from all gender groups and marginalized households.

<sup>14</sup> The five local policy instruments include:

1. *Agriculture Policy 2025 – TilathiKoiladi Rural Municipality*
2. *Agriculture Policy 2025 – Laxmipur Patari Rural Municipality*
3. *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy plus Five Years of Comprehensive Implementation Plan – TilathiKoiladi*
4. *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy plus Five Years of Comprehensive Implementation Plan – Chinnamasta*
5. *Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) policy plus Five Years of Comprehensive Implementation Plan – Laxmipur Patari*
6. *Five Years of Comprehensive Implementation Plan- Karjanha Municipality.*

<sup>15</sup> 1USD=Nepali Rupee 144.039 (January 2025 exchange rate)

public hearings, reflecting stronger community-level mobilization and social accountability engagement, although system-level adoption is advancing more gradually due to more uneven institutional capacity and processes that remain dependent on individual champions.

Outcome progress strengthened with 82% of activities completed in 2025, except the learning route and legal literacy classes shifted to 2026. Because the carried-forward participants were covered through legal literacy sessions in 2025, the overall participant coverage stands at 66%. Most Outcome 4 actions will phase over to municipalities next year, advancing the exit strategy. Key GRB, GESI and capacity-building supports continue into 2026, while several advocacy, policy dialogue and standalone training activities are being phased out or integrated into broader platforms.

Municipalities took concrete steps toward strengthening institutional accountability by completing their first GESI audits. The findings were directly used to inform the development of GESI policies and CIPs, ensuring that identified gaps were systematically translated into actionable reforms across policy, institutional structures, service delivery, and participatory governance. For example, in Laxmipur Patari, Siraha district, the GESI audit identified key gaps, including the absence of GRB, limited participation of women in local planning processes, and inadequate agricultural services tailored to women farmers. These findings directly informed the municipality's GESI Policy and CIP.

As a result, the municipality introduced GRB coding to strengthen policy and planning processes and improve expenditure tracking for gender equality outcomes. Ward-level GESI sub-committees were established to institutionalize accountability and oversight. To address service delivery gaps, mobile agricultural clinics targeting women farmers were launched. Measures were also introduced to ensure the meaningful participation of women's groups in ward planning forums. In addition, a grievance mechanism was established to provide excluded groups with accessible channels to raise concerns and seek redress. These actions demonstrate a clear progression from diagnostic assessment to institutional reform, contributing to more inclusive governance and improved service delivery at local level.

Institutional capacity for inclusive and evidence-based decision making was strengthened through improved understanding on use of gender and sex disaggregated data. Thirty-one local government officials across five municipalities enhanced their capacity skills in gender statistics, intersectionality, and the application of these data in planning, budgeting and monitoring. While all five municipalities benefitted from capacity-building activities through JP RWEE, only Tilathikoiladi from Saptari have begun applying these skills to strengthen their local data systems—including collecting, analysing, and using sex-disaggregated data on agriculture and rural women's economic opportunities. This emerging practice is contributing to improved accountability and more responsive policy and programme design in those municipalities.

Under Output 4.2, rural women demonstrated stronger and more influential engagement in policy formulation, budgeting and monitoring. A total of 21 women contributed directly to the development of GESI policies and CIPs in four municipalities, ensuring that priorities such as agricultural inputs, removal of participation barriers and equitable resource allocation were fully reflected<sup>16</sup>. Local authorities noted that women's contributions improved policy relevance and enhanced their capacity to participate meaningfully in governance processes.

Women also raised collective priorities in national and provincial forums, contributed to policy dialogues and most notably 83 women, including Dalit, Muslim and Madhesi participants, engaged directly with authorities through public hearings on agriculture, infrastructure and public services.

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<sup>16</sup> Data Source: Implementing Partner

These engagements led to concrete budget commitments. In Chhinnamasta, approximately NPR 2.3 million (USD 15,967) was allocated for women's skills and income generation programmes, with an additional NPR 1.8 million (USD 12,496) for community infrastructure. In Karjanha, women's advocacy secured NPR 610,000 (USD 4,234) for kitchen gardening support for pregnant and lactating women, exposure visits and seed distribution. These allocations reflect women's growing influence on local planning, budgeting and decision-making.

In parallel, 4,622 women strengthened their awareness of legal rights and available services, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention, legal aid, referral and protection mechanisms. Through targeted orientations and psychosocial support in Siraha and Saptari, women learned how to recognize violence, seek help and navigate GBV pathways such as Judicial Committees, Victim Support Funds, police and one stop crisis management centres. Thirteen trained psychosocial counsellors provided individual and group counselling, handled GBV-related cases and supported women in accessing justice, improving family relations and using social protection services. This integrated legal literacy and GBV awareness work increased women's confidence to claim entitlements and seek timely protection.

Linkages between rural women's organizations and formal protection and advocacy mechanisms were strengthened. Women farmer groups were formally connected to the Women Human Rights Defender Network, improving access to referral pathways, protection mechanisms and rights-based advocacy support. This marks a shift from informal coping to institutionalized protection and advocacy, strengthening community accountability and services for women experiencing violence.

By midterm, Outcome 4 has progressed ahead of plan in policy uptake and institutional engagement. Most foundational tools and capacities are in place, but institutionalization remains weak and still depends on project led coordination. Municipalities are only beginning to apply GESI and GRB tools, and consistent system use is not yet achieved. The priority for 2026 is consolidation rather than expansion: strengthening implementation of GESI and GRB commitments, improving budget coding and tracking, reducing uneven progress through intermunicipal learning, and embedding JP RWEE approaches into routine planning and monitoring. With core systems established, the next year will focus on transferring ownership and ensuring gains are absorbed into municipal structures for long term sustainability.

### **Delays in Implementation**

This year, activities under Outputs 2.2 (piloting a care model) and 2.3 (designing gender-responsive financial products) were not initiated and have been rescheduled for implementation in 2026. The planned learning route (Output 4.2.) also could not be organized due to the Gen Z movement and a temporary UNDSS-mandated suspension of international travel in Nepal, which restricted cross-border learning and exposure activities. This learning exchange is intended to showcase the effectiveness of GALS within and beyond JP RWEE intervention areas, including to IFAD-implementing countries with different geographical region across globe.

Furthermore, activities under Outputs 2.3 (digital literacy training on the agriculture application) and 4.2. (legal literacy classes) were postponed to 2026 as this year's efforts were focused on participants carried over from 2024.

### **Key Challenges with Lessons Learned**

**Climate Shocks in Madhesh Province.** Madhesh Province was officially declared a drought-hit disaster-crisis zone following prolonged dry conditions affecting all eight districts in mid-2025. By the end of the 2025 rice planting season, only 46–51.82% of rice land had been planted due to insufficient rainfall. Subsequent off-season rainfall during harvesting further damaged standing crops, resulting in an 11.39% decline in paddy production.<sup>17</sup> With the provincial drought impact level reaching approximately 52%<sup>18</sup>, project participants, particularly those in Siraha were significantly affected.

In response, the programme provided a layered support strategy that combined immediate risk-mitigation measures with medium-term resilience-building interventions. Small-scale irrigation solutions, including shallow tube wells were provided to 755 women farmers ensuring irrigation coverage across 122 hectares. Additionally, 49 women’s groups were strategically linked to FAO programme, enabling access to year-round irrigation infrastructure through programme synergies. Previous irrigation investments in Karjanha further proved instrumental in helping farmers cope with the 2025 water shortages.

To reduce climate-related risks, 51 women farmers’ groups, representing 1,396 participants, received climate-resilient rice varieties to help maintain yields under erratic rainfall and water-stress conditions. Complementary livelihood-diversification initiatives including mushroom cultivation, pigeon rearing, clay craft, and dairy production further reduced dependence on water-intensive agriculture and strengthened household income resilience.

The 2025 drought reaffirmed that climate stressors in Madhesh are persistent and increasingly systemic. While climate adaptation has already been integrated into programme design, the growing scale and frequency of climate shocks highlight the need to further deepen, systematize, and institutionalize climate-resilient approaches across all components of women’s economic empowerment programming. Continued expansion of irrigation access and resilient seed systems will be essential to safeguard and sustain livelihood gains for women farmers in the face of escalating climate variability.

**Institutional Procurement Constraints and Limited Negotiation Power in School Market Linkages.** The programme linked women farmers with 37 public schools to supply fresh vegetables and other food items, creating stable demand and fair prices while promoting gender responsive procurement. However, challenges emerged in navigating formal procurement processes. Quarterly budget disbursements led to delayed payments, and women farmers faced difficulties in negotiating terms, aligning delivery schedules, and asserting their interests. Limited foundational literacy further affected their confidence in handling written contracts, resulting in informal agreements and reduced bargaining power. In Chhinnamasta, Dalit women experienced additional trust and exclusion barriers, underscoring that market access alone does not guarantee equitable participation.

Learning from this situation, in 2026, the programme will standardize school procurement contracts to strengthen gender responsive procurement, deliver simplified contract-literacy sessions, and enhance coordination with municipalities and schools to clarify roles and payment timelines. Additionally, the programme will continue advocating for more transparent and inclusive contracting processes, particularly for women facing caste-based discrimination.

**Limited Institutional Capacity for Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting (GRPB).** Local governments showed strong political commitment to gender equality, but their capacity to implement gender-responsive planning and budgeting remained limited. Frequent staff transfers, under-resourced GESI

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<sup>17</sup> Preliminary estimates released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development on 19 January 2025

<sup>18</sup> 2025 Drought in Nepal's Madhesh Province: A rapid situational analysis

units and uneven technical skills weakened continuity and hindered effective GRPB implementation, especially when trained focal points were reassigned. Stand-alone trainings proved insufficient to translate commitment into sustained practice.

In response, the programme shifted to hands-on, system-embedded mentoring supporting practical GRB coding through SuTRA and aligning coaching with municipal planning cycles. This strengthened institutional processes, improved accountability and increased the likelihood that women's priorities were reflected in budgets despite staff turnover.

Addressing this challenge, demonstrated that GRPB is most effective when embedded in government systems and reinforced through continuous, cycle-aligned mentoring rather than one-off trainings, ensuring sustainability in decentralized contexts with frequent personnel changes.

**Challenges in Measuring Formal Employment and Electoral Participation Indicators.** Progress against Indicator 2.2.1 (women who enter employment in the formal labour market) could not be reliably reported during the current period due to structural constraints affecting formalization of rural women's economic activities. While 2,461 women initiated or expanded income generating activities, none of the rural women formally registered their microbusinesses, obtained a Permanent Account Number (PAN), or met formal employment criteria. Without verified administrative data, reporting figures would be unreliable.

This challenge reflects broader rural economic realities rather than programme underperformance. For small, homebased or group run businesses, formal registration is often deterred by costs, administrative complexity, limited perceived benefits and weak local enforcement. As a result, women's economic participation remains largely informal, even as their earnings, skills and agency continue to grow. The programme has therefore marked this indicator as a limitation and will consult with the GCU on adapting measurement approaches or sequencing formalization support more realistically. In 2026, the programme will focus on sensitizing women to the benefits of business registration and facilitating access to PAN registration services.

Progress against Indicator 3.3 (women in elected local governance structures) also cannot be demonstrated, as Nepal's local elections are scheduled only after the JP RWEE Phase II ends in May 2027. With no electoral cycle during the reporting period, measurable change will only be captured in the final evaluation. However, strong progress on prerequisite empowerment indicators such as increased leadership in groups, committees and cooperatives shows that women are building the confidence, experience and social capital needed for future electoral participation once elections occur.

A key learning is that both formal employment and elected representation depend on broader structural, administrative and political timelines. Movement from informal to formal work and from community to electoral leadership is gradual, requiring sustained institutional reform and long-term engagement.

### **Qualitative assessment**

The JP RWEE remains strongly aligned with national and subnational commitments to gender equality, food security, agriculture, and rural development. All interventions are anchored in existing government policies and systems, including the Agriculture Development Strategy and the Madhesh Provincial Periodic Plan. The programme contributes to institutional strengthening rather than stand-alone outputs by prioritizing agriculture and allied sectors as key drivers of income generation, job creation, and economic

growth. It also enhances women farmers' access to markets, technology, and institutional training. This strong policy alignment has reinforced government ownership and positioned the programme as a credible partner in advancing federal governance priorities.

The joint UN approach has significantly strengthened coherence, sequencing and overall impact. Regular coordination enabled complementary interventions and joint problem solving, ensuring each agency and implementing partners' comparative advantage contributed to shared outcomes. FAO's expertise in climate-resilient agriculture reinforced food security efforts, while IFAD and WFP advanced livelihoods, entrepreneurship and market access. UN Women strengthened leadership, social norms and unpaid care work components, ensuring economic gains were matched by increases in agency and institutional responsiveness. This integrated approach amplified results, linking productivity improvements with income gains, better nutrition and stronger leadership—achievements that would not have been possible through isolated agency efforts.

Partnerships with government institutions at federal, provincial and municipal levels have been central to progress. The National Steering Committee ensured strategic alignment with federal priorities, while the Provincial Coordination Committee strengthened cross-sector dialogue. At municipal level, coordination committees facilitated contextual adaptation and co-financing. Growing municipal financial contributions and infrastructure investment reflect increasing ownership and movement toward institutional integration. Civil society and women's groups played a key role in mobilization, accountability and reaching marginalized women, including Dalit women. Improved clarity of roles, stronger communication and regular reflection enhanced adaptive management, contributing to more inclusive implementation.

The joint platform enabled high-level dialogues, including the CSW69 Rome-based Agencies' Side Event in New York, where national leadership recognized the programme's contribution to rural women's socio-economic advancement. This visibility reinforced political legitimacy and positioned the programme within global discourse. Similarly, the International Day of Rural Women provided a strategic entry point for provincial engagement in Madhesh Province. Under the leadership of MoLMAC, the event convened policymakers, line ministries, private sector actors and development partners, creating a rare space where rural women directly voiced priorities and constraints. Discussions highlighted persistent gender-differentiated barriers in agriculture and led to commitments to strengthen gender-responsive agricultural policies and budgeting. This convening power demonstrates the added value of the joint modality in influencing policy and fostering an enabling environment.

Crosscutting dimensions were systematically integrated. Social norms and unpaid care work were addressed through community engagement and leadership approaches. Intersectional barriers affecting Dalit women were incorporated into outreach strategies. Climate-resilient agriculture and irrigation support enhanced resilience to climate shocks, while gender-responsive budgeting and sex-disaggregated data strengthened accountability. Together, these strategies ensured economic progress was reinforced by institutional reform, social norm change and improved referral and prevention of GBV.

Overall, the programme demonstrates strong qualitative progress at mid-term. Evidence shows movement from beneficiary-level support toward institutional and governance change. The joint approach has enhanced efficiency, policy influence and systemic integration, while government and civil society partnerships have strengthened ownership and sustainability. Continued efforts are needed to deepen institutionalization and municipal capacity, but progress toward system-level change is visible and credible.

## **ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment ([see Annex I](#))**

### iii) A Specific Story

#### **From Silence to Leadership: Shyam Kumari Ram**

Shyam Kumari Ram lived at the intersection of economic exploitation and gender-based violence. Although she performed the same demanding agricultural labour as men, she earned significantly less, while also carrying unpaid care and domestic work. At home, she endured domestic violence in silence, constrained by social norms that discouraged women from speaking out or seeking support.

Her journey began to change through JP RWEE, when she joined a Women Farmers' Group and later became a community catalyst. Leadership training, including Training of Trainers on women's rights, gender equality, and laws addressing domestic violence, strengthened her knowledge, confidence, and agency. She began facilitating weekly dialogue sessions with women farmers, creating safe spaces for collective learning, reflection, and advocacy.

With continued programme support, Shyam accessed justice mechanisms, medical care, psychosocial counselling, and legal recognition through marriage registration. Today, she continues to mobilize women in her community, contributing to greater awareness of rights, breaking the silence around violence, and nurturing higher aspirations for girls' education and leadership.



*Shyam Kumari Ram, a local farmer and catalyst of the Women's Leadership School, expresses gratitude to her peers after presenting during a leadership training session.*

**Photo:** UN Women/DidiBahini

### **.III. Other Assessments or Evaluations**

Nepal JP has conducted Midterm Review (MTR) in Q3-2025 and the Annual Monitoring exercise in Q4 2025. The 2025 MTR, supported by monitoring data and stakeholder consultations, confirms that the programme has moved beyond activity-level implementation toward influencing systems and structures. Moreover, the Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM), integrated into JP RWEE monitoring system since the project's launch in 2023 remains a core element of Accountability to Affected Populations, guided by the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

The Annual monitoring 2025 shows that since baseline, JPRWEE participants have gained consistent progress across food security, economic participation, and women's agency, with relatively balanced improvements across outcomes. Under Outcome 1, reductions in food insecurity and improvements in production and consumption patterns indicate strengthened household resilience. Under Outcome 2, women's participation in income-generating activities has increased, alongside improved access to services and markets, although gains in income control and financial inclusion remain gradual. Under Outcome 3, women's collective agency and participation in decision-making have strengthened, with increased engagement in groups, public hearings, and accountability platforms influencing local governance processes. Under Outcome 4, Nepal has contributed to institutional change with one policy framework achieved in 2025, alongside stronger integration of gender-responsive practices within local governance. Municipalities are increasingly institutionalizing these approaches, with examples such as Chhinnamasta and Karjanha allocating over NPR 4.7 million to women's livelihoods and nutrition and applying gender-responsive budgeting tools, reflecting growing responsiveness to women's priorities in planning and service delivery. Overall, the most pronounced progress is observed in food security, women's collective agency, and integration of gender-responsive practices in local governance, while deeper structural changes in

income control and financial inclusion remain gradual. Approximately 70–80% of indicators show positive change in line with or above expected trajectories toward endline.<sup>19</sup>

The MTR results have expanded these findings. The Nepal MTR finds that the programme is highly relevant and well aligned with the needs of rural women in climate-vulnerable contexts, with strong coherence across its integrated pathways and clear responsiveness to local priorities. Efficiency and jointness are reflected in effective complementarity at community level, where sequencing interventions reinforces outcomes, although coordination remains time-intensive and largely programme-facilitated. In terms of effectiveness and impact, the programme has established solid foundations, particularly in women’s agency, leadership and household-level livelihood improvements, while economic gains remain modest and constrained by informal markets and limited scalability. Sustainability and institutionalization show emerging traction, with municipalities engaging through co-financing and local linkages, but with integration into planning, budgeting and systems still uneven and not yet routinised. Across these areas, the MTR highlights a consistent pattern: strong results at community level, but institutional anchoring and economic scaling remain areas for consolidation. The 2026 AWP responds directly to these findings through a combination of strategic shifts and operational adjustments, including strengthening market-oriented interventions, deepening engagement with municipalities, reinforcing governance and learning mechanisms, and advancing exit-oriented approaches to support institutional uptake—laying the groundwork for more durable and scalable results beyond the current phase.<sup>20</sup>

In Nepal, the CFM—led by WFP and operational since 2023—continued to function effectively in 2025 through a hotline, WhatsApp/SMS, and email channels. The mechanism received around ten cases during the year, primarily information requests, complaints, programme quality concerns, and staff-related issues. All cases were resolved promptly, typically within seven days, and the few sensitive complaints received were referred in accordance with established procedures. The year also saw strengthened awareness efforts through community meetings, posters, partner outreach, and training activities. Feedback contributed to increased sensitization on the toll-free hotline and PSEA messaging. Despite good progress, challenges remain around inter-agency information sharing and fully integrating CFM actions at field level. Continued support is planned to update SOPs and enhance coordination as digital information management systems are adopted.

The 2025 beneficiary adjustment exercise is also an integrated part of the yearly monitoring system. The assessment indicates that Nepal reached 3,060 unique direct participants, slightly exceeding its annual unique target of 3,000 (102.0%). Reach remained strongly concentrated among rural women and was characterized by a highly group-based delivery model, with nearly all unique participants linked to group structures. Across outcomes, the largest volume of cumulative reach was recorded under Outcome 3, which substantially exceeded target, while Outcome 4 remained comparatively limited in scale. The results suggest that programme delivery in Nepal is effectively reaching its intended scale while relying on collective platforms to connect women to multiple areas of support. At the same time, the relatively smaller reach under institutional pathways indicates that the programme’s beneficiary profile in 2025 remained weighted more toward direct and group-based support than toward broader policy-facing engagement. The beneficiary profile in Nepal was highly integrated, with cumulative outcome reach generating an overlap intensity of 180.2% relative to unique participants reached, indicating strong layering of support across multiple outcomes.

#### **IV. Programmatic Revisions N/A**

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<sup>19</sup> An **Internal Annual Monitoring Report 2025** is available to be shared for additional information on the Annual Monitoring results.

<sup>20</sup> **The MTR package** can be requested and consulted. It provides a full fledge MTR report, Executive Summary report, Management response 2026-2027 and Exit and Sustainability Strategy.

## **V. Resources**

The only minor change in this reporting period was the appointment of a new FAO technical focal point, to support the overall coordination and management of the FAO component. The transition was smooth, with a proper handover process in place, and there were no gaps in implementation. In addition, the JP RWEE Programme Management Unit provided an orientation on the overall programme, including upcoming priorities and expectations, to ensure continuity and effective engagement by the new focal point.

## Annex I - Indicator Based Performance Assessment

**Achieved indicator:** The table below shows the changes (**increase or decrease**) against JP RWEE performance indicators, **in relation to the baseline** at goal, outcome and output level, in line with the country's approved Results and Performance Framework (RPF).

**Baseline and Targets:** Baseline figures are representative of the **country's programme target population** (total targeted across the entire programme cycle of 5 years) and therefore appear in % and/or absolute numbers in some cases, in line with JPRWEE Compendium Indicator. Annual targets also appear in % (**increase or decrease over the baseline**) and are estimated by the country team during the annual planning exercise, while final endline targets are established and validated internally just after the baseline has been finalized. The endline targets are also mentioned in this table to help understand the trajectory towards the expected final change. In some cases, 2025 targets does not appear since certain indicators were not meant to be measured at midline (2025), however to respond to the need of understanding midterm changes on women's empowerment (outcome 2 and 3) normally measured only at baseline and endline, the country teams had made the efforts to measure those indicator as well.

**Reasons for Variance with Planned Year Target (if any):** Whether the expected year target has been met or not, changes have been marked as follow: **NA, NOT ACHIEVED, PARTIALLY ACHIEVED, ACHIEVED**. NA is used when the indicator is "optional" according to the country's approved PRF and whether the country team has not chosen to report on it in the program cycle because not relevant to the submitted Annual Work Plan. Note that even if the annual target was not achieved it doesn't imply that improvement has not been registered since baseline. The variance in figures (% or unit number) represent the difference between the annual target (in %pp) and the actual achieved indicator.

**Source of verification:** Normally, these changes are measured every year using a mix method of quantitative surveys administered at individual and household level across a representative sample size of the targeted population (approx. 300/400 individuals between men and women) selected randomly from the beneficiary roster. Qualitative methods of focus group discussions and key informant interview are also applied at group and national stakeholder level to triangulate and enrich the quantitative results of the surveys. Annual monitoring through individual quantitative survey happens across all countries between October and January of the following year.

Baselines and Targets for 2025	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<b>Goal: To secure rural women's livelihoods, rights and resilience to advance sustainable development, Agenda 2030 and the SDGs</b>			
<b>Goal 1: Decrease in the proportion of households with moderate or severe food insecurity (based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, FIES and adapted from SDG 2.1.2)</b>			
<i>Baseline:</i> 2967 <i>2025 Target:</i> -9 % <i>Endline Target:</i> -19%	-18%	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>-9%</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Beneficiary households were supported with improved seeds and input packages for key crops</p>	Quantitative Survey (Food Insecurity Experience Scale - FIES, adapted from SDG 2.1.2 Household & Individual based)

		including paddy, wheat, lentils, mustard, and year-round vegetable composite seed packages. The timely distribution of these inputs enabled households to enhance crop productivity and diversify agricultural production across seasons. As a result, participating households experienced improved availability of food and increased dietary diversity, which contributed significantly to strengthening household food security and reducing the proportion of households facing moderate or severe food insecurity.	
<b>G.3 Proportion of targeted communities where there is evidence of improved capacity to manage climate shocks and risks</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 4 (31%)</i> <i>Endline Target: 7 (54%)</i>	9 (69%)	<b>+5 (38%) ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> An assessment on the adoption pathway was conducted, and two local governments were supported in preparing climate-resilient agriculture policies. Training on the Climate Smart Village concept was provided to champion farmers. Soil sample testing was organized in collaboration with the Provincial Soil and Fertilizer Testing Lab and local governments. Rural women were also sensitized on climate-resilient agriculture practices. This holistic approach led to higher levels of achievement.	Key Informant Interview with Climate Capacity Score (CCS)
<b>OUTCOME 1: Improved food security and nutrition for rural women and their households that contribute to equitable and sustainable food systems</b>			
<b>1.1 Percentage increase in production/productivity of nutritious crops by rural women disaggregated by food crop (% change in production volume, kg/ha)</b>			
<i>Baseline:</i> <i>Pulses: 225 kg/ha</i> <i>Other vegetables: 2234 kg/ha</i>	Pulses: 632 kg/ha (+181%) Other vegetables: 7082 kg/ha (+217%) Paddy: 3787 kg/ha (+44%)	<b>+151% ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> This outstanding performance is attributed to the comprehensive support provided to rural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual Interview with Rural Women (Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS) Sub-Module B1)</li> </ul>

<p><i>Paddy:</i> 2630 kg/ha  <i>Wheat:</i> 1220 kg/ha  <i>Nuts/Seeds:</i> 167 kg/hectare  <b>2025 Target:</b> +49% (average)  <b>Endling Target:</b> +66% increase from baseline (average target of 5 crops)</p>	<p>Wheat: 2147 kg/ha (+76%)  Nuts/Seeds: 972 kg/ha (+482%)  Average: 2924 kg/ha (+200%)</p>	<p>women farmers. Climate-resilient lentil and vegetable seed packages (for both summer and winter seasons) were distributed, accompanied by technical training on improved cultivation practices. Simultaneously, sustainable soil fertility management techniques, including the use of green manure (Dhaicha) and organic bio-inputs such as Jhol Mal, were promoted. These integrated interventions significantly enhanced farmers' knowledge and skills, improved soil health, reduced dependence on chemical fertilizers, and increased crop productivity. Collectively, these efforts directly contributed to strengthening household food and nutrition security, resulting in the remarkable overachievement of the target.</p>	
<b>1.2 Increase in the proportion of rural women who reach minimum dietary diversity (MDD-W) (% increase from baseline)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 880  <b>2025 Target:</b> +22%  <b>Endline Target:</b> 26% increase from baseline</p>	<p>82%</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+60% ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> This was driven by the promotion of nutrition-sensitive agriculture and sustainable consumption through social and behavior change activities, reaching more than 5,500 participants. Health personnel and local government staff were oriented on nutrition, and school children were engaged on healthy consumption practices. In addition, nutrition gardens were supported, radio jingles were aired, and information, education, and communication (IEC) materials were distributed. Nutrition support was also</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Interview with Rural Women (Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women Module)</li> </ul>

		provided through Nutrition Field Schools, and household decision-making was strengthened through participatory gender and leadership (FEBL-GALS) sessions. These combined interventions improved household dietary diversity, directly contributing to the overachievement of the target.	
<b>1.3 Decrease in the proportion of households spending 65% or more of their monthly budget on food (Household Food Expenditure Share)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 3540  <b>2025 Target:</b> -5%  <b>Endline Target:</b> 10% decrease from baseline</p>	-41%	<p><b>-36%  ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> This outcome is primarily due to households producing their own vegetables and nutritious foods, which reduced their expenditure on food. In addition, overall household income increased, further contributing to the substantial reduction in food-related spending.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Household survey (Household Food Expenditure Share (FES) module)</li> </ul>
<b>1.4 Decrease in rate of rural women farmers' post-harvest losses over time (disaggregated by crops)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b>  Pulses: 54 kg  Other vegetables: 41 kg  Paddy : 191 kg  Wheat: 66 kg  Nuts/Seeds: 14 kg  <b>2025 Target:</b> -4%  <b>Endling Target:</b> 8% decrease from baseline (average target of 5 crops)</p>	<p>Pulses: 52 kg (-4%)  Other vegetables: 40 kg (-2%)  Paddy: 140 kg (-27%)  Wheat: 57 kg (-14%)  Nuts/Seeds: 14 kg (-0%)  Average: 61 kg (-9%)</p>	<p><b>-5%  ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement is attributed to improved post-harvest handling and storage practices, which significantly reduced losses in cereals and pulses, including paddy, wheat, and other legumes, as well as nuts and seeds. In 2025, the project primarily focused on production and supply chain management of vegetables. From 2026 onwards, the focus will shift toward sensitization and strategies to minimize post-harvest losses of vegetables and fruits. These combined efforts have</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual Interview with Rural Women (Smallholder Agriculture Market Support (SAMS) Sub-Module B1)</li> </ul>

		enhanced food availability at the household level, contributing directly to the observed reduction.	
<b>1.1.1: Increase in the proportion of rural women with access to productive resources as measured by the relevant WEAI (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 2,059</i>  <i>2025 Target: +8%</i>  <i>Endline: 30% increase from baseline</i></p>	56%	<p><b>+48%</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> This reflects substantial empowerment of rural women through improved access to productive resources. Women gained greater access to land, often through family agreements or leasing arrangements, and expanded ownership of large and small livestock, poultry, and mechanized farm equipment via on-farm enterprises and support from CHSC and financial services. While non-mechanized farm equipment showed modest gains and fishponds/fishing equipment remained limited due to accessibility barriers, women also increased access to large and small consumer durables, cell phones, and other household assets, driven by higher income, knowledge, and empowerment. Collectively, these improvements across multiple resources explain the remarkable overachievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI (control over productive resources module))</li> </ul>
<b>1.1.2: Increase in the number of rural women with access to climate-smart inputs, assets and natural resources for agricultural production such as high-quality drought resistant seeds, tools and machinery, water and irrigation, land, greenhouses/ polytunnels (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: +75%</i>  <i>Endline Target: 100% increase from baseline</i></p>	81%	<p><b>+6%</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small Holder Smaller Support Agriculture Survey (Individual Interview)</li> </ul>

<b>1.1.3: Increase in the number of rural women adopting improved value -chain specific, climate-smart and indigenous agricultural production techniques (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0  <b>2025 Target:</b> +70%  <b>Endline Target:</b> 75% increase from baseline</p>	<p>88%</p>	<p><b>+18% ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Climate-resilient and indigenous agricultural practices were promoted, including the use of green manure (Dhaicha), preparation and application of organic bio-inputs such as Jhol Mal, improved crop management techniques, and efficient soil fertility management. These interventions enhanced women farmers’ knowledge and skills, enabling them to adopt more sustainable and climate-resilient production methods.</p> <p>As a result, a growing number of rural women have adopted improved agricultural practices, contributing to higher productivity, better soil health, and more resilient and sustainable farming systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (SAMS Module)</li> </ul>
<b>1.1.4: Increase in the number of rural women with access to time- and labor-saving technologies (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 0  <b>2025 Target:</b> 5%  <b>Endline Target:</b> 10% increase from baseline</p>	<p>31%</p>	<p><b>+26% ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Custom Hiring Service Centers equipped with 19 different agricultural tools and machinery were established, enabling rural women farmers to access time- and labour-saving technologies at an affordable cost, without the need for individual ownership.</p> <p>Access to these mechanized tools has significantly reduced the time and physical labour required for key agricultural operations, improved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Holder Smaller Support Agriculture Survey (Individual Interview)</li> </ul>

		<p>farming efficiency, and allowed women to allocate more time to other productive and household activities. This intervention has contributed to increased adoption of labour-saving technologies among rural women and strengthened their participation in agricultural production and income-generating activities.</p>	
<p><b>Output 1.2: Rural women have enhanced skills and capacities to increase nutritious food production, food quality and local food security reserves; reduce food losses and waste; and improve household diets</b></p>			
<p><b>1.2.1: Increase in the number of rural women and men with improved skills and capacity for nutrition, health and food safety disaggregated by sex (% increase over baseline)</b></p>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: +65%</i>  <i>Endline Target: 75% increase from baseline</i></p>	<p>85%</p>	<p><b>+20%  ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Nutrition-sensitive interventions targeted pregnant and lactating women and reached a large number of rural women through field schools and awareness sessions on nutritious crop production and sustainable consumption. Vulnerable households benefited from nutrition gardens, radio messages, and distribution of information, education, and communication (IEC) materials. Participatory sessions also fostered reflection on livelihoods and economic empowerment. These combined efforts significantly improved household dietary diversity, contributing to the substantial overachievement of the target.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with the women beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2.2: Increase in the number of rural women accessing extension services, including weather information (% increase over baseline)</b></p>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: +70%</i>  <i>Endline Target: 90% increase from baseline</i></p>	<p>93%</p>	<p><b>+23%  ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> A combined approach was applied to increase rural</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (SAMS Module)</li> </ul>

		women's access to extension and weather-based information. Face-to-face orientations were delivered, follow-up sessions were organized, and lead farmers were trained on mobile application services. This strengthened skills, improved confidence, and encouraged regular use of extension and weather information, resulting in the overachievement of the target.	
<b>1.2.3: Increase in the number of rural women utilizing improved and value-chain specific post-harvest handling and storage practices (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: +30%</i> <i>Endline Target: 60% increase from baseline</i>	28%	<b>-2%</b> <b>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> The number of rural women adopting improved post-harvest handling and storage practices was slightly below the target. This shortfall of 2% is primarily due to the limited distribution of essential tools, such as weighing machines and crates, which are critical for implementing value-chain-specific practices. As fewer beneficiaries received these tools, overall adoption of the improved practices fell just short of the target.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (SAMS Module)</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 2: Rural women's income, decent work and economic autonomy increased to secure their livelihoods and build resilience</b>			
<b>2.1: Percentage increase in rural women's average annual farm incomes</b>			
<i>Baseline: NPR 13,428 (USD 103)</i> <i>2025 Target: +10%</i> <i>Endline Target: 20% increase from baseline</i>	105% (USD 211)	<b>+95%</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> Through the timely provision of quality seeds, agricultural inputs, and technical training on improved farming practices, rural women farmers increased crop yields and diversified production. The higher production not only improved household	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (SAMS Module)</li> </ul>

		food availability but also enabled women to sell surplus produce in local markets, enhancing income-generating opportunities. This contributed to higher average annual farm income, strengthened economic resilience, and reinforced women's role in household decision-making.	
<b>2.2: Percentage increase in rural women's average annual off-farm incomes (including from micro-enterprises and wage employment promoted by the project), disaggregated by employment type</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b>  <i>Wage: NPR 39,225 (USD 300)</i>  <i>Self-employment: NPR 39,748 (USD 304)</i>  <b>2025 Target:</b> +5% (average)  <b>Endline Target:</b> 15% increase from baseline (average)</p>	<p>Wage: 46% (USD 437)  Self-employment: 49% (USD 454)  Average: USD 446 (48%)</p>	<p><b>+43%  ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The substantial overachievement resulted from a synergistic approach that strengthened women's business planning, household decision-making, and access to financial services through participatory FEBL/GALS sessions. Complementary support provided business skills training, start-up assistance, and market linkages, enabling rural women to adopt off-farm activities, improve enterprise management, and increase income-generating opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women (non-farm employment and income survey module)</li> </ul>
<b>2.3: Increase in the proportion of rural women with control over the use of their income and expenditures as measured by the relevant WEAI</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 4345  <b>2025 Target:</b> NA  <b>Endline Target:</b> 15% increase from baseline</p>	+6%	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI Module – Autonomy in Decision-Making)</li> </ul>
<b>2.4: Household redistribution in the average number of daily hours spent on unpaid care and domestic work, by sex and age (adapted from SDG 5.4.1) as measured by the relevant WEAI (Gender gap in hours per day)</b>			
<p><b>Baseline:</b> Men: 1.6 hours;  Women: 4 hours.  <b>2025 Target:</b> NA</p>	<p>About half of women (50%) reported having enough time for sleeping/resting,</p>	<p><b>NA</b></p> <p>This indicator is measured only at baseline and endline as part of the pro-WEAI index.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI Module – Time Allocation)</li> </ul>

<i>Endline Target: Men: 3 hours; Women: 3 hours</i>	personal care, leisure/recreational activities, and income-generating activities over the past month/six months.		
<b>Output 2.1: Rural women have enhanced capacities, skills and time for entrepreneurship and access to markets and value chains</b>			
<b>2.1.1 Increase in the number of rural women with improved financial literacy and/or entrepreneurship skills (% of increase over baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0 2025 Target: +73% Endline Target: 100% increase from baseline</i>	73%	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interviews with the women beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.2: Increase in the number of rural women who initiate new agribusiness and/or self-employment activities, disaggregated by sector (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0 2025 Target: +18% Endline Target: 27% increase from baseline</i>	77%	<p><b>+59% ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The over-achievement resulted from strong synergy as reflected in the MTR. Women's planning and decision-making were strengthened through FEBL/GALS sessions, while technical skills were enhanced, start-up support provided, and connections to markets facilitated. This combined approach empowered rural women, enabling them to initiate new agribusiness and self-employment activities beyond the target.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employment and Business Survey (Individual Interview)</li> <li>PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.3: Increase in the number of rural women with improved physical access to markets, processing and/or storage facilities (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 1962 2025 Target: +18% Endline Target: 30% increase from baseline</i>	42%	<p><b>+24% ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Market access for rural women was significantly strengthened by linking them to community schools and local weekly</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pro-WEAI Module - MODULE G7- MOBILITY</li> </ul>

		markets. Their access to real-time market price information was improved through a mobile-based application. In addition, the construction of an agriculture collection center provided a reliable aggregation point, enhancing their ability to reach larger markets. These efforts led to outcomes that exceeded target expectations.	
<b>2.1.4 Optional: Increase in the number of rural women-owned micro-enterprises or producer organizations engaged in formal partnership, agreements and/or contracts with public and private entities (% increase over baseline), by sector</b>			
<i>Baseline: 212</i> <i>2025 Target: +1700</i> <i>Endline Target: 1850 increase from baseline</i>	1091	<b>-609</b> <b>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> Efforts focused on strengthening women’s planning and decision-making through FEBL/GALS sessions, while technical skills were enhanced, start-up support provided, and connections to markets facilitated. This combined approach enabled many rural women to initiate new agribusiness and self-employment activities, though the overall target was not fully reached.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion with groups</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.5 (Optional) Increase in value (USD) of sales by rural women-owned micro-enterprises or producer organizations</b>			
<i>Baseline: 105</i> <i>2025 Target: +10%</i> <i>Endline Target: 15% increase from baseline</i>	190%	<b>+180%</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> Household planning and decision-making were strengthened through FEBL/GALS sessions, while complementary support improved skills, provided start-up assistance, and linked households to markets. This coordinated approach enhanced empowerment, addressed resource gaps, and enabled households to adopt suitable livelihood practices and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Holder Smaller Support Agriculture Survey (Individual Interview)</li> </ul>

		manage small enterprises more effectively, leading to a substantial increase in sales.	
<b>Output 2.2: Rural women have increased access to decent work, including off-farm work and social protection</b>			
<b>2.2.1 Increase in the number of rural women who enter employment in the formal labour market (% increase over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: +15%</i>  <i>Endline Target: 20% increase from baseline</i></p>	27%	<p><b>+12%</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> Household planning and decision-making were strengthened through FEBL/GALS sessions, while complementary support improved skills, provided start-up assistance, and connected households to markets. This coordinated approach enhanced empowerment, addressed resource gaps, and enabled households to adopt suitable livelihood practices and manage small enterprises more effectively, supporting a higher number of rural women to enter formal employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (non-farm employment)</li> </ul>
<b>2.2.2: Increase in number of rural women covered by social protection systems (% change over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: 15%</i>  <i>Endline Target: 25% increase from baseline</i></p>	50%	<p><b>+35%</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> 2025 plan was to support ~825 rural women who were eligible for Government social security allowances but were not registered because of limited knowledge or technical barriers. However, the project oriented all rural women on available social protection services and linked them to additional schemes such as nutrition allowances and education allowances. This expanded access beyond the planned target and resulted in higher achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with the women beneficiaries</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>

<b>2.2.3 Increase in number of government entities and/or companies that develop and/or implement gender-responsive procurement and employment policies</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: 1</i>  <i>Endline Target: 1</i></p>	37	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+36</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from linking 38 women's groups with 37 community schools to supply agricultural products under the Home-Grown School Feeding approach for the mid-day meal programme. Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed between the 37 schools and women's groups formalized these arrangements, contributing to a substantial increase in the number of entities implementing gender-responsive procurement practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KII</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2.3: Rural women have increased access to gender-responsive financial and business development services; ICTs and other products and services</b>			
<b>2.3.1: Increase in the number of rural women using gender-responsive financial services and products (including savings, credit, and insurance), disaggregated by type and total amount (USD) (% change over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 40</i>  <i>2025 Target: 262</i>  <i>Endline Target: 2000 increase from baseline</i></p>	1489	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+1227</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from increased access to financial services, with women using savings and credit from banks and financial institutions and insurance from cooperatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with the women beneficiaries</li> </ul>
<b>2.3.2: Increase in the number of rural women who access and use new business knowledge, products, services and technologies for improved market access (% change over baseline)</b>			
<p><i>Baseline: 0</i>  <i>2025 Target: +18%</i>  <i>Endline Target: +27% increase from baseline</i></p>	57%	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+39%</b>  <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from strengthened market access, including</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with the women beneficiaries</li> </ul>

		linking women to community schools and local weekly markets, providing access to real-time market price information via a mobile application, and establishing an agriculture collection center as a reliable aggregation point. These measures enabled rural women to reach larger markets and apply new business knowledge and technologies effectively.	
<b>2.3.3 Number of community savings and credit groups established and functional (additional number compared to baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 40</i> <i>Endline Target: +50 increase from baseline</i>	120	<b>+80</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from group management and strengthening trainings, which provided guidance on savings practices. In 2025, 80 groups were covered through this activity, combined with 40 groups from 2024 out of 80 trained where information was debriefed, contributing to a total of 120 functional groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 3: Rural women’s voice and agency increased for full and equal participation and leadership in their households, communities, organizations and governance systems</b>			
<b>3.1 Increase in the proportion of rural women with decision-making power over production and productive assets as measured by the WEAI (‘Instrumental Agency’ in Pro-WEAI)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 4730</i> <i>2025 Target: NA</i> <i>Endline Target: 3% increase from baseline</i>	+5% (Censored inadequacy headcount ratio 6%, Uncensored inadequacy headcount ratio 4%)	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI Module – Access to Productive Capital and Autonomy in Decision-Making)</li> </ul>
<b>3.2 Increase in the proportion of rural women with empowerment in the leadership domain as measured by the WEAI (‘Collective Agency’ in Pro-WEAI)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 1320</i> <i>2025 Target: NA</i>	8%	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual interview with rural women ( Pro-WEAI</li> </ul>

<i>Endline Target: 5% increase</i>			Module - MODULE G5 Group Membership )
<b>3.3 Increase in proportion of women in elected local governance structures</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: +14%</i> <i>Endline Target: 15% increase from baseline</i>	14%	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro-WEAI Module - MODULE G5 Group Membership</li> <li>• PUNO/Implementing partner reports</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 (Optional) Increase in the proportion of participating women who are empowered or whose achievements are at least as high as men in their households according to the WEAI Gender Parity Index</b>			
<i>Baseline: 2695 (GPI - 0.86)</i> <i>2025 Target: NA</i> <i>Endline Target: 20% increase from baseline</i>	NA	NA: Measured every 5 years (baseline and endline)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI Module GP Index)</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3.1: Rural women have increased skills and capacity to participate in local governance and decision-making structures</b>			
<b>3.1.1: Increase in the proportion of women members in community decision-making structures, including producer organizations, cooperatives, unions and local food security reserves</b>			
<i>Baseline: 660</i> <i>2025 Target: 50%</i> <i>Endline Target: 60% increase from baseline</i>	52%	<b>+2% ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interview with rural women (Pro-WEAI Module-Group Membership)</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>3.1.2: Increase in the proportion of women leaders in community decision-making bodies, producer organizations, cooperatives, unions and local food security reserves</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: +10%</i> <i>Endline Target: 15% increase from baseline</i>	10%	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGD with rural women's groups</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>Output 3.2: Organizational capacities and social capital strengthened to form, participate in and sustain gender-responsive producer organizations, cooperatives and unions, savings groups and self-help groups</b>			
<b>3.2.1: Increase in the number of informal rural women's groups which become formally registered producer organizations, cooperatives and unions</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 160</i> <i>Endline Target: 200</i>	169	<b>+9 ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGD with rural women's group</li> </ul>

		All 169 are women-led producer organizations that are formally registered with local government offices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>3.2.2: Increase in the number of producer organizations, cooperatives and unions that adopt a gender policy/ strategy/ training/ women's quota for their board, etc.</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 2</i> <i>Endline Target: 6</i>	10	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+8</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from strong uptake by cooperatives following sensitization on GESI policies and strategies, encouraging them to adopt gender-responsive measures more broadly than anticipated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FGD with rural women's group</li> <li>PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>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</b>			
<b>4.1 Number and type of revised or adopted national or regional legal frameworks, policies, or strategies that promote, enforce and monitor gender equality in agriculture, national food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness, and economic and labour systems (% change from baseline) (adapted from SDG 5.1.1)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 1</i> <i>Endline Target: 3</i>	6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>+5</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b></p> <p><b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from the activation of the previously dormant GESI committee in 2025. Given that 2025 was the mid-phase of the project, six policies and frameworks were drafted to lay the groundwork for impact, which is expected to be observed in 2026 and 2027.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KII with stakeholders</li> <li>PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>4.2 Increase in the number of programme countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment in the agricultural sector (adapted from SDG 5.c.1) (% change from baseline)</b>			
<i>Baseline: Yes</i> <i>2025 Target: Description and number of the policy/programmes</i> <i>Endline Target: 1 Federal Ministry of Ministry of Finance</i>	Yes	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UN Women's Annual country reports</li> <li>National Government Reports related to the National strategy of economic and</li> </ul>

<i>(Line Ministry Budget Information System)</i>			social empowerment for women and girls in rural area, • KII with national stakeholders
<b>Output 4.1: Capacities of policymakers and other relevant stakeholders enhanced to design, implement and track gender-responsive policies, strategies, legal frameworks and budgets</b>			
<b>4.1.1: Increase in the number of national women’s machineries and policymakers with capacities to advocate for gender-responsive policies and budgets</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0 2025 Target: 150 Endline Target: 200</i>	169	<b>+19 ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from engaging not only local government stakeholders but also federal and provincial government stakeholders in 2025, expanding the reach of capacity-building efforts beyond the target set.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KII with Stakeholders</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.2: Increase in the number of rural women engaged in local and national-level government meetings on policy formulation, budget allocation and monitoring for gender commitments</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0 2025 Target: 300 Endline Target: 400</i>	323	<b>+23 ACHIEVED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interviews with women beneficiaries</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>4.1.3. (optional) Increase in the number of stakeholders with increased capacities in the collection, analysis, use and reporting on gender statistics including sex disaggregated data on agriculture and economic opportunities for rural women</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0 2025 Target: 15 Endline Target: 15</i>	5	<b>-10 PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> The target initially included institutions at the federal and provincial levels. Following the exercise, it became clear that capacity-building on collection, analysis, use, and reporting of gender statistics, including sex-disaggregated data on agriculture and economic opportunities for rural women is most relevant at the local government level. Going forward, efforts will focus on strengthening local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KII with stakeholders</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>

		government stakeholders' knowledge and skills, and the target needs to be revised accordingly.	
<b>Output 4.2: Capacity of rural women and their organizations increased to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels</b>			
<b>4.2.1: Increase in the number of rural women who demonstrate increased awareness and understanding of legal rights and relevant policy mechanisms</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 3500</i> <i>Endline Target: 4,500</i>	4622	<b>+1,122</b> <b>ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> The overachievement resulted from extensive awareness-raising and capacity-building activities, combined with effective outreach and spillover effects that reached more rural women than initially targeted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Interview with women beneficiaries</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>4.2.2: Increase in the proportion of women's groups linked to advocacy networks and alliances, by network focus (e.g., gender, climate action, etc.)</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 10%</i> <i>Endline Target: 20%</i>	5%	<b>-5%</b> <b>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> Women's groups engaged in networking and coordination activities with advocacy networks and alliances, receiving orientation and buy-in from these platforms. While these efforts laid the foundation, further work is planned in 2026 to strengthen linkages and expand connections to relevant networks for remaining groups as set for 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGD with women groups</li> <li>• PUNOs/ Implementing partners' progress reports</li> </ul>
<b>Output 4.3: Rural women's economic empowerment strengthened through regional and global policy dialogues and processes</b>			
<b>4.3.1: Increase in the number of policy briefs and/or knowledge products published on rural women's economic empowerment topics and measurement strategies</b>			
<i>Baseline: 0</i> <i>2025 Target: 24</i> <i>Endline Target: 36</i>	22	<b>-2</b> <b>PARTIALLY ACHIEVED</b> <b>Reason for Variance:</b> Most knowledge products were completed in 2025. The	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link to published policy briefs and/or knowledge products</li> </ul>

		remaining outputs-a video and the Technical Note on GTA will be finalized in 2026. The GTA Technical Note is currently in draft form and in the process of completion by IFAD.	
<b>4.3.2: Increase in the number of regional and global policy dialogues on rural women's economic empowerment</b>			
<i>Baseline: NA</i> <i>2025 Target: NA</i> <i>Endline Target: NA</i>			