

JOINT PROGRAMME ON:
**Accelerating Progress towards the
Economic Empowerment of Rural Women**



Decentralized Evaluation

Global End-term Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda from 2014 to 2020

Final Evaluation Report

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A report for FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP
Evaluation Manager: Ashley Hollister, FAO

Prepared by

Marlène Buchy, Team Leader
Muriel Visser, Zoe Driscoll, Elizabeth Hodson, Liam Bluer, Sarah Candy and Jim Grabham



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Acronyms

ADS	Agriculture Development Strategy
BALI	Business Action Learning for Innovation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Kinds of Discrimination against Women
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEQAS	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System
EM	Evaluation Matrix
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
EQ	Evaluation Question
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFW	Food for Work
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GC	Global Coordinator
GCU	Global Coordination Unit
GESI	Gender and Social Inclusion
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HH	Household
HQ	Headquarters
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IP	Implementing Partner
ISC	International Steering Committee
JP	Joint Programme
JP RWEE	Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
MAGA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food / Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación, Guatemala
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINECO	Ministry of Economy / Ministerio de Economía, Guatemala
MoALD	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Nepal
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NC	National Coordinator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
Nrs	Nepalese Rupees
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PO	Producer Organization
PRODENORTE	Sustainable Rural Development Programme of IFAD for the Northern Region, Guatemala
QS	Quality Support
RBA	Rome-Based Agency

RERP	Rural Enterprises Remittances Programme
RuSACCO	Rural Savings and Credit Cooperatives
RWF	Rwandan Franc
SA	Stakeholder Analysis
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEPREM	Presidential Secretariat for Women
SEGEPLAN	Presidential Secretariat for Planning and Programming
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SHG	Self-Help Group
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TF	Trust Fund
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UN-SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls
USD	United States Dollar
VfM	Value for Money
VSLA	Village Saving and Loan Association
WEAI	Women's Economic Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

Executive Summary

Introduction

- S1. This report presents the findings of the Global End-term Evaluation of The Joint Programme on “Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women” (JP RWEE). JP RWEE is a global initiative that aims to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. Jointly implemented since 2012 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (UN Women) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, the JP RWEE builds on each agency’s comparative advantages to improve the status of women in rural areas.
- S2. The main objectives of the evaluation are to:
- Evaluate the outcomes of the JP RWEE at the global and country levels and to identify lessons learned, capture good practices and generate knowledge from the first phase to inform a potential subsequent phase of the JP RWEE, including identifying what packages of strategies and interventions work well and those that need improvement.
 - Assess the adequacy of the governance structure of the Joint Programme, including the quality of the inter-agency coordination mechanism that has been established at the global and country levels.
 - Identify lessons to strengthen management of the JP RWEE and to assess the extent to which participating agencies, through the Joint Programme, have effectively positioned themselves as key players in contributing to the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to make recommendations for addressing rural women’s food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and participation in decision-making structures, as well as creating a gender responsive policy environment.
- S3. As indicated in the Terms of Reference (ToR) (page 8) the evaluation is an important element of the overall accountability and learning framework of the JP RWEE, as listed in the Indicative Framework on “Strengthening Knowledge Management and Communication in Managing the JP RWEE”. The end-term evaluation will provide a systematic assessment of JP RWEE across countries at the close of the current funding cycle. The results of this analysis will feed into the discussions between partner agencies and development partners as they assess the progress of their joint efforts through JP RWEE as well as inform the design and reach of a potential second phase of the programme.
- S4. Scope: The evaluation covers the implementation of the JP RWEE in seven countries over the period from October 2014 to 2020. Three of the countries (Nepal, Niger and Guatemala) are country case studies with primary data collection at the beneficiary level and the other four countries are desk-based studies.
- S5. Stakeholders: The Technical Advisory Board (TAC) and the International Steering Committee (ISC) members, which include representatives of the four agencies, countries, beneficiaries and the donors, are the main audience of the evaluation.
- S6. The JP RWEE was designed to tackle the inequalities experienced by rural women in the economic sphere. It was implemented in seven countries (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda), and was launched in October 2012.
- S7. The JP RWEE benefits from the technical knowledge and policy assistance of FAO in the area of food and agriculture, the experience of IFAD in co-financing rural investment programmes, promoting gender inclusion through community-based approaches,¹ and addressing gender at the household level, the innovations of WFP in food assistance, and the global championship of UNW in gender equality and its strong partnerships with global, regional and national mechanisms for gender equality and women’s empowerment.²

















¹ For example, the implementation of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) in IFAD-supported projects.

² The JP RWEE annual consolidated report 2019.

Methodology

- S8. The evaluation design was theory-based, relying on several tools: a Theory of Change (ToC), the Stakeholder Analysis (SA) and the Evaluation Matrix (EM). The ToC was constructed to help the team to understand how the links between interventions and expected outcomes were envisaged and to identify the key underlying assumptions; the SA helped to construct lists of external and internal stakeholders at all levels; and the EM provided the structure for the evaluation, detailing the sub-questions and indicators related to the evaluation questions and included information about sources of information and tools used to collect and analyse primary and secondary data.
- S9. The evaluation objectives were evaluated against the following criteria: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability.
- S10. The data collection process included a number of different steps: country and global level document reviews, key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussions (FGD) in the three country case studies (see details Table S1).

Table S1 Data collection

The data collection process included a number of different steps:																
	Global		Ethiopia		Guatemala		Kyrgyzstan		Liberia		Nepal		Niger		Rwanda	
																
Data and document review of the seven countries																
KII	15	5	3	7	24	13	15	6	4	7	20	28	12	33	6	9
FGD					67	0					78	22	69	78		
An on-line survey administered to UN agency staff, national stakeholders (government and partner agencies' representatives) with a focus on the governance of JP RWEE received 113 responses (54% response rate).																

S11. **The evaluation used participatory approaches.** Engagement with relevant stakeholders was sought throughout the evaluation process and included stakeholder input in the inception report and feedback sessions. For all countries the evaluation team conducted presentations of initial findings and recommendations to each of the seven countries, as well as of global findings in a presentation to the TAC and ISC. This validated the initial findings before finalizing the PowerPoint presentations and writing the final evaluation report.

S12. **Gender equality and equity considerations:** The evaluation used a gender lens in answering the evaluation questions ensuring as far as possible a gender balance in respondents. Gender equality and equity considerations were included by assessing the availability of sex disaggregated data, and the participation of men and women in the programme activities. During fieldwork the team respected social norms, whilst at the same time providing space for women to express themselves freely. This was achieved through organizing women only group discussions. Whilst organizing interviews with beneficiaries the team ensured the planning of visits at times and places culturally suitable for the beneficiaries.

S13. Limitations on the evaluation process included:

Challenges

- Travel constraints due to COVID-19 restrictions
- The 2020 hurricane in Guatemala led to revisions in the evaluation schedule and reallocation of roles within the evaluation team
- Poor connectivity in all countries for remote interviews, particularly Niger.

Limitations

- High staff turnover amongst government staff and JP RWEE staff in some countries limited historical insights, partly mitigated through project documentation
- Gaps in documentation and output and outcome data prevented robust trend analysis and comparison between countries or assessing effectiveness of different packages of interventions

- Results from the Women's Economic Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) study were not available and prevented the team from triangulating qualitative results on empowerment with quantitative results.

Key findings

S14. The key findings of the evaluation team are summarized below, structured according to the main evaluation questions:

EQ 1 – How responsive was the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders' needs, as well as national and global development goals and policies? (Relevance)

The JP RWEE has been highly relevant. It has been aligned to the national policy framework in each of the countries where Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) is recognized as an objective or an important component of agricultural development. It is also very closely aligned to the needs of rural women involved in the programme.

S15. JP RWEE is aligned with the key national policies on gender equality and women's economic empowerment and plans at country level, as well as broader international commitments and frameworks, including the SDGs and Agenda 2030. The contribution of the JP RWEE to SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 17 is clear and demonstrates strong alignment. This alignment is seen as a key component for ensuring the success and ownership of participating countries.

S16. The JP RWEE was grounded in a participatory planning process at the global level, involving governments, UN agencies, civil society and other stakeholders, which ensured an understanding of the needs of rural women from the start. At the country level, the JP RWEE aligns with beneficiary needs, and programmes are designed through community engagement, needs assessments and with participation from wider civil society and government stakeholders.

EQ 2 – To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's social and economic empowerment across countries? (Coherence)

Internal coherence: There has been strong internal coherence between the agencies and between the JP RWEE objectives and agency mandates. The JP RWEE is built on comparative advantages of each agency and addresses the multifaceted issues around WEE and is consistent with local demands and contexts. Working as one has been more challenging and took time to take off initially.

S17. During interviews at global, national and local level, the JP RWEE has been unanimously recognized as a force that created synergy between agencies, and between government organizations and local level community organizations, as exemplified by the case of Niger. This has been validated through the e-survey in which 42 percent of the respondents considered the synergy as a primary positive aspect of the JP RWEE.

S18. JP RWEE is built on the comparative advantages of each agency and addresses the multifaceted issues around WEE and is consistent with local demands and contexts. The evaluation found unanimity on the leverage of the comparative advantages of different institutions to achieve the results and address interlinked areas of women's economic empowerment in an integrated manner.

External coherence: At the organizational level there is a good level of synergy with the agencies developing new partnerships with other United Nations (UN) organizations. However, this has not always translated into synergy on the ground between implementing partners. Though the four agencies target the same beneficiaries, implementing partners do not always work with each other: According to KIIs, implementing partners (IP) in Liberia, Nepal and Guatemala are sometimes working in silos.

EQ 3 – To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results? (Effectiveness)

Individual level

On an individual level the JP RWEE has made a significant contribution to rural women's improved livelihoods in the project countries through improved agricultural practices, linkages to the market, awareness raising and leadership building. There are documented increases in vegetable and livestock production, diet and

nutrition (outcome 1), and income gains in all the countries (Outcome 2). During field visits both women and men reported shifts in social norms such as women being allowed to take work outside the house, or husbands taking on some of the household chores. Women interviewed in the three countries also reported an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem (Outcome 3). Although there has been some progress, there is less evidence of systemic change as this takes longer (Outcome 4).

S19. Results from annual reports corroborated data gathered during key informant interviews at global, national and local levels by the evaluation team and more importantly during group discussions with rural women in Nepal, Niger and Guatemala, confirming positive results in the first three outcome areas. Activities under Outcome 4, influencing policy change, have been more varied in scope and effectiveness depending on the specific country. This outcome is one of the most difficult ones to implement and results take longer to take effect.

S20. Reports from all countries (including from beneficiaries themselves) have indicated that rural households with women involved in the JP RWEE programme have managed to be more resilient to the impacts of COVID-19 because of the increased availability of assets such as additional cash or access to revolving savings or the possibility of selling a goat (Niger) or chickens (Guatemala).

Organizational level

Governance of the JP RWEE has consisted of global and country level steering and technical structures. The National Advisory Committee at country level has supported collaborative programme design, planning and information sharing, progressively ensuring unity and coordination amongst agencies. The global TAC has provided inputs into country-level planning.

S21. The Steering Committee at global and national levels in most countries, which is made up of the four agencies, government and service providers at country level, has had varying levels of activity in the different countries. Whilst it has met regularly it has not always been attended by the same government representatives (e.g. Rwanda) thus limiting the potential for knowledge dissemination and impact at the national level.

S22. Sufficient focus on learning at the national and global level is lacking. Evidence to demonstrate the value and to share good practice beyond the JP RWEE and the effectiveness of certain packages in specific national contexts has been limited. Though there have been briefing notes on lessons learned, in some cases these notes have been more descriptive than providing a robust analysis of the validity of the change pathways of the ToC.

EQ 4 – Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient? (Efficiency)

Agencies have worked together to decide on priorities and deliver against programme results. Nonetheless decision making and funding have remained insufficiently aligned with rhythm and needs of implementation. Differences in disbursement procedures reduced synchronization of delivery and capacity to deliver in line with needs. Working with multiple agencies and implementation partners has aligned with UN reform but efficiency gains could be made. Annual work plans have provided an opportunity for review and learning, with corresponding adjustments, but monitoring overall has suffered from significant weaknesses affecting knowledge management and communication of results.

S23. Though significant efforts were put into mobilization of funding at the start of the JP RWEE there was a significant (more than two-year) delay in mobilizing funds which produced a challenging start in all countries. The amount of funding secured fell considerably short of initial plans which created challenges in terms of rolling out the programme.

S24. Annual allocation of funding by donors, different disbursement rates and procedures, and lack of long-term visibility are found by this evaluation to have affected the achievement of results. Annual work plan cycles affected speed of implementation. These factors were found to have compromised a more coherent and planned response amongst Implementing Agencies and Partners on the ground.³

³ A point also highlighted in Hollister, 2019.

- S25. Monitoring of programme processes and results has been weak with duplicate systems producing additional inefficiencies. The JP RWEE programme document did not include a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan from the start and this has been a significant limitation. For agencies monitoring at country level this has been a double task with agencies having to report internally to their headquarters against corporate indicators and the requirements of their M&E systems and having to comply with the JP RWEE monitoring requirements once these were made clear.
- S26. The JP RWEE prepared a work plan compliance guidance note which included expectations on resource use. In practice, a pragmatic choice was made to divide resources equally between agencies to overcome biases in resources allocation, in part in light of limited funding. In some countries, attempts were made to align funding with priorities of the workplan, although these were only moderately successful.
- S27. The governance structures have been a critical component of the JP RWEE design and support to implementation. Technical coordination at global and country levels has improved and became more efficient over time, in part through dedicated staff positioned in the JP RWEE. National Steering Committees (NSCs) and the ISC have functioned below expectations in terms of providing guidance on expenditure and fund allocation. Analysis of costs and cost-efficiency has not received attention. Coordinating among four different agencies at technical level and in implementation results in transaction costs.

EQ 5 – What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will remain for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life? (Sustainability)

Selected elements of the JP RWEE show signs of sustainability that are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme. The savings groups that have been established through JP RWEE emerge as a powerful transformative element of the programme with considerable likelihood of being sustained. Sustainability remains challenging for activities that require sizeable investments, activities that remunerate women for their work, and those that require capacity to purchase inputs. In addition, sustainability is challenging where implementation partners have key roles and where government services cannot take over these roles.

- S28. Replication of the JP RWEE has been occurring at a modest scale in most contexts. This has happened through elements of the programme being taken over by partners (including government). It has also taken place through the design of other projects that integrate lessons from the JP RWEE, as has been done by subgroups of JP RWEE partners. These efforts do not yet constitute a sufficient guarantee of sustainability.
- S29. The extent to which activities are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme varies by country and by activity. The extent to which government and other actors can provide a comprehensive range of services to support transformation remains fragile and is critical to sustainability.
- S30. The operational arrangements for the programme have been set up specifically for the JP RWEE and have been replicated in other joint programmes as a good practice. While some ways of working have been adopted by partners, the governance arrangements have not been embedded in national structures that will continue beyond the duration of the programme. Opportunities exist to establish better linkages with existing coordination structures, both within government and within the UN reform.
- S31. All JP RWEE countries are experiencing the effects of climate change, with some facing particularly high levels of vulnerability. Environmental practices have been selectively pursued in some of the countries and by some agencies but have not been consistently incorporated in the design of interventions.

EQ 6 – What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)

The synergy, the complementarity and effective national coordination have been the main contributing factors to delivering results and sustainability. The main hindering internal factor has been issues surrounding funding which has impacted the delivery of activities, turnover of staff in some cases, and the capacity to invest in knowledge management and learning. Whilst a conducive policy and government interest have been contributing external factors, natural disasters (including pandemics) and political instability have hindered progress.

S32. Lessons for relevance

- A conducive policy environment for joint programmes and WEE interventions is paramount.
- The inclusion of all stakeholders at the design stage ensures a higher degree of relevance. In countries where there has been higher involvement from the start, the outcomes in terms of agency synergies and partnerships with governments have been higher.

S33. Lessons for coherence

- The role of the national coordinator to foster, nurture and facilitate coherence at the onset and then to maintain a fluid communication between the actors is critical. The JP RWEE national coordinator needs to be a full-time position dedicated to the programme.
- Despite commitment to UN reform, agencies which have different procedures and mandates face internal hurdles to work smoothly in a joint programme. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in developing relationships between agency staff – especially the JP RWEE focal points – to address these challenges openly.
- The importance of securing multi-annual funding has been demonstrated by the JP RWEE as it will stabilize staff and allow for more strategic, multiyear planning.

S34. Lessons for effectiveness

- The approach to working through groups which can become legally recognized structures (e.g. cooperatives) and increasing women's participation in those groups is important to give women's work legitimacy and recognition. These groups can then become formal platforms for women to claim their rights, approach local government for support or have more visibility as economic actors.
- The synergy developed between agencies at the global and national level must translate into synergies on the ground between implementing partners and between local actors and implementing partners. Mechanisms for coordination between implementing partners are needed to ensure benefits of joint programming/planning.
- As social norms, gender imbalance and in particular men's perception of women's roles in society have been hindering factors to women's empowerment, involving men and boys is critical. Men should not feel threatened in their roles and they should see the benefits from changes in women's lives for themselves and their families.

S35. Lessons for efficiency

- Joint programming ensures efficiency if coordination work is shared and activities are not duplicated. This requires strong coordination and bottom-up planning.
- Annual funding cycles reduce efficiency, as recruiting new IPs or renewing their contacts is costly. Annual funding also stops programme staff from being able to concentrate on the longer-term vision of the programme. Insecurity of funding reduces employment security for staff and is more likely to result in a high staff turnover.
- An efficient way of allocating resources between the agencies is based on unit costs of activities and dependent on bottom-up planning.

S36. Lessons for sustainability

- A clear vision of sustainability needs to guide the efforts of the programme from the start.
- Investing in government ownership at the sub-national level when implementing activities contributes to sustainability and needs to be fostered.
- Linkages between local actors – local municipalities, line agencies, cooperatives or community-based organizations – are important to develop local ownership of the various processes.

Recommendations

S37. The findings and conclusions of this evaluation led to the evaluation team making the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. At the start of the second phase, the JP RWEE should consolidate support to the same women and continue to strengthen outcomes. The second phase should also allow for the expansion of the approaches and strategies to a larger group of beneficiaries. This will create a critical mass of resilient and sufficiently empowered women who can become catalysts for change in their communities and will extend the benefits to other women and communities.			
Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Use the second phase of the programme to consolidate transformative change for the women who benefited from the first phase	TAC	As part of the design of the second phase	High
Explore ways to involve men and youth in ways that will strengthen support to women's empowerment	National Advisory Committee (NAC) supported by TAC	As part of the design of the second phase	High
In the second phase of the programme find/develop mechanisms to scale up within the countries	National Advisory Committee (NAC) supported by TAC	Start in third quarter of second phase	High
Explore, based on lessons learned, the possibility to expand from single JP RWEE countries to other countries in the same region	ISC/TAC	After year 1 in the second phase	Medium
Rationale: Transformative change is a long-term process. The JP RWEE has been able to bring about important changes for women but these need more time to be consolidated. Expanding in a regional level would allow lessons to be learned and shared between similar cultural and geographical contexts.			

Recommendation 2. JP RWEE should identify and share best practices on building strong partnerships between UN agencies and within countries, to ensure stronger linkages and synergy between all actors.			
Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Recruit full-time national coordinators solely dedicated to the JP RWEE in all countries	TAC to lead panel with TAC and NAC members and Global Coordinator (GC)	As soon as second phase starts	High
Understand better where the bottlenecks to coordination are between implementing partners (NGOs, Government, Private Sector), and foster improvement as well as strengthen the NSC and strengthen linkages with existing country structures such as national level women farmers associations or federations of cooperatives (as relevant in different countries) to ensure coherence and sustainability	NAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Identify indicators for monitoring strength of partnerships and joint delivery and ensure these are integrated in the JP RWEE monitoring for the second phase	Global coordination unit (GCU) with the support of TAC and NAC to contextualize	As part of the design of the second phase	High
Review existing guidelines for the different tasks to be delivered by the ISC and NSC, including for how the NSC will monitor joint delivery. Assess whether adjustments are needed based on the UN Reform process and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)	ISC to lead with cooperation from TAC	As soon as second phase starts	Medium
Use the programme ToC to clearly identify respective roles for each agency and	TAC	As part of the design	High

consider not having all agencies involved in implementation on the ground		of the second phase	
Sign multi-annual agreements with implementation partners and agree for more than one agency to work through one IP as relevant to reduce the loss of expertise and knowledge and ensure continuity	National Coordinator (NC)	Once planning of the second phase has been completed	Medium
The JP RWEE has brought together the experience of four agencies in support of a transformative set of interventions for women. However, there is scope for generating significantly greater efficiency in the joint work, which would enhance results and allow for resources to be better coordinated and delivered to beneficiaries fully aligning with their needs.			

Recommendation 3. JP RWEE country teams should focus on generating learned lessons and evidence and share between countries to have a targeted approach to influence policy.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Strengthening of the function of the National Steering Committee to act as a forum for regular sharing and programme learning	ISC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Facilitate larger intra and inter country workshops and sharing of best practices with government	GCU and NAC	Start planning in second quarter of second phase	Medium
Allocating knowledge management and M&E responsibility at the global level to GCU and at the national level to the lead agency to ensure that it is adequately staffed, funded and prioritized in each country	ISC to lead with NSC	As part of design	High
Review and strengthen all M&E systems to ensure collection of robust data to evaluate effectiveness (and efficiency including cost effectiveness and value for money (VfM))	GCU to lead with TAC /NAC member with with M&E expertise	At the end of this evaluation as preparation for the second phase	High
Collect baseline data in all the countries on gender equality, social inclusion and women's empowerment	NAC lead with technical support of GCU	As soon as second phase starts	High
Develop best practice case studies focusing on lessons from coordination of implementing partners and linkages between government structures, including cooperatives	GCU with support of NSC	At the end of this evaluation as preparation for the second phase	Medium
Increase visibility of the JP RWEE results and activities through a joint website, including showcasing lessons from Phase 1	GCU	In the second quarter of the second phase	Medium
Rationale: The JP RWEE is generating valuable experiences in promoting the JP RWEE across a range of contexts. There are considerable opportunities for enhancing the level of lesson learning and sharing across these different contexts in ways that will benefit a second phase of the programme and enable the JP RWEE to make stronger inroads into influencing policy, which has been the weaker outcome of the programme.			

Recommendation 4. JP RWEE should mainstream and prioritize climate change across all activities, with a focus on capitalizing on the role that women play in leadership and advocacy on climate change to strengthen preparedness and recovery to climate related disasters.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Integrate climate change fully in the design of activities from the start by including climate considerations in the initial assessments and having a strong focus on resilience in programming	NAC	As part of design	High
Continue strengthening synergies with other joint programmes, as well as national programmes, that focus on mainstreaming preparedness and recovery in their plan to build resilience of affected populations	NAC to lead with support from TAC/GCU	As part of design	High

Ensure that baseline and programme monitoring and reporting pay full attention to climate change issues	GCU, to lead with TAC, NC with UN agency and government focal points	As soon as second phase starts	High
Commission external support to explore how best to mainstream at country level, attention to preparedness and recovery in its plans and link to M&E framework	TAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Rationale: JP RWEE countries all face major challenges related to climate change, and rural women who depend on agriculture are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate events. Rural women are also well placed to be part of the solution for climate change through adaptation of resilient agriculture practices. There are opportunities to enhance the attention of the JP RWEE programme to consider activities that address climate change and to mainstream these across the programme.			

Recommendation 5. During the design of future phases of the JP RWEE, longer-term strategic planning should be a priority that includes a stronger prioritization of value addition, market linkages to ensure the gains from the programme can be sustained and to enhance the transformative potential of the JP RWEE in the second phase.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Include in the 5-year plan milestones to be monitored, including for a sustainability strategy, and use annual planning to provide brief updates in line with progress	GCU, in collaboration with NC and TAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Ensure programming for the second phase comprehensively prioritizes stronger investment in market linkages, product transformation, and value adding, drawing from lessons learned in the first phase and prioritizing partnerships that can contribute to this area of work	TAC in coordination with the NAC	As part of design	High
Rationale: The JP RWEE has had strong transformative effects for women at the level of individual self-esteem, self-confidence, and stronger engagement in community processes including leadership. However, fully transformative change will be conditional on women being able to generate sufficient added value from their activities for reinvestment. COVID-19 has shown that women in the programme have mostly been able to manage better than those outside the programme but the long-term effects of the pandemic put these gains at risk and will require support for recovery.			

Recommendation 6. JP RWEE success should be secured by multi-annual funding to ensure that transformative results can be achieved and sustained. Senior management of agencies should advocate for the JP RWEE at headquarter level to prioritize JP RWEE fundraising, as well as at the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRC) in each country.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Develop a resource mobilization strategy and corresponding multi-annual resource mobilization plan and strategy for the second phase of the JP RWEE	GCU with support of TAC/ISC	In parallel with/slightly ahead of design	High
Strengthen the global coordination unit with a specific 1-year consultancy position dedicated to resource mobilization	External professional fundraiser under supervision of the GC	In parallel with design	Medium
Identify gender champions at global and national level from among the broader group of gender stakeholders who can support the mobilization of funding for the second phase of the JP RWEE	ISC, TAC and GCU	As soon as possible – before beginning of phase II	Medium
Convene a global meeting of senior directors of the four agencies to present results of this evaluation, together with the funding case	TAC	Before the start of the design	High

and the multi-annual resource mobilization plan to secure support for resource mobilization.			
<p>Rationale: Funding to the JP RWEE has been allocated annually by donors limiting the longer-term visibility and generating challenges to continuity in terms of staff and implementation partners, among others. The lack of predictable funding has been a major challenge to implementing the programme and, in particular, to bringing about the expected benefits of a joint programme. Multiyear funding is a requisite for making joint programming successful. A professional fundraiser in the first year would help strengthen and implement the fundraising strategy as the GC already has many roles.</p>			

Introduction

1.1. Evaluation features

1. This report presents the findings of the Global End-term Evaluation of The Joint Programme “Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women” (JP RWEE). JP RWEE is a global initiative that aims to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development. Jointly implemented since 2012 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls (UN Women), and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, the JP RWEE builds on each agency’s comparative advantages to improve the status of women in rural areas.
2. This report provides a section on the context of the JP RWEE (section 1.2), which provides an overview of the issues surrounding rural women and their empowerment, and the context in which the programme operates. This is followed by an overview of the JP RWEE with key features of the programme (section 1.3) and the methodology and limitations for the evaluation (section 1.4). Sections 2.1-2.5 present the evaluation findings, structured by evaluation question, followed by section 2.6, which presents the overall conclusions and recommendations. Various annexes are referenced throughout the text and provide further details on methodology and results.
3. The evaluation was commissioned by FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP and serves the dual objectives of accountability and learning. The results of this analysis will feed into the discussions between partner agencies and development partners as they assess the progress of their joint efforts through the JP RWEE as well as inform the design and reach of a potential second phase of the programme. The main objectives of the evaluation are to:⁴
 - Evaluate the outcomes of the JP RWEE at the global and country levels and to identify lessons learned, capture good practices and generate knowledge from the first phase to inform a potential subsequent phase of JP RWEE, including identifying what packages of strategies and interventions work well and those that need improvement
 - Assess the adequacy of the governance structure of the Joint Programme, including the quality of the inter-agency coordination mechanism that has been established at the global and country levels
 - Identify lessons to strengthen the management of the JP RWEE and to assess the extent to which participating agencies, through the Joint Programme, have effectively positioned themselves as key players in contributing to the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to make recommendations for addressing rural women’s food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and participation in decision-making structures, as well as creating a gender responsive policy environment.
4. The evaluation provides a systematic assessment of the JP RWEE across countries at the close of the current funding cycle. It therefore covers activities and outcomes achieved in the six-year period at the global and country level achieved from October 2014 to 2020. The evaluation has also assessed the extent to which JP RWEE has been able to build effective governance and management mechanisms both at the global and country levels.
5. The primary users of the evaluation at the global level are the International Steering Committee (ISC), which oversees the allocation of funds and provides strategic vision and direction, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which includes focal points from the four UN partner agencies, and the Global Coordinator, who provides operational support to the ISC. In each of the seven countries the primary users are the National Steering Committee (NSC), which is co-chaired by the designated government official and the representative from the lead agency, and the JP RWEE Country Team or Technical Working Group (TWG), which includes a National Coordinator who is responsible for the roll-out of the programme at country level. Wider users include the Executive Board of each of the four agencies, national and sub-national governments, implementing partners, private sector partners, donors, direct and indirect beneficiaries of the programme, and wider actors working on women’s economic empowerment.
6. The evaluation has been conducted by a team from Mokoro Ltd. It was led by Dr Marlène Buchy, supported by a core team of experienced evaluators and national consultants, and by data analysis and

⁴ Objectives as provided in the TOR for this evaluation.

research support. An inception phase took place in October and November 2020. This was followed by a data collection and analysis phase between December 2020 and February 2021, including data and document analysis, global and country-level interviews, and country-level fieldwork. Annex 4 shows the overall timeline for the evaluation, and Annex 8 provides individual schedules for country case studies.

1.2. Context

Situation for rural women

7. Rural women have gradually been recognized as key players in supporting food security and nutrition. They are major contributors to the agricultural sector and generate vital income that contributes to rural economies, as well as to the health and well-being of their families and communities. However, rural women have continued to face significant barriers that limit their ability to fully participate in and benefit equally from profitable economic activities. Restricted access to resources and services, such as land, finance, healthcare, education, market information, agricultural inputs and technology, are further compounded by broader systemic barriers, such as the unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work and the exclusion from decision-making structures and processes. These issues are exacerbated during times of conflict, food, economic and/or environmental crises.
8. It is widely recognized that the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women (OECD, 2012) – including in entrepreneurship and participation in the labour force – undermines the realization and enjoyment of their human rights and has negative impacts on country productivity and growth trajectories. Women, who represent only 39 percent of the formal labour force (World Bank, 2020), and particularly rural women, face numerous challenges. Rural contexts are characterized as being remote, less densely populated, with fewer and/or more expensive services given high transaction costs, and where economic activity is largely derived from agriculture. Rural women are also more likely to lack literacy and numeracy skills, preventing them from managing money, engaging in trade, and accessing information. Often, women’s legal rights are either not protected by the law or are constrained by the law, and lack of land rights and tenure security is a major challenge (Williams *et al*, 2020). There is evidence that expanding women’s access to labour markets as well as the realization of their rights and political participation decreases gender inequalities and accelerates development (Duflo, 2012).

Agriculture

9. In all the countries covered by the programme, agriculture – in particular rainfed and subsistence agriculture – remain the dominant agricultural systems and in most, women largely predominate or take a significant responsibility for agricultural production as illustrated in Table 1 below: Nepal (74 percent), Rwanda (71 percent), Ethiopia (57 percent), Niger (70 percent), Liberia (41 percent) – with the exceptions of Guatemala (10 percent) and Kyrgyzstan (19 percent).⁵

Table 1 Employment in agriculture, 2020 (% of total employment)

	Male	Female	Total
Ethiopia	72.6	57.4	65.6
Guatemala	41.8	9.7	31.3
Liberia	45.0	41.1	43.0
Nepal	52.3	74.4	64.5
Niger	78.8	69.5	74.8
Kyrgyzstan	21.0	19.3	20.4
Rwanda	52.0	70.7	61.7
Global	27.2	25.4	26.5

Source: ILOSTAT database. Data retrieved November 2020.

10. Nepalese women are less likely to be recognized as farmers and to be approached by extension officers (JP RWEE, 2016j). This is also the case in Ethiopia where only 51 percent of women take advantage of extension services compared to 62 percent of male farmers (FAO, 2019a). Official statistics on women in the agriculture sector in Liberia are limited; women represent most of the smallholder producers generating approximately 60 percent of the agricultural yields (World Bank, 2010).

⁵ ILOSTAT – Percentage of female employment in agriculture, modelled ILO estimate for 2020. Due to different approaches in how countries define and measure employment status, the size and distribution of employment in agriculture may not be directly comparable between countries. Often self-employed and unpaid family works are excluded from the data, for example. Full limitations are outlined by ILOSTAT.

11. Rainfed agriculture has low productivity and is vulnerable to climate change. Only 7 percent of the surface area of Kyrgyzstan is categorized as arable land (though 80 percent of this land is irrigated). Niger, like Ethiopia, is particularly prone to drought and locust invasion; Nepal is prone to landslides and floods; Guatemala is prone to recurrent disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, landslides and droughts; and Rwanda is vulnerable to climate and weather-related risks, including prolonged droughts and erratic rains.

Food security and nutrition

12. Food insecurity remains a major issue in most countries (see Table 2 below).⁶ Apart from Ethiopia, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan where important progress has been achieved, the situation of undernourishment has not changed in the past decade, having worsened in the cases of Rwanda, Niger and Liberia. The State of Food Security and Nutrition Report 2020 shows that at the global level, the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity is higher among women than men, with significant differences found in almost all years for Africa and Latin America. The data showed that in 2020, after controlling for socio-economic characteristics, women still had about a 13 percent higher chance of experiencing moderate or severe food insecurity than men at the global level. Furthermore, the report showed that at the global level the gender gap in accessing food increased from 2018 to 2019.

Table 2 Undernourishment status in JP RWEE countries

Country	Number of people undernourished (Millions)			Prevalence of undernourishment (%)		
	2000/02	2010/12	2017/19	2000/02	2010/12	2017/19
Ethiopia	32.1	27.1	21.8	47.1	30.1	19.9
Nepal	5.7	2.3	1.7	23.6	8.4	6.2
Rwanda	3.2	2.3	4.4	38.5	22.7	35.6
Guatemala	2.7	2.7	2.7	22.4	17.7	15.4
Niger	N/A	N/A	N/A	21.6	11.3	16.5
Liberia	1.1	1.3	1.8	36.7	33	38.1
Kyrgyzstan	0.8	0.5	0.4	15.3	8.3	6.4

Source: SOFI 2020 (except for Niger where data was taken from the Global Hunger Index Report 2020).

13. According to the Global Nutrition Report 2020, malnutrition and anaemia continue to be major issues in the programme countries. Table 3 below shows some statistics regarding anaemia in women, and under-5 stunting and wasting. Though the data extracted from the Global Nutrition Report 2020 is from 2019, the numbers reveal that the magnitude of the problem prevails over time (GNR, 2020).

Table 3 Global Nutrition Report data 2020 for JP RWEE countries

Countries	% of women of reproductive age anaemic	% of under-5 stunted	% or prevalence of under-5 wasting
Ethiopia	23.4	38.4	10
Nepal	31	25	9.6
Rwanda	22.3	38.2	2.3
Guatemala	16.4	46.7	0.8
Niger	49.5	40.6	10.1
Liberia	34.7	32.1	5.6
Kyrgyzstan	36.2	12.9	2.8

Land ownership

14. Land is an important asset in supporting agricultural production and providing food security and nutrition. In many parts of the world both men and women have inadequate access to secure rights over land, and women are particularly disadvantaged. Globally, less than 15 percent of all landholders are women (FAO, 2018). In Nepal, only 19.7 percent of women own land. This is only 5 percent of the total land of Nepal. Of these women, only 11 percent have control over their land (Women Foundation Nepal, 2020). In Ethiopia women are particularly lagging behind in terms of access to land. Data for Ethiopia shows a lower proportion of female agricultural holders, with just 19.2 percent having agricultural resources, including land, as compared to 80.8 percent of male agricultural holders (FAO, 2019a). A study of coffee production in Rwanda identified that 71 percent of the plantation worked by women was owned by a male family member (Bayisenge *et al.*, 2019). As data in Table 4 below shows there is limited data on

⁶ We opted to describe the situation of food insecurity based on the two principal SDG 2 targets.

female land ownership in some countries. The lack of formal land ownership limits women’s capacity to borrow money and invest in agriculture or other economic activities.

Table 4 Incidence of female agricultural landowners

Country	Year	% female (sole or joint)	% female (sole only)
Ethiopia*	2011	50	12
Guatemala	No data	No data	No data
Liberia	No data	No data	No data
Nepal*	2011	10	10
Niger	2011	35.3	14.1
Kyrgyzstan	No data	No data	No data
Rwanda*	2010	54	13

Source: FAO Gender and Land Rights Database: <http://www.fao.org/gender-landrights-database/data-map/statistics/en/>. Data Retrieved November 2020.

*Reported ownership. Survey does not exclude other land than agricultural (e.g. residential).

Education and literacy

15. Globally, the literacy rate for men is higher than for women. In 2020, 89.9 percent of men globally were literate, compared to 83.0 percent of women.⁷ The gap is greater in South Asia, West Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. In Rwanda, for example, 69 percent of adult females are literate, compared to 78 percent of adult males.⁸ In 2017 in Liberia, just 34 percent of adult females were found to be literate, compared to 63 percent of adult males.⁹ Literacy is crucial for promoting women’s rights, enhancing livelihood skills, providing opportunities to engage in entrepreneurship, and strengthening their participation and leadership in the public sphere.

Gender equality

16. Gender rankings show variations between the JP RWEE countries. Rwanda ranks a high nine out of 153 countries (and first in Africa) on the Global Gender Gap Report 2020 from the World Economic Forum,¹⁰ Ethiopia and Liberia rank in the middle with scores of 82 and 97, and Nepal and Guatemala are relatively low with 101 and 113, respectively. Niger and Kyrgyzstan are not apparently listed. These two countries are ranked 189 and 120 respectively in the Human Development Report 2020 of UNDP rankings (UNDP, 2020), which is recognized to consider wider indicators than gender related ones. Independent of the data considered or the methods followed (for example, Rwanda ranks high mostly because of political parity in parliament and government but ranks average for other indicators), these rankings confirm that six of the seven JP RWEE chosen countries still have shortcomings in terms of gender equality and human development status.
17. Despite these gender disparities and challenges, it is worth noting that all seven countries are stated parties of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and offer an overall conducive political and institutional context to advance women’s economic empowerment (WEE).

Humanitarian context and COVID-19

18. Evidence has shown that women tend to be more vulnerable than men to shocks and face heightened risks because of pre-existing gender inequalities, such as having fewer economic resources and fewer coping mechanisms at their disposal (ODI, 2019). The sectors in which women work, including agriculture and the informal economy, are also often the most impacted by crises (Barclay *et al*, 2016). All JP RWEE countries have been impacted by humanitarian emergencies and/or political instability over the time of implementation. Table 5 below summarizes some of these shocks.

⁷ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.FE.ZS>

⁸ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.FE.ZS>

⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.FE.ZS>

¹⁰ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf

Table 5 Shocks impacting JP RWEE countries over the period of implementation

Country	Overview of humanitarian situation
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015/16 – Failure of short rains in 2015, alongside El Niño weather conditions which led to erratic long rains, left 10.2 million in need of emergency food assistance (including 3.7 million in Oromia and 0.4 million in Afar) (EHCT & GoE, 2015) • Poor rains in 2016/17 in predominantly pastoral areas, including Oromia, led to severe food crises, with two million in need of food assistance in Oromia (GoE & OCHA, 2017) • In 2020 JP RWEE programme areas of Oromia and Afar were impacted by floods and locusts. Political unrest was also seen in Oromia. According to the 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (NDRMC and UNOCHA, 2020), approximately 1.8 million Ethiopians who are internally displaced due to conflict and climate shocks and more than 1 million Ethiopians who have returned to prior areas of residence need humanitarian assistance.
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guatemala faces recurrent drought, hurricanes and floods. In 2017, the JP RWEE programme area was impacted by floods, destroying crops (JP RWEE, 2018h). Continuous rains in October 2017 increased water levels and flooding from the Polochic River (IFRC, 2017). • Category 4 Hurricane Eta hit Guatemala in early November 2020, followed by Category 5 Hurricane Iota about two weeks later. 1.2 million people in the North and North-East regions faced displacement (FAO, 2020b).
Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kyrgyzstan faced economic and political instability in 2020 with several days of civil unrest following elections in October 2020.
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2014/2015 outbreak of Ebola caused almost 4,000 deaths – the highest ever Ebola death toll in West Africa.
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country faces political instability and environmental shocks, including landslides and floods. • Two devastating earthquakes struck Nepal in April and May 2015, with estimated losses of USD 280 million in agriculture (WFP, 2019a).
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recurrent shocks and political instability, with a deteriorating security situation on the border with Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria causing large population displacement. The results of the November 2020 Cadre Harmonisé estimated 1.2 million people to be food insecure during the October–December 2020 period (WFP, 2021).
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017/2018, the Eastern Province, where two of the JP RWEE districts are found, faced drought with little or no harvests. Food assistance was required to support over 3,000 families (The East African, 2018).

19. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought profound socio-economic impacts across the world. Emerging evidence of the impact of COVID-19 suggests that women's economic and productive lives will be affected disproportionately and differently from men. SDG targets related to women's economic participation and empowerment, youth unemployment, education, maternal and child health, sexual reproductive health, child marriage, gender-based violence and female genital mutilation are likely to be affected negatively (UN, 2020). Preliminary assessments suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic may add between 83 and 132 million people to the total number of undernourished in the world in 2020 (SOFI, 2020). A recent study conducted by WFP in Nepal on the effects of COVID-19 reveals that households headed by women faced more food insecurity because of the pandemic and the loss of wages than households headed by men (WFP, 2020a).

Country gender commitments and frameworks

20. In Ethiopia the following significant gender commitments have been made in consecutive national development plans: Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP) (2002/3–2004/5); the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) (2005/06–2009/10); the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) I (2010/11–2014/15) and GTP II (2015/16–2019/2020). These plans consider gender inequality as an obstacle to development and advocate for gender mainstreaming as the tool to address equitable poverty reduction and economic growth (Druza *et al.*, 2019). Gender is increasing in importance in Ethiopia's agriculture sector and in national policies where there is a desire to improve food security for all citizens. GTP II also stipulates that to "strengthen women's empowerment and enhance their economic benefits, integrated and well-organised awareness creation and capacity development interventions need to be pursued" (GTP II:74).

21. In Guatemala, the law gives women and men equal economic rights and equal legal access to agricultural land; however, these laws are not effectively enforced and discriminatory practices against women continue, increasing their vulnerability to hunger and malnutrition (HANCI, 2021). In 2015, for the first time in its history, Guatemala's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food approved a comprehensive Policy on Gender Equality, committing the Ministry to systematically mainstream gender in all areas of work (FAO, 2015).
22. Kyrgyzstan has an extensive legislative base guaranteeing gender equality. Civil, penal, labour and family codes proclaim equal rights for men and women. In 2013, Kyrgyzstan approved a road map on Sustainable Development for 2013 to 2017 proposed by the President's Office. These steps reinforce its first long-term innovative gender equality strategy (2012–2020) and its 2012 initial National Action Plan. The National Gender Development Strategy to 2020 highlights the problems of rural women across the country and promotes access to non-formal education through improved technical infrastructure (internet access) and by expanding the functions of existing institutions (schools, rural health centres and family health centres). The report also recognizes that having a permanent income-generating activity is a primary condition for rural women's material and social well-being.
23. The Government of Liberia has developed a series of policies which enforce women's rights, including: the National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action (2006); the Gender and Development Act (2001), which established the Ministry of Gender and Development and its mandate in promoting gender equality, the National Gender Policy (2019); the National Gender Policy, which demonstrates the political will to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination; and the Land Rights Policy (2013), which makes important policy recommendations to ensure representation of women. Following the inauguration of the new government in January 2018, the new national development framework titled Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) includes critical cross-cutting issues that the Government intends to address, including gender equality.
24. Nepal, as a member of the United Nations and the international community, is a signatory of various conventions and instruments i.e., 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169, CEDAW and another 20 international instruments on human rights. As such the overall policy and legal framework for Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) is positive in Nepal and the Government of Nepal has recognized GESI as an important issue in all its periodic development plans, with an emphasis on special measures backed by proportional representation, positive discrimination and gender budgeting. The 20-year Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) includes a 10-year plan of action with a specific GESI objective. The development of agriculture remains an important focus for local authorities. The Government of Nepal also carried out a nutrition assessment and gap analysis in 2009.
25. In Niger, the following policies provide the framework for women's rights in the country: the 2007 National Gender Policy seeks to promote equity and gender equality; the 2017 National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women aims to promote income-generating activities and entrepreneurship opportunities for women; the National Strategic Plan to End Child Marriage (2019); and the National Strategy for the Prevention of and Response to Gender-based Violence for 2017–2021, which aims to reduce the prevalence of gender-based violence by 2021. The Economic and Social Development Plan for 2017–2021 (PDES) provides the backdrop for development in the country and includes actions to promote women's empowerment. However, other national sectoral policies and strategies do not demonstrate strong commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment.
26. Strong political commitment in Rwanda has driven the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Vision 2020 was Rwanda's overarching, long-term development framework that has guided policy and programming since 2000. The national gender policy has been aligned with Vision 2020 in creating an environment that promotes "social security, democratic principles of governance, and an all-inclusive social and economic system" (GoR, 2010:13). Rwanda boasts progressive inheritance and land laws that promote equal rights for men and women to own and inherit property. The Matrimonial Regimes, Liberties and Successions Law (1999) guarantees the joint ownership of property in legal marriage by requiring the names of both spouses on the land title, as well as the names of all legitimate children. The 2008 Law on Gender Based Violence and the 2009 Labour Law are both important pieces of legislation that seek to protect human rights and restricts discriminatory behaviour in formal settings. The Government of Rwanda has also demonstrated its political intent to promote gender equality by committing the country to more than 10 international conventions and protocols on gender equality including the CEDAW. Women's political representation is also amongst the highest in the world in respect to the number of women parliament (62 percent after the 2018 elections) (Abbott & Malunda, 2015).

1.3. Subject being evaluated

Overview

27. The goal of the JP RWEE is to secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of the SDGs. The programme was designed to tackle the inequalities experienced by rural women in the economic sphere. It was implemented in seven countries (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda), and was launched in October 2012. The Joint Programme (JP) emerged from discussions held during the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2012 which focused on the theme "the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges". FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP organized a joint side event on "accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women". The meeting was followed by the then Executive Director of UN Women, Michele Bachelet, spearheading discussions with heads of FAO, IFAD and WFP, and inviting the establishment of the JP RWEE. This led to collaborative meetings, the mapping of current ongoing initiatives in selected countries and joint field missions at country level throughout 2012.
28. Following the launch in 2012, effective programme implementation started in late 2014 (October) when funds were secured from the Government of Norway. In line with the five-year time frame, the original end date of the programme was 14 October 2017. This was extended at the request of the joint partners to 31 December 2021, to allow for project completion and for this final evaluation to take place.

Logical framework and design

29. The programme document presents a complete logical framework in which the Results Chain (*Activities–Outputs–Outcomes–Impact*) is clearly described (see logical framework in Annex 4). The programme design is articulated around four outcomes for rural women: **Outcome 1** improved food and nutrition security aims at increasing the productive potential of women smallholder farmers and enhancing their control and management of local food security reserves; **Outcome 2** increased income to sustain their livelihoods and create wealth focusing on creating, supporting and developing rural women-led enterprises, supporting their role along value chains, enhancing their income opportunities and promoting their linkages to high value markets; **Outcome 3** their enhanced leadership and participation in communities, rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes to strengthen their voice and influence in key processes and engage male advocates at all levels to champion and support change for their empowerment; and **Outcome 4** more gender responsive policy environments to influence legislative and policy reforms for the effective enforcement of rural women's land rights and their access to decent wage employment, social protection, and infrastructure.
30. The programme document presents a set of very detailed activities under each output (around 30 in total). In short, these can be summarized under the following main typologies:¹¹
 - Input from joint agencies that promote/enhance access to agricultural inputs (seeds, technology, technical and financial services) in favour of environmentally responsive food production, storage and processing.
 - Training and support activities for women farmers, leaders, and entrepreneurs with a focus on improved techniques and approaches for production, processing, marketing and leadership development.
 - Activities that strengthen access to markets and market information and provide employment, thus challenging social norms.
 - Sensitizing JP RWEE households and communities on gender equality.
 - Activities on nutrition awareness.
 - Supporting women and cooperative groups and cooperative governance and management.
 - Investing in research into barriers to the JP RWEE and innovations.
 - Strengthening the capacity of national authorities.
 - Targeted advocacy efforts at community, sub-national, national, regional and global level to influence national policies, programmes and plans in favour of WEE.

¹¹ Typologies developed by the evaluation team as presented in the Theory of Change (see Annex 4), for the sake of clarity and better understanding.

Gender dimensions of the intervention

31. The Joint Programme document of 2014 highlights that the JP RWEE is about implementing a “transformative agenda for the economic empowerment of rural women” (page 8).The document identifies the need to engage in different dimensions of rural women’s economic empowerment: (i) “[..] asset building and wealth accumulation, ensuring a more equitable balance in the sharing of economic and social benefits and work load between women and men”; (ii) “[..] changes in social norms, political and social institutions”, and (iii) “rural women’s agency through their collective action to demand positive and meaningful change in their condition and status”.
32. These dimensions are reflected in the 4 Outcomes (see paragraph 29) and the programme ToC lays out the strategy of addressing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) from different angles (i) addressing a wide spectrum of practical and strategic needs of rural women, for example providing training and the means to develop enterprises (such as access to finances), increasing women’s participation in decision making in the household (HH), and at local and national levels but also working towards securing policy reforms and in particular land rights and tenure security; (ii) involving men in some activities in order to address cultural barriers to women’s empowerment and promote behavioural change; (iii) promoting participatory approaches and grass roots involvement, with a focus on the most vulnerable and deprived rural women as well as economically active women in some countries; and (iv) developing and strengthening collaboration between various governmental departments and ministries to raise the profile of GEWE within the national agenda.
33. The JP RWEE is a programme specifically addressing the inequalities that women experience in their respective countries, therefore gender equality and the rights of rural women are the focus of the programme. One objective of working in different countries is generate lessons from diverse contexts in order to raise the profile of GEWE on the global agenda.

Beneficiaries

34. Overall, the programme has reached over 75,000 women and 284,000 members of their families through interventions to support women’s empowerment (JP RWEE, 2020p). The two key groups of targeted rural women include: (i) the most vulnerable, poorest, and illiterate women, who are often bypassed by conventional economic empowerment programmes; and (ii) women entrepreneurs already organized in Producer Organizations (POs), including cooperatives, with the “highest potential” to boost the communities’ economy (JP RWEE, 2020a).

Table 6 Numbers of total beneficiaries reached per year by JP RWEE

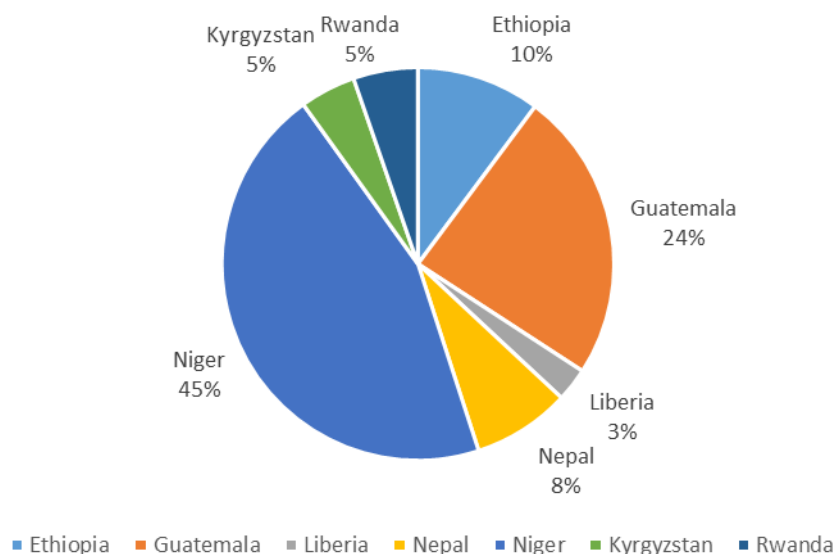
	Women (direct)	Men (direct)	Total (direct)	Household member beneficiaries**
2015	18 000 (approx.)	n/a	n/a	n/a
2017	40 227	10 953	51 180	261 000
2018	49 089	12 647	61 736	315 688
2019	35 068	3 226	38 294	204 954
2020	Unavailable*	Unavailable*	37 251	197 879

* 2020 data aggregated from individual country annual reports as 2020 consolidated report not available. Disaggregated data on sex of beneficiaries not available for all countries. **Household member beneficiaries calculated using average household sizes for JP RWEE programme areas in each country and vary from 4.5 in Rwanda to 6 in Niger.

35. In total, beneficiary numbers have fluctuated over the period with 2018 having the highest number of beneficiaries as shown in Table 6 above.¹² A further review of annual reports highlights that the percentage of beneficiaries by country has fluctuated between 2014 and 2019 as did the funding. According to the global annual report, in 2020, in order of decreasing magnitude, 45 percent of the beneficiaries were in Niger, 24 percent were in Guatemala, followed by Ethiopia 10 percent, Nepal 8 percent, Kyrgyzstan and Rwanda both with 5 percent, and Liberia 3 percent.

¹² Beneficiary data is only available from 2015 but without capturing beneficiary households as is shown in the table (2014 was used for preparation and no direct beneficiaries were recorded). In 2019 the number of direct beneficiaries was lower than in the previous reporting periods. This was due to different programmatic reasons exacerbated by an irregular funding cycle which lengthened the period of implementation but without additional funds (JP RWEE, 2020n).

Figure 1 Share of total direct beneficiaries, 2020



Source: JP RWEE, 2020n

36. Data show that targets have been achieved in terms of reaching out to the beneficiaries in 2019 (see Table 7 below). It is important to note that comparing beneficiary data between countries and between years is challenging, which is why the evaluation team is just presenting 2019 data. This is because in some cases countries have only reported new beneficiaries in certain years, rather than total beneficiaries reached. This type of discrepancy can be seen in the table below where targeted beneficiary numbers for Kyrgyzstan and Liberia are just for new beneficiaries, and not total number of targeted beneficiaries.

Table 7 Planned versus actual direct beneficiaries, 2019

	Actual			Target			Planned vs actual
	Women	Men	Total direct beneficiaries	Women	Men	Total direct beneficiaries	
Ethiopia	3 500	0	3 500	3 500	0	3 500	100%
Guatemala	4 529	1 083	5 612	4 559	1 273	5 832	96%
Kyrgyzstan	2 591	278	2 869	670	30	700	-
Liberia	5 657	120	5 777	2 055	890	2 945	-
Nepal	2 333	0	2 333	2 330	0	2 330	100%
Niger	14 745	1 375	16 120	14 745	1 375	16 120	100%
Rwanda	1 713	370	2 083	1 341	403	1 744	119%

* The target for Liberia and Kyrgyzstan includes new beneficiaries only, not total beneficiaries, therefore the target is not clear.

Source: Data is taken from the consolidated global annual report 2019, country-level annual reports and annual workplans for 2019.

Governance

37. A summary of the JP RWEE Governance structure is illustrated in Annex 5. At the global level, an International Steering Committee (ISC) oversees the allocation of funds and provides strategic vision and direction to the implementing partners, establishing requirements and priorities, including coordination with other initiatives. The ISC consists of the four participating UN Agencies, donors, representatives of the pilot countries and the UN MPTFO (Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office). A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of focal points from the four UN Agencies as well as a JP RWEE

Global Coordinator, provides operational support to the ISC, and provides information needed for making decisions.

38. At the country level different agencies take leadership in different countries: the JP RWEE is led by UN Women in Ethiopia, Nepal, Liberia and Kyrgyzstan, by WFP in Guatemala and Rwanda, and by FAO in Niger. The lead agency coordinates activities related to the consultative process for the roll-out of the programme at country level, including the engagement with the Government and local donors; it is also responsible for the consolidation of a country workplan, a narrative annual report and the hiring of a national coordinator.
39. A National Steering Committee (NSC) chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, consisting of donors, participating UN Agencies, civil society and private sector partners of JP RWEE and representatives of rural women exists in each implementing country. In each country, there is also a Technical Working Group (TWG) comprised of representatives of the four UN Agencies and technical staff of relevant ministries.

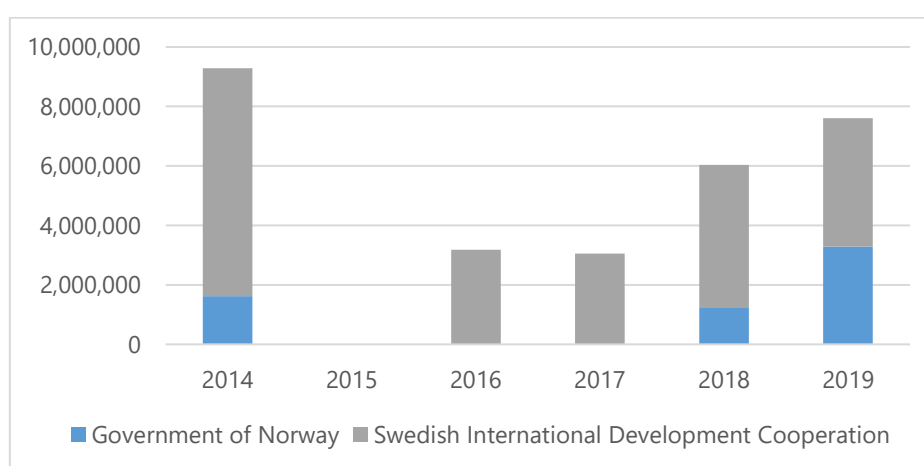
Partners

40. In addition to the four participating agencies (FAO, IFAD, UN Women, WFP), other UN agencies were involved, mainly through the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and Resident Coordinator. The programme involves a wide range of partners in each country, including high-level government entities (usually the ministries of agriculture or gender/women as leaders), but also other ministries (e.g. finance, youth, local development, etc., depending on the country). On the government side, it also involves the corresponding decentralized public administration structures at province, district and municipality level. Civil society (NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBO)), especially organizations working with rural women, are key partners in all countries. Different private sector institutions and in some cases academia, were also involved in activities to support the programme. For example, in Liberia a private sector partnership with Orange has been developed.

Resource requirements and funding situation

41. The JP RWEE Fund uses a pass-through funding modality and is administered by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in accordance with its financial regulations and rules. The JP RWEE programme budget was approved for a total amount of USD 35 million. Sweden and Norway were the two donors and Sida – the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency – funded USD 23.0 million or 79 percent of the programme between 2014 and 2019.

Figure 2 JP RWEE donor contributions by year 2014–2019 (USD)



Source: JP RWEE consolidated annual reports 2014–2019.

42. Funding allocations to the different partners were as follows: FAO USD 7.2 million (27 percent of the approved funding); IFAD USD 2.8 million (11 percent), UN Women USD 8.5 million (32 percent), and WFP USD 8.1 million (30 percent). As of 31 December 2019, the net amount funded by the MPTFO to all seven countries, and headquarters, was USD 26,657,307 with 70 percent of these funds already utilized (JP RWEE, 2020a). Table 8 below illustrates the expenditure and net funded amount for the different partners between 2014 and 2019. The funding was made available for each country not directly related to outcomes.

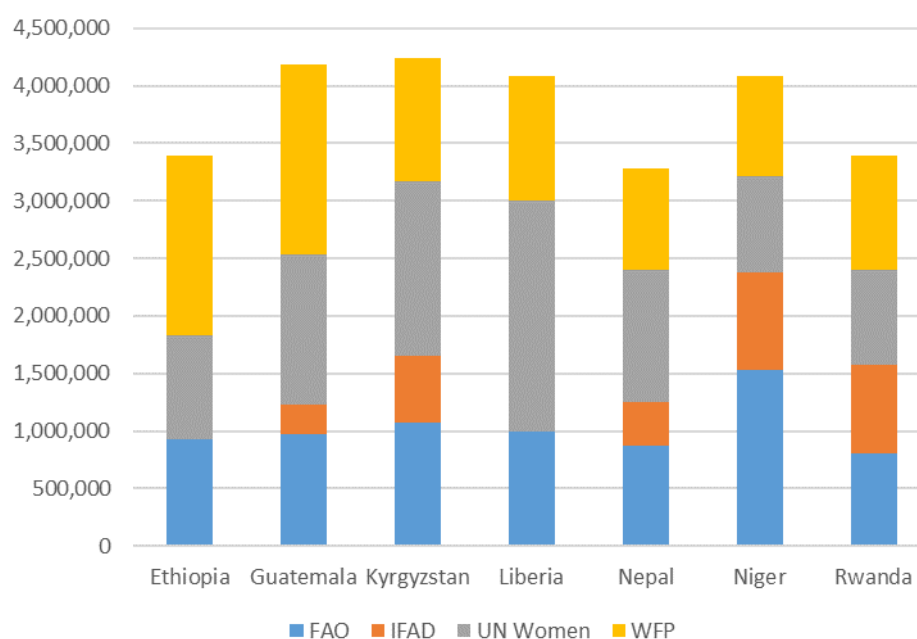
Table 8 Expenditure, by year, by agency

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total Expenditure	Net funded amount 2014–2019	Aggregated delivery rate % to 2019 ¹³
FAO	0	969 970	1 147 197	913 521	808 376	998 482	4 837 546	7 188 265	67%
IFAD	0	30 562	505 907	402 359	205 984	407 612	1 552 424	2 826 695	55%
UN Women	54 437	1 601 669	1 718 485	1 184 485	729 484	1 317 451	6 606 011	8 539 158	77%
WFP	0	647 099	1 211 330	1 810 313	1 067 082	1 060 548	5 796 372	8 103 189	72%

Source: JP RWEE consolidated annual reports 2014-2019.

43. In the same period, the net funded amount between countries has varied between USD 3.29 million in Nepal to USD 4.24 million in Kyrgyzstan. The share of funding allocations between agencies does vary between countries. The figure below illustrates the net funded amount between agencies in each country between 2014 and 2019. In all countries the lead agency has received the highest proportion of funding, apart from in Ethiopia where WFP has taken on the funding originally allocated to IFAD so has double the amount of funding the other two agencies receive. The figure also shows that in some countries (e.g. Rwanda) funding has been relatively evenly divided between the four agencies, whereas in other countries (e.g. Liberia) the funding division is less equal. In addition, the figure illustrates that IFAD did not receive any funding in Liberia or Kyrgyzstan as there was not sufficient buy-in from the IFAD country teams in these countries at the time of programme inception.¹⁴

Figure 3 Net funded amount for each agency, by country 2014–2019 (USD)



Source: JP RWEE consolidated annual reports 2014–2019.

Overview of analytical work

44. Across all countries, analytical work has been carried out in the form of research and evaluation. A more detailed overview is provided in section 2.1 and also in Table 39 in Annex 14. A mid-term review has not taken place of the global programme, although evaluations were carried out in Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, Rwanda and Ethiopia in 2018 and 2019. In addition, the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) has been used as an empowerment indicator in baseline surveys in four of the seven countries (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan and Niger) and at the time of this evaluation, the JP RWEE is

¹³ The percentage of funds that have been utilized, was calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Participating Organization against the ‘net funded amount.’

¹⁴ Source: KII.

conducting and analysing results through endlines in six countries (Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda), which will be developed as a synthesis report to present WEAI results at country and global level (JP RWEE, 2020o).

1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations

Methodology overview

45. The detailed methodological design for this evaluation took place during the inception phase. A full overview of the methodology is presented in Annex 7. The evaluation design was theory-based, relying on several tools: a Theory of Change (ToC), the Stakeholder Analysis (SA) and the Evaluation Matrix (EM). The ToC (Annex 3) was constructed to help the team to understand how the links between interventions and expected outcomes were envisaged and to identify the key underlying assumptions; the SA helped to construct lists of external and internal stakeholders at all levels; and the EM (Annex 2) provided the structure for the evaluation, detailing the sub-questions and indicators related to the evaluation questions and included information about sources of information and tools used to collect and analyse primary and secondary data. The key evaluation questions guiding the evaluation are:
- **Relevance (EQ1):** How responsive was the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders' needs, as well as national and global development goals and policies?
 - **Coherence (EQ2):** To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's social and economic empowerment across countries?
 - **Effectiveness (EQ3):** To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results?
 - **Efficiency (EQ4):** Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient?
 - **Sustainability (EQ5):** What is the likelihood that benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the duration of the programme?
 - **Effectiveness and Sustainability (EQ6):**¹⁵ What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned?
46. The team used several tools to gather data from different sources. These included:
- **In-depth data and document review.** A systematic review of programme documentation was conducted using the EM to guide the review. A list of the reviewed documents can be found in the bibliography in Annex 20.
 - **Global stakeholder interviews.** The team interviewed 20 respondents at global level to explore questions around inter-agency cooperation and organizational aspects, as well as perspectives on the implementation and outcomes of the programme. A summary is shown in Table 9 below and a full list of all the interviews is found in Table 23 in Annex 9.
 - **In-depth country case studies.** Three in-depth country case studies were conducted in Nepal, Niger and Guatemala, which allowed for primary data collection at field level to assess change and results from the beneficiaries' standpoint. Niger was chosen as it was the only francophone country and the only country where FAO was the lead agency. Similarly, Guatemala was chosen for its geographic representation primarily. Nepal was chosen for its absence of a country-level evaluation, whilst there was a lot of data in the other four countries. The country case studies included interviews at national level with agency staff, partner organizations and other key informants, including ministry staff. Table 9 below gives a summary of stakeholders reached by the evaluation, by country. A list of all the interviewees can be found in Table 23 and a breakdown of focus group discussions and the locations of fieldwork can be found in Table 19. The case studies systematically addressed the evaluation questions, with some tailoring of the sub-questions in line with the country focus. The questions developed for the country case studies can be found in Annex 11. The Niger case study was conducted as a pilot to inform subsequent case studies. These case studies have also led to thematic case studies in JP RWEE, which have led to stand alone dissemination products and can

¹⁵ After consideration of the assessment of impact (paragraph 52 of the ToR) the team concluded that a thorough impact assessment was out of the scope of this evaluation partly because of the timing (the programme activities are not yet fully completed) but also because an impact assessment requires a different methodology. However, an analysis of impact is implicit in EQ 3, and even more so in EQ 5 sub-questions and indicators. The team included another indicator in EQ 5 (5.3) to make this more evident.

















be found in Annex 15, Annex 17 and Annex 18. A full overview of the country case study schedules is found in Annex 8.

- **Country desk studies.** The remaining four JP RWEE countries (Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia and Rwanda) were desk studies for the evaluation. Following documentation review, remote interviews were conducted at national level with agency staff, partner organizations and other key informants (including with the national coordinator, the agency lead and a representative from each agency, at least one ministry representative and a member of the NSC, and representation from implementing partner). Table 9 below presents a summary of people interviewed for each desk study and a full list of people interviewed can be found in Table 23 (Annex 9).
- **Online survey.** After the in-depth documentary review and the first country case study, an online survey was designed and implemented with a particular focus on the governance aspects of the JP RWEE. The online survey was sent out to all key JP RWEE stakeholders (agency staff, IP staff and government representatives) involved in implementing the programme, including stakeholders in all seven countries. The survey overview and results can be found in Annex 12 and the survey tool can be found in Annex 10. The response rate was slightly over 50 percent, which is excellent for this type of online survey (see Table 9 below).
- **Validation presentations.** Following data collection, the evaluation team conducted presentations of initial findings and recommendations to each of the seven countries, as well as of global findings in a presentation to the TAC and ISC. This validated the initial findings before finalizing the PowerPoint presentations and writing the final evaluation report. Attendance numbers at each of the validation presentations are found in Table 1 in Annex 9.



Key informant interview, Nepal (Photo by Irada Gautam, Mokoro Ltd.)

Table 9 Summary of stakeholders reached through interviews, group discussions and the online survey

	Global		Ethiopia		Guatemala		Kyrgyzstan		Liberia		Nepal		Niger		Rwanda	
																
KII	15	5	3	7	24	13	15	6	4	7	20	28	12	33	6	9
FGD					67	0					78	22	69	78		
An on-line survey administered to UN agency staff, national stakeholders (government and partner agencies' representatives) with a focus on the governance of JP RWEE received 113 responses (54% response rate).																

47. **Data analysis** followed a number of steps, using both quantitative and qualitative investigation techniques and ensuring full triangulation of evidence. Templates for document reviews, structured by Evaluation Question (EQ), were prepared and relevant information was extracted from various documents under each EQ. The team also consolidated and analysed financial data, as well as output and outcome data from across annual reports (as presented in Annex 14). Gaps in the data after the document and data review helped shape the interview templates for KII and fieldwork discussions. Interview and field notes were compiled into a single compendium. The compendium ensured that interview notes could easily be searched by topic and facilitated triangulation of different interviewee perspectives. Thematic analysis of KII and group discussion notes was conducted by each of the interviewers and a consolidation of this work was done through a team brainstorming session where each team member brought forward evidence from their own data sets to answer each EQ. After an initial round of team analysis, initial findings guided the design of the online survey which was used to either fill in any gaps in the data or to verify findings. As already mentioned, debriefing sessions in all the seven countries helped consolidate the analysis.
48. **Gender** has been considered throughout data collection, ensuring a gender-balanced selection of interviewees at community level and the perspectives and opinions of both men and women have been recorded and considered. During fieldwork we respected social norms, whilst at the same time providing space for women to express themselves freely. This was achieved through organizing women only group discussions. Whilst organizing interviews with beneficiaries we ensured that we organized our visit at times and places culturally suitable for the beneficiaries. We also sought the participation of the most vulnerable women by providing specific criteria for invitations to the field contact person to avoid selection bias.



Focus Group Discussion, Niger (Photo by Halimatou Moussa, JP RWEE)

Limitations

49. The following limitations have affected the evaluation, although mitigation methods put in place at inception phase have reduced the impact on the evaluation:

Table 10 Limitations for the evaluation

Challenges and limitations	Mitigation	Limitation significance (High/H, Medium/M, Low/L)
Challenges		
COVID-19 restrictions meant international team members could not visit Nepal, Niger	In all countries national team members were able to conduct visits to JP RWEE programme	L

Challenges and limitations	Mitigation	Limitation significance (High/H, Medium/M, Low/L)
and Guatemala in person so conducted interviews remotely. As well as limiting important face-to-face interactions with stakeholders, poor connectivity impacted remote interviews.	areas. Full details of field visits are presented in Annex 8. The Evaluation Team also worked closely with the JP RWEE focal points to ensure that introductions were made to enable remote interviews and the team were flexible in the timeline for the case studies, extending the period for fieldwork from two weeks to three weeks to allow for the extra time needed to carry out remote data collection and overcome connection challenges.	
Remote working reduced the interaction that would normally be part of an evaluation process between the data collection team to discuss emerging findings.	Internally the team conducted weekly team meetings over the full evaluation period. The team also ensured very systematic note taking, filing, and sharing within the team. Team workshops were also conducted at two stages: first, following the initial case study in Niger to share lessons and findings to feed into the following case studies; and second, a team workshop to discuss findings, conclusions and recommendations on completion of all data collection.	L
There was a change in the evaluation team because of a change in the timeline of the evaluation, which meant that one team member was unable to participate. This change was due to the hurricane in Guatemala in 2020, which delayed fieldwork by a month.	The team mitigated this by reallocating the Guatemala case study to an existing senior evaluator on the team and also increasing research support to the Guatemala case study.	L
Limitations		
Turnover in key staff in some countries, particularly focal points for the JP RWEE from each agency, affected ability to obtain the views of those who were in position early in the evaluation period, and political change in some countries (particularly Kyrgyzstan) affected ability to reach key government officials.	The evaluation team sought to obtain contact details and introductions from the JP RWEE focal points of former staff and government stakeholders. For example, in Ethiopia the former JP RWEE coordinator was spoken to, and in Liberia the former focal point in the Ministry of Agriculture participated in the evaluation. However, in Kyrgyzstan the team was not able to obtain introductions to former government officials and JP RWEE coordinators. In addition, the evaluation used secondary sources, including country-level reviews and evaluations, to triangulate evidence.	M
Limited scope of country desk studies meant that there was a risk that available documentation is either too slim or outdated to provide answers at an acceptable level to the evaluation questions. There was a risk of drawing too heavily on a small number of informants and consequently not being able to triangulate findings.	To address this risk all desk study countries covered more informants than was initially foreseen. In addition, the team were careful to highlight the limitations of a desk study and specifically identified gaps in information. Finally, the survey and documentation were used to get a more grounded perspective on topics across a wider range of stakeholders. Response rate was high for the survey, with 108 full responses (54 percent of those contacted), including for desk study countries (Ethiopia – 17 responses; Liberia – 16	L

Challenges and limitations	Mitigation	Limitation significance (High/H, Medium/M, Low/L)
	responses; Kyrgyzstan – 14 responses; Rwanda – 11 responses).	
Gaps in documentation and data, particularly output and outcome data: the evaluation team found large gaps in monitoring data collected between countries, and inconsistencies in the way data was reported between countries (e.g. some countries reported new beneficiaries each year, rather than total beneficiaries each year). In addition there was no mid-term review of the JP RWEE and only three countries had satisfactory mid-term evaluations, which was also a challenge.	The team discussed and fill data gaps with country staff where possible and sought to understand the challenges faced in aggregating data by the teams. In addition, the team used data collected by other sources, including other evaluations. The gaps in data are highlighted by the evaluation team in this report.	M
The ToR specified that results from the Women's Economic Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) study would be provided for the team to triangulate qualitative findings. However, this data was not available in time.	The team make it clear that there is limited quantitative data to feed into the evaluation and have looked at other sources to triangulate information.	M

Ethics

50. Mokoro has been responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. All team members are bound by Mokoro's Code of Conduct which is consistent with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System and Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. Two key requirements are always to safeguard the independence of the team and to safeguard the rights and interests of its informants. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results do no harm to participants or their communities. FGD and interviews with children have not be carried out in this evaluation. Mokoro recognizes the strict policy of the United Nations for zero tolerance concerning unethical, unprofessional or fraudulent acts. The Ethics Sub-Committee of Mokoro's Council provides company-wide oversight of all such ethical matters.
51. The COVID-19 crisis has imposed new ethical obligations on evaluators. The pandemic requires us to recognize the heavy new burdens that many of our informants in governments and multilateral organizations have had to shoulder over recent months, and constraints that are likely to continue for some time. The evaluation team have ensured that data collection has been conducted sensitively to ensure that it does not obstruct or distract informants from their most urgent priorities. The evaluators have also adhered to strict social distancing and other public health requirements, as part of the "Do No Harm" principle.

Evaluation Findings

52. The evaluation findings and the evidence to substantiate them are presented below.

2.1. EQ 1 – How responsive was the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders’ needs, as well as national and global development goals and policies? (Relevance)

Alignment to international development agenda and national priorities

Finding 1. JP RWEE is aligned with the key national policies and plans at country level, as well as broader international commitments and frameworks, including the SDGs and Agenda. Alignment to SDG 13 to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” is less clear across all countries and has not been an explicit focus of the programme.

53. The JP RWEE focus on effective development operations to accelerate the progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is clear, with the understanding that gender equality and rural women’s empowerment is essential for reducing rural poverty, achieving food and nutrition security, and promoting inclusive and sustainable rural development. The programme was designed before the SDG framework had been defined and therefore alignment to the SDGs in the initial programme documents is not explicit. Similarly, there is little explicit reference to programme relevance to the SDGs in reporting documents, especially in the Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nepal and Niger annual reports. Reports on Liberia recognize the contribution of the programme in the case of the Government of Liberia’s commitment to the SDGs, especially for Goals 1, 2, 5, 16 and 17; reports for Rwanda note the contribution of the Rwanda programme to Goals 1 and 5; and reports for Kyrgyzstan note the contribution to Goals 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 16. However, the contribution of JP RWEE in many of the SDGs is clear and is detailed in Table 29, Annex 13, which demonstrates the strong alignment with Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 16 and 17.
54. Contributions of individual countries to each of these goals varies, with the emphasis on different activities differing between countries. For example, under Goal 4 on equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all, technical and vocational skills for employment have been an important component in some countries under the JP RWEE. In Rwanda, although literacy activities have not been a focus of the programme, low literacy levels have led to difficulties for women participating in the programme because they are unable to engage with written training content (Hollister, 2019). In Guatemala, Ethiopia, and Liberia, literacy components have been an important aspect of the programme and have supported rural women in business and agricultural expertise and in accessing credit. Similarly, under Goal 17 on revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development, an aspect of the programme in Kyrgyzstan has been supporting the development of sex-disaggregated indicators for the agricultural sector by the National Statistical Committee, which contributes to the SDG target on increasing availability of reliable disaggregated data (Kosheleva & Kerimalieva, 2018).
55. Alignment to SDG 13 to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” is less clear across all countries and has not been an explicit focus of the programme. This was seen as a gap in the programme by key informants in the evaluation. Climate change has not been fully integrated as a cross-cutting issue to any of the country programmes, although in some countries climate resilient agricultural methods are being promoted. This is discussed further in section 2.5. In Rwanda, greenhouses were used as a climate resilient agriculture practice and beneficiaries have learned improved methods to prevent soil erosion (Hollister, 2019). However, as discussed in section 2.5 the use of greenhouses can be limited due to the challenges of access to land (often unaffordable for many groups of women farmers). In Guatemala, however, which is among the ten countries in the world most vulnerable to climate change (WFP, 2020b), activities that respond to climate change, or that capitalize on women’s roles in leading and advocating for climate change, have not been evidenced in annual reports. Similarly in Kyrgyzstan, which states a contribution to SDG 13 in programme documents, there is also no explicit focus on climate change in reports or work plans.
56. The Joint Programme is also aligned with the key national policies and plans at country level (see overview in Table 30 in Annex 13). This alignment is seen as a key component for ensuring the success and ownership of participating countries. The purposeful alignment of JP RWEE to the national development plans is clear in programme documents for all countries. In Nepal, JP RWEE was started as a joint initiative with the Government of Nepal to pilot the implementation of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) 2015–2030 with a gender equality and social inclusion focus, under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD).

57. In some countries, the JP RWEE is not only aligned with national policies but also integrated with national systems for planning, targeting of beneficiaries, implementing and monitoring activities. This is key in Ethiopia, where close relationships have been built with 26 government institutions as the direct implementing partners, with a focus on building their institutional capacity for women's economic development and policy decisions. This also brings about some constraints, for example in the timely delivery of activities and in monitoring and reporting. In Rwanda the programme has aligned with pre-existing services and community structures at local level, to provide women with access to a comprehensive package of pre-existing services that they could benefit from. For example, pre-existing savings groups and other women's associations were consolidated into larger cooperatives, providing a formal legal structure of cooperatives which follows the rules and regulations of cooperatives in Rwanda. In Guatemala, however, coordination has been sought with municipalities but has not been consistent enough, or well-coordinated enough in a context where the turnover of staff and officials is considerable. As a result, the team observed that at times implementing partners and UN agencies were replacing the services that the Government should be offering.
58. The JP RWEE has focused on Delivering as One to accelerate progress to achieve the SDGs, although it predates the start of the UN reform processes. It has been aligned with the United Nations joint frameworks (United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) and subsequent United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF)) in all countries. Table 30 in Annex 13 further elaborates the relevance of the JP RWEE to the United Nations framework in each of the countries. In some JP RWEE countries, particularly Kyrgyzstan and Guatemala, although alignment to the overall framework is clear, the opportunity to work with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRC) to better promote coherence and coordination among UN agencies has not happened. This is attributed to the fact that the programme predates the UN reform, and to a limited role for the UNRC in the governance structures of the JP RWEE.

Relevance to context and the needs of rural women

Finding 2. JP RWEE has been relevant to the needs of women, with programmes grounded in participatory processes and stakeholders at community and national levels. Continued relevance is ensured through ongoing planning and interventions, which have been based on the beneficiaries' needs at local level.

59. The JP RWEE was grounded in a participatory planning process at the global level, involving governments, UN agencies, civil society and other stakeholders, including targeted rural women from the start. At the country level, the JP RWEE aligns with beneficiary needs, and programmes are designed through community engagement, needs assessments and with participation from wider civil society and government stakeholders. Table 11 below illustrates some of the different processes that were followed in select countries to ensure an understanding of the needs, including workshops at national and sub-national levels, learning lessons from previous development programmes, and various assessments (market assessments, feasibility studies, needs assessments, capacity assessments). However, not all countries ensured sufficient involvement from stakeholders at the design phase. Although in-country processes for design existed in Guatemala (as detailed in Table 11 below), informants perceived that the design of the programme had been led from the global level, rather than through in-depth participatory process at country level. This resulted in an insufficient understanding of the problems to be addressed.

Table 11 Design and planning processes for JP RWEE, by country

Country	Design process
Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National workshop to lay ground for the Joint Programme and introduce key programme objectives to stakeholders, including sector ministries, community representatives, donor community, potential donors, other UN agencies and civil society organizations (CSOs) • Planning workshop in each region to create common understanding about the programme among all key implementing partners and to agree on the initial annual work plan. Rural women were invited to participate alongside implementing partners and key stakeholders • Assessments and feasibility studies to inform the programme, including market and capacity assessment of farmers and feasibility study of time and labour-saving technologies
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative of WFP HQ Gender Unit visited Guatemala and met with Deputy Minister of Economy, Minister of Agriculture, Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM),

Country	Design process
	<p>Presidential Commissioner for Rural Development, and Presidential Secretariat for Planning and Programming (SEGEPLAN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field visits to women's organizations and organizations for small agricultural production, to identify challenges to women's economic empowerment • Participatory workshop with women leaders, government authorities, private sector, and academia to identify elements for a joint document contextualizing the situation of rural women in Guatemala – 40 participants (35 women, 5 men)
Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National consultations and findings of desk review of different practices and lessons learned formulated the design • GALS tool used to aid visioning process and decisions made on joint businesses of women's groups (e.g. type of organization, its mission, and services it will provide to its members) • Selected target areas based on the initial survey of existing women's groups and their operations
Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning lessons from previous Joint Programmes (Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2009–2013 and Joint Programme on Food Security and Nutrition 2008–2013) • National Rural Women's Conference, including 225 rural women delegates, with consultations for the adoption of the roadmap for the JP RWEE • Strategic mapping and assessment of rural communities and women's farming groups in targeted countries was conducted to understand needs and context, e.g. capacity building needs • Engagement with relevant rural women, men, women's CSOs, farming groups, and NGOs.
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extensive national consultative workshop was organized by the four UN agencies in 2012, and attended by over 100 participants, including representatives from relevant ministries, UN agencies, Local Development Officers, Women and Children Development Officers, women farmers from Mountain, Hill and Terai regions, and other stakeholders. The outcome of the workshop assisted in the design and drafting of the initial JP RWEE proposal • Mapping study carried out to identify good practices, gaps in the ongoing programmes and processes, and potential broad areas of synergies for the programme to address • Convening of a Working Group, comprised of the four UN agencies FAO, WFP, IFAD and UN Women, to draft the JP RWEE
Niger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The programme design was the result of a number of meetings between the four agencies at the international level • This was then adapted through a bottom-up approach: the choice of location was agreed through a consultation with the 3N initiative and activities were selected and prioritized using the Dimitra Club approach which had been in long use in Niger in other regions
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning lessons from previous agricultural initiative • A national needs assessment conducted in partnership with the Government which guided the design of the programme • A country-level workshop attended by UN Agencies and relevant ministries, as well as farmer organizations and rural women representatives.

Source: KIs and Country Annual Reports 2014

60. Continued relevance was also ensured in JP RWEE countries as ongoing planning and intervention decisions were based on beneficiary needs and further assessment processes. In Rwanda, for example, Implementing Partners conducted their own needs assessments to target activities at the start of the second phase of the programme (2016–19), which helped identify gaps. In addition, further needs assessments have been integrated into annual planning and reporting to inform adjustments. Similarly, in Liberia feedback continued annually through group discussions with rural women to understand challenges and priorities for the programme. In Niger feedback on the process and results was collected by municipalities through Dimitra Clubs and community assemblies and, additionally, feedback collected through village and municipality learning meetings was discussed at the national level through stock-taking workshops. Despite these opportunities to engage with rural women involved in the programme to feed into planning decisions, the evaluation did not find any evidence of a cohesive complaints and feedback mechanism across countries.

61. Furthermore, opportunities were taken for research and learning to ensure continued relevance to the context, although evidence in evaluation interviews of strong dissemination and use of these products was limited (see Table 39 in Annex 14 for further examples of evidence generated as presented in annual reports). For example, in Liberia, two studies on the Status of Women in Cross-Border Trade and on the Status of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs) were finalized in 2017 (Kanneh, 2017a; Kanneh, 2017b). In Ethiopia, evidence-based studies have been completed, including one on the Cost of Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity (MoA Ethiopia *et al*, 2018). In addition, qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted in Ethiopia to assess the extent to which the JP RWEE has been effective in achieving its goal of economically empowering rural women in Ethiopia (Mulema, 2018; Hillesland *et al*, 2020). More recently, in Niger, Ethiopia and Guatemala opportunities were taken to conduct rapid assessments to understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on JP RWEE beneficiaries. In addition, evaluations of the programme were conducted in Liberia (Final Evaluation, 2018), Kyrgyzstan (Final Evaluation, 2018), Rwanda (Review, 2019), and Ethiopia (Final Evaluation, 2018), and in Kyrgyzstan internal evaluations of both the GALs and Business Action Learning for Innovation (BALI) methodologies were conducted (CDA, 2018; CDA, 2020). In Ethiopia, this evaluation found that few stakeholders outside the lead agencies were aware of key evaluation findings from the final evaluation and the subsequent management response. In Liberia, the evaluation was not finalized by the consultants contracted and, although some data collected through the process was deemed useful, the draft evaluation was re-categorized as a review and has been kept internal. In Kyrgyzstan, however, the evaluation has led to some important learning. For example, the evaluation highlighted factors such as lack of enough land or having a disability as presenting barriers to prevent women from participating and benefiting from the JP RWEE. As a result, in the 2020 work plan (JP RWEE, 2019n), the programme revised the selection criteria to make them more inclusive and to target the poor who were left behind in the previous phases. Overall, the limited number of evaluations across all countries, especially at mid-line, to inform activities and allow adjustments of the programme, was seen as a weakness by multiple evaluation interviewees at national and global level.
62. JP RWEE targeted beneficiaries through a human rights-based approach and has focused on women in greatest need and those in food insecure areas with potential in agriculture and business, ensuring the principle of Leave No One Behind. In Nepal, the programme initially focused on the Terai and Hill regions, but due to limited funding scaled down to two districts, Rautahat and Sarlahi. These two districts had high occurrences of traditional harmful socio-cultural practices such as child marriage, and also contained areas that were severely affected by flood in 2017. In Rwanda, the geographical scope of the programme was also scaled down due to funding constraints, and to promote stronger partnership among agencies. Those living in poverty and dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods were selected. Beneficiaries were also targeted in Rwanda to ensure the programme was inclusive of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including households from lower socio-economic status, women living with HIV/AIDS, survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and other marginalized groups. In Guatemala, the programme has focused on an area where the needs are high, but there is a “presence of women with potential” (JP RWEE, 2015h). The Valley of Polochic represents the most difficult region in Guatemala and is a critical area for working on women’s rights. The municipalities in which the JP RWEE focuses are 89 percent indigenous, and the poverty rate is significantly higher than the national average (at the time of programme design the poverty rate was 85 percent in the Valley of Polochic, compared to the national rate of 59.3 percent¹⁶). The relative economic participation of women in Alta Verapaz is lower than the national average. Targeting of beneficiaries in Guatemala has varied by activity to reach those with high needs and those with potential. For example, in 2015 women with production surplus were selected for training on the generation of surplus for commercialization (JP RWEE, 2016h). Similarly, in Niger, the poorest communities were selected in line with the policy of the “communes de convergence”. In Liberia, the JP RWEE initially focused on south-eastern counties of Liberia, an area characterized by chronic food insecurity, geographic isolation, and limited market access. However, in 2015 it expanded into northern and central counties so that it could also target entrepreneurial women with the potential to advance businesses. However, partnership with wider UN joint programmes on HIV/AIDS and on gender-based violence (GBV) enabled synergy between other programmes and allowed broader focus on vulnerable groups in Liberia. In Kyrgyzstan, the programme has used different criteria for different groups of beneficiaries, depending on the activities conducted, and has targeted both the most vulnerable and those with agricultural and business potential. For example, in 2020 newly mobilized beneficiaries included those living below the national extreme poverty line, whereas for some activities such as a business mentorship programme, selection of beneficiaries from existing groups included women who already had an established business and had proven interest in running a business (JP RWEE, 2019n). The 2018 evaluation of the programme in Kyrgyzstan did find that the targeting

¹⁶ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/GT>

criteria of the poor had left behind the most vulnerable (those who do not have access to three to eight acres of land and those with disabilities). However, the programme has been responsive to evaluation learning and in the 2020 work plan this has been addressed to target the poor that were left behind by previous phases (Kosheleva & Kerimalieva, 2018). Finally, in Ethiopia, two states were selected for the programme, representing one state with higher population and agricultural productivity (Oromia) and one state with high susceptibility to drought and climate change (Afar). The selection was influenced strongly by Government, although with a plan to scale up to the whole country. However, selection criteria were in place to ensure the capacity of the regions and districts to undertake the programme, as well as the proximity for monitoring and follow-up. Selection of individual women targeted existing women's rural saving and credit groups or saving and credit cooperatives and ensured women were experienced in business and enthusiastic to take part in the programme (JP RWEE, 2015j).

63. JP RWEE has also remained relevant to emerging needs in countries, although certain humanitarian crises, particularly COVID-19 in 2020, have severely impacted work plans. For example, in Ethiopia where the JP RWEE has been responsive to government needs, the 2019 Joint Programme was able to target 800 women internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the Oromia region who benefited from business diversification support.

2.2. EQ 2 – To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's social and economic empowerment across countries? (Coherence)

Finding 3. There has been strong internal coherence between the agencies and between the JP RWEE objectives and agency mandates. JP RWEE is built on comparative advantages of each agency and addresses the multifaceted issues around WEE and is consistent with local demands and contexts. Working as one has been more challenging and took time to take off initially.

Internal coherence

64. There is unanimity amongst respondents on the leverage of the comparative advantages of different institutions to achieve the results and address interlinked areas of gender inequality in an integrated manner. The JP RWEE benefits from the technical knowledge and policy assistance of FAO in the area of food production, agriculture and nutrition, the experience of IFAD in co-financing rural investment programmes, promoting gender inclusion through community-based approaches,¹⁷ and addressing gender at the household level, the innovations of WFP in food assistance delivery and production, and the global championship of gender equality of UN Women and its strong partnerships with global, regional and national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment.¹⁸
65. There is internal coherence between each of the agencies' mandates and the JP RWEE: IFAD is mandated to enable poor rural women and men to improve their food security and nutrition and raise their income and strengthen their resilience. The mission of FAO is to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition as well as to contribute towards the eradication of poverty. The mandate of UN Women is entirely dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. WFP provides food assistance during emergencies and on a long-term basis and provides technical assistance to promote economic and social development of countries in need to improve nutrition. It also has a mandate to create the conditions to advance gender equality and women's empowerment.¹⁹
66. The four agencies have different levels of experience and expertise around issues of food security, nutrition, rurality, agriculture and economic development and WEE issues. FAO and IFAD have expertise in agriculture, and rural development and nutrition whilst WFP has expertise around nutrition and rural resilience; UN Women has expertise on WEE and policy advocacy at the global level though FAO also has gender expertise but focused primarily on agriculture. This means that the potential to collaborate, learn from each other and develop more robust interventions is high. For example, UN Women staff have recognized the opportunity to increase their expertise around agriculture and rural issues whilst the Rome-Based Agencies (RBA) staff have tended to value UN Women's expertise on advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment, including through its experience in policy advocacy and influence.²⁰

¹⁷ For example, the implementation of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) in IFAD-supported projects.

¹⁸ JP RWEE annual consolidated report 2019.

¹⁹ See UN agencies websites.

²⁰ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Nepal 2021.

67. All agencies target the same beneficiaries in order to ensure that each woman accesses support in the four outcome areas in line with the ToC. For example, in Ethiopia WFP provides support to business skills training and saving and credit cooperatives; FAO supports agricultural inputs and training; UN Women supports cooperatives and gender training. In Nepal, FAO has introduced new agriculture technology such as improved seeds and has distributed polytunnels for off-season cultivation; UN Women has supported leadership and advocacy skills development, awareness raising about women's rights and the gender mainstreaming of the Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS), including the development of the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy of the ADS. WFP has organized the construction of storage centres and nutrition improvement plans and since 2019 the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has introduced the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology (already tested in JP RWEE Rwanda and Kyrgyzstan programmes) to women's groups formed by FAO.²¹ To capitalize on comparative advantage and avoid duplication, an important work of coordination is conducted annually through inter-agency annual planning and joint monitoring visits (see below under Finding 4).
68. All agencies do not have the same level of presence in country. IFAD in for example does not have huge country presence: more often limited to a country representative and, in the case of Nepal for example, one consultant dedicated to the JP RWEE. Because of its limited human resource capacity on the ground IFAD did not participate in Liberia and only became more involved in Nepal in 2019 in the push to disseminate the GALS approach. In Ethiopia, the JP RWEE and IFAD fiduciary systems could not be aligned, with IFAD unable to find a way to channel their resources through Government, and therefore ownership of their activities was transferred to WFP for implementation. Nevertheless, IFAD is involved at implementation level in Niger where it supports the introduction of husbandry kits, also showing differences of involvement between countries. UN Women in Niger has only seen its office capacity develop recently though there has been a focal point for JP RWEE since 2014. In contrast, FAO and WFP have had a strong and historical presence in JP RWEE countries. These differences mean that agencies have different levels of expertise and knowledge in the countries as well as different capacities to draw on agency resources if needed.²²
69. The RBAs have already experienced working together since they have had a strong mandate for the last decade to develop partnerships in countries where they all operate (WFP, 2019b); they also all work on issues related to food production and all have headquarters based in Rome, which facilitates communication, and comprehension of each other's work and organizational culture. The location of the UN Women headquarters in New York added a logistical challenge to fluid communication. Therefore, working together as four agencies at global and country level required some learning but was largely achieved.
70. The leadership of the respective agencies was not questioned by respondents in any of the countries; FAO, WFP and UN Women have each had long involvement in the respective countries and worked on agriculture, nutrition, rural livelihood and WEE as well. In all the three cases there is coherence between the lead agency mandate and their role in the JP RWEE.²³ Having one agency leading in each country was deemed necessary and appropriate to provide a home for the national coordination.

Development of a shared vision

71. Nevertheless, a shared vision for delivery and cohesion between agencies was not realized from the start. In Liberia, for example, only WFP and UN Women received funding in the first round, while in Nepal, FAO got funding only in the second round. FAO involvement in Liberia²⁴ at the start was on the periphery, despite being involved in initial planning meetings, and this led to a lack of joint understanding and agreement on target locations, beneficiaries, and strategy for integrated programming.
72. In Kyrgyzstan,²⁵ a shared vision for delivery between agencies has not always been easy. For example, there have been different visions between agencies for the criteria for targeting rural women (the most vulnerable versus those with agricultural potential) and different methods were used to achieve organizational development of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) (participatory social mobilization processes and use of community activists as focal points versus working through local authorities and using social workers as focal points). However, the agencies have come together to consolidate and build best

²¹ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Nepal 2021 and JP RWEE Nepal project document 2015.

²² JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews global level 2021.

²³ See web pages of each agency for details : <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/nepal/about-un-women-nepal>; <http://www.fao.org/niger/programmes-et-projets/fr/>; <https://www.wfp.org/countries/queatemala>

²⁴ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Liberia 2021 and JP RWEE, 2015f.

²⁵ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Kyrgyzstan 2021.

practices and lessons learned from the different modalities used for SHGs, to ensure sustainability of achieved groups by the groups. This has been set out in their 2020 work plan.

73. A review of the various lead agencies and their country websites reveals that the JP RWEE with a collaborative approach between the four agencies is given limited visibility. For example, on the UN Women Nepal website,²⁶ which has a section on partnerships, the JP RWEE is not mentioned; on the Niger FAO website,²⁷ under the programme page once again, JP RWEE is not mentioned. However, to be fair no other specific programmes are mentioned either. On the IFAD Kyrgyzstan site²⁸ there is just one press release that briefly introduces the JP RWEE, dated 2018. Overall, this reveals a lack of visibility which could be linked to issues around knowledge management, discussed under EQ 3.

“Most joint programmes are rarely joined in nature but to a great extent the JP RWEE succeeds, as you need to work with different components. The design lends itself to real time joint implementation. Focal points help anchoring the components all together, ensuring coherence across the board, [...] a number of conversations are happening at the technical level.”

Source: JP RWEE Global Evaluation interview, Nepal 2021

External coherence

Finding 4. At the organizational level there is a good level of synergy with the agencies developing new partnerships with other UN organizations. However, synergy at this level has not always translated into synergy on the ground. Though the four agencies target the same beneficiaries, implementing partners have been encouraged to coordinate and collaborate by their respective partner agencies to various degrees.

Difficulties with synergy on the ground

74. Synergy between agencies has not always translated into synergy on the ground between implementing partners, who in most cases are local NGOs (though not always since in Nepal for example, FAO has its own staff working at delivery level with farmers groups). Typically, each implementing partner is contracted through one of the UN agencies. According to key informants, with implementing partners (IP) in Liberia, and to some extent in Guatemala in particular, there is a tendency to work in silos, under the leadership of each IP's contracting agency. Often UN agencies are unaware of what other implementing partners are doing. The issue of lack of collaboration between IPs was also mentioned in Nepal by the IPs themselves.
75. It took time to build coherence between agencies as the agencies in all the countries did not have prior experience of working together. There was a tendency for agencies to work alone rather than collaboratively. In Ethiopia,²⁹ areas of duplication in the early stages were highlighted by all partners, such as in the provision of labour-saving technologies and different cooperatives set up with the same beneficiaries, but regular coordination meetings, especially to feed into annual work plans, ensured that these issues of duplication in Ethiopia were addressed. In Rwanda, there are some continued challenges for IPs in complementing each other's activities and avoiding duplication: because FAO, IFAD and UN Women all cover agricultural activities, there was no clear separate mandate, with the result that duplication occurred.³⁰ In Guatemala, there continues to be significant room to improve coordination at the annual planning stage by, for example, creating clarity on technical mandates, and defining how and when agencies support one another.³¹
76. Apart from Niger (see Box 1 below) where the JP RWEE has set up a platform for implementing partners to meet and share information on progress, there is no formal mechanism in other countries for implementing partners to coordinate activities and participate in learning lessons.

²⁶ <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/nepal/about-un-women-nepal> accessed 10/03/2021.

²⁷ <http://www.fao.org/niger/programmes-et-projets/nos-programmes/fr/> accessed 10/03/2021

²⁸ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/news-detail/asset/40211750> accessed 10/03/2021.

²⁹ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Ethiopia 2021.

³⁰ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Rwanda 2021.

³¹ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews Rwanda 2021.

77. There has been strong external coherence with the priorities of the seven countries' national governments as demonstrated under EQ 1 (see paragraphs 56 and 56 and Annex 13), in terms of alignment with major policy frameworks in all the countries.
78. The synergy developed through the JP RWEE partnerships has also prompted new partnerships outside the JP RWEE. For example, in Nepal the JP RWEE is collaborating with the Government IFAD-funded Rural Enterprises Remittances Programme (RERP) to disseminate the GALS methodology within JP RWEE women's groups, scale up its use in other palikas³² and increase government ownership of the methodology.
79. In Ethiopia, the programme ensured in the initial selection that the programme did not target women's rural saving and credit groups that were already involved in other programmes supported by each of the agencies. In addition, by working through government systems, it ensured that the programme targeted existing groups and cooperatives that were not already benefiting from other interventions by other donors (JP RWEE, 2015j). In Niger the Government directed the JP RWEE towards municipalities where there were no other projects being implemented. In Nepal the IFAD funded Rural Enterprises Remittances Programme (RERP), implemented by the Government of Nepal, is working with the JP RWEE women's groups to expand the use of GALS. In Liberia, in order to address issues such as GBV, HIV/AIDS, and conflict management and peacebuilding, the JP RWEE has built synergies with other UN Joint Programmes (Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (JP HIV/AIDS)), Spotlight Initiative, and the Joint Programme on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (JP SGBV). Linkages have been built with the JP SGBV led by UN Women with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). As a result, the JP RWEE uses the National SGBV Referral Pathway for awareness raising with its beneficiaries at county, district and community levels. The JP SGBV has conducted several assessment missions in JP RWEE targeted countries. Reporting of SGBV cases in JP RWEE communities at country level has increased according to the JP SGBV (Momoh & Browne, 2018).
80. In Kyrgyzstan, the second cohort of beneficiaries were selected from the pool of villages where WFP was already working through its "Support for the National Productive Safety Nets and Long-term Community Resilience Programme". This enabled the JP RWEE to use already established relations with local authorities, which reduced the cost of entry in the communities. In addition, the JP RWEE benefited from the government support to the existing WFP development programme, including use of government warehouses for food storage, access to local government social workers to mobilize and coordinate JP RWEE activities, and nutrition training sessions for JP RWEE rural women, conducted through district and province health promotion units. WFP also had monitoring officers present in these locations who were able to support and supervise the social workers (Kosheleva & Kerimalieva, 2018).

Box 1 Synergy at work in Niger³³

Niger offers a good illustration of solid synergy at national and ground level where national coordination played an effective role in clarifying, at national and local level, the ethos of working jointly from the onset. Monthly technical group meetings, annual joint monitoring missions between the four agencies, government focal points and close contact at field level, ensured that data and ideas for relevant and coherent annual planning was generated. These were discussed at the community level with rural women, local authorities, IPs and decentralized government services. The multi-actor platform also allows local actors to meet and resolve any emerging planning or coordinating issue during the implementation cycle.

81. During interviews at global, national and local level, JP RWEE has been unanimously recognized as a force that created synergy between agencies, and between government organizations and local level community organizations. This has been validated through an e-survey where 42 percent of the respondents considered the synergy as a primary positive aspect of the JP RWEE, which is a high score given that only one answer was possible. One respondent stated: "This was one of the few positive examples of successful collaboration that I have seen in my UN career - not only between UN agencies, but also with donors." However, there were other respondents who felt synergies between the agencies still needed to be developed.

³² Palikas are a level of administration division in Nepal, equivalent to municipalities.

³³ See Annex 15 for the full Niger case study.

“The joint programme has created positive competition between the agencies. It has pushed agencies to think of their own added value and challenged them to adapt and use new methodologies in order to synergise.”

Source: JP RWEE Global Evaluation, Kyrgyzstan Interview, 2021

2.3. EQ 3 – To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results? (Effectiveness)

Finding 5. JP RWEE has made a significant contribution to rural women’s improved livelihoods in the project countries through improved agricultural practices, linkages to the market, awareness raising and leadership building. There are documented increases in vegetable and livestock production, diet and nutrition, and income gains in all the countries. Both women and men report shifts in social norms such as women being allowed to take work outside the house, or husbands taking on some of the household chores. Women interviewed in the three countries also report an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem. Despite some progress, there has been less emphasis on policy advocacy and change and limited focus on learning at the global level.

Extent of intended results achieved

82. Data from the JP RWEE 2019 annual consolidated report show positive progress on all outcomes (for more details on outcome indicators see Annex 14):
- For Outcome 1 all countries reported an increase in production (ranging from an increase of 329 percent in Nepal to 13 percent in Liberia); Dietary Diversity Score increased from 3.8 to 5 in Falwel and from 2.42 to 3.73 in Djirataoua in Niger and from 4.5 (in 2014) to 6.22 in Kyrgyzstan (scores not available for the other countries).
 - For Outcome 2, all the countries report income generation through sales of agricultural products. In particular, an increase of 253 percent in Nepal since 2018 and 20 percent in Niger has been reported. Similarly in all countries group savings are increasing. More importantly accessing revolving credit is increasing for women: 1,300 women in Ethiopia, 1,410 in Guatemala, 2,258 in Nepal and 4,650 in Niger now have access to revolving funds. In Kyrgyzstan, Liberia and Rwanda, 644, 693 and 2,361 women respectively have improved their financial literacy skills. Additionally, income generation activities providing additional employment opportunities are being supported: for example, in Liberia 344 women gained employment through Orange Liberia Mobile money services, and 1,410 women in Guatemala are now involved in poultry, aquaculture, or honey production amongst others.
 - Outcome 3 enabled over 3,000 women in both Ethiopia and Liberia to become members of land committees and in Niger 32 women participated in land commissions across three municipalities. In Niger 130 women and 69 in Guatemala are leading farmer groups. In Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia and Niger women have been provided with support to increase their literacy skills, including 1,222 rural girls receiving scholarships. In Ethiopia, Liberia, Nepal and Rwanda, leadership training and self-confidence building activities have reached 249, 500, 1,294 and 871 women respectively. The programme report shows an increasing number of women engaging in governance and policy at national and regional levels in six of the countries (Nepal excluded).
 - Activities under Outcome 4 on more gender responsive policy environments have been more varied in scope and effectiveness depending on each country, and have been achieved in some countries more than in others. The JP RWEE has been able to make meaningful contributions to the policy agenda in some of the countries: it provided support to revise the National Gender Policy, and in 2018 the Land Rights Act was signed into law in Liberia (JP RWEE, 2018f; JP RWEE, 2019f). In Ethiopia the JP RWEE was instrumental in forming the National Network for Gender Equality in the agricultural sector (Hando *et al.*, 2018); in Niger the International Day of Rural Women was institutionalized securing the collaboration of two ministries (Agriculture and Women and Children’s Welfare), which is a major political endorsement for the cause of rural women;³⁴ in Nepal the JP RWEE has been contributing towards revising the WEE policy within the national agricultural policy and in Guatemala the JP supported the establishment of a national gender unit (FAO, 2015) and the design of the gender policy for the Ministry of Agriculture.

³⁴ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews national level Niger 2021.

“JP RWEE has forced the Liberian government to set up a Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting Unit at the Ministry of Finance. Other ministries have set up gender desks and have incorporated gender mainstreaming in their work. Thank you for this great programme!”

Government respondent to JP RWEE Global Evaluation e-survey 2021, Liberia

83. Results from annual reports corroborated data gathered during key informant interviews (KII) at global, national and local levels by the evaluation team and more importantly during group discussions with rural women in Nepal, Niger and Guatemala confirming positive outcomes in these three areas.

“I am able to support my children and educate them, buy them notebooks and invest in household purchases. My son asked to buy a mobile which is NRS 36,000 for his online classes. From farming vegetables, we were able to buy a mobile. My husband is also very supportive. From our earnings we also purchased a motorbike so that we can supply vegetables in the market and grew vegetables in 2 Bigha of leased land”

Source: Chairperson of women’s group – Chandranagar municipality, Sarlahi. JP RWEE Global Evaluation Interview Nepal, 2021

84. In all the three countries where field visits took place, (confirmed by the desk studies of the other countries) women have reported positive changes in their lives. The processes of change described during the change mapping exercises with beneficiaries confirm the validity of the change pathways laid out in the ToC. According to beneficiaries, the trigger for change comes from two initial interventions which go hand in hand: the formation of groups and the dissemination of new agricultural technologies. Groups provide the entry point for subsequent interventions but also foster reflection and dialogue between women (and between men as is the case with the Dimitra clubs). Improvements in agricultural technology – whether new tools such as polytunnels allowing for out of season production in Nepal (FAO) or the introduction of husbandry kits in Niger (IFAD) or multi-use platforms for food transformation (UN Women in Niger) – lead to an increase in production and a diversification of income sources.

85. The scale of increase varies between countries and unfortunately there is no data on the share of this increase in relation to the total HH income, but women report that increased production has two effects: (i) more production in vegetable and meat improves the HH diet (with anecdotal evidence that it decreases health costs especially for children) and (ii) lower expenses on health or the purchase of food added to increased income, which lead to more disposable income. In Niger, women reported being able to contribute towards household finances and in particular to cover school fees. In Nepal some women (see Annex 17) have reported being able to purchase investment items such as a mobile phone or a motorbike, which help to connect to the market, thus also providing an opportunity for more productive activities. Thus, women confirm that the programme has helped to increase their productive choices in farming and feel better able to face food insecurity and nutrition related challenges.

“We eat more vegetables than before, children are not falling ill frequently, we spend less money on treatment due to adopting good hygiene and a balanced diet.”

Source: Pashupati women farmers group at Gujara municipality -7 Prasawa, Rautahat on 7th Feb 2021. JP RWEE Global Evaluation Interview Nepal, 2021

86. The combination of increased financial autonomy with interventions around Outcome 3 such as awareness raising programmes and leadership or literacy skills training have helped women to increase their agency. Women report everywhere gaining confidence in basic actions such as signing their names, making agricultural decisions or deciding on HH spending. Their economic contribution to the HH and their display of increased confidence contribute to an increased status within their community. This has been seen across all countries. The women interviewed report a significant increase in their social and interpersonal skills and feel more comfortable to speak, share, and educate themselves on farming and nutrition. This translates for example into 30 percent of rural women beneficiaries in Guatemala taking part in decision making at the organizational level or 80 women leaders participating in the process of local planning and budgeting (see Table 38, Annex 14).

87. Men in Nepal and Niger interviewed during fieldwork have reported (more or less unanimously) that their wives have gained confidence to improve their farming skills and earn money for their own livelihood.³⁵ As a result, men say that there is growing support from men to improve the status of women in villages

³⁵ JP RWEE evaluation focus groups, Niger December 2020 and Nepal February 2021.

and men report being increasingly likely to contribute to household chores. Consequently, there is greater social harmony since the project began in both countries because, overall, HH are under less financial stress. In Kyrgyzstan, an internal evaluation on the GALS methodology showed that increases in self-confidence were a major change in the lives of participants (CDA, 2018) and the evaluation of JP RWEE in Kyrgyzstan showed that JP RWEE training provided to members of SHGs running for local keneshes (councils) led to 32 out of 92 women who had received training being elected to keneshes and becoming active members in leadership in their communities (Kosheleva & Kerimalieva, 2018). In Liberia the programme has strengthened women's leadership and participation in local governance, with JP RWEE playing a key role in strengthening advocacy from rural women for the passing of the Land Rights Act and the revision of the National Gender Policy. The JP RWEE programme in Liberia has also seen an increase in rural women's participation in the community. For instance, they are becoming superintendents, district commissioners, and town chiefs (Momoh & Browne, 2018).

"I am so happy that my husband and family started helping me. We have reallocated household tasks in the family. And now I have time for myself. I feel myself more confident and happy."

Source: Interview with respondent from Atbashy Rayon in Naryn oblast for Internal Evaluation of the GALS methodology in Kyrgyz Republic (CDA, 2018)

88. However, despite the support to flagship policies and activities, in practice there have been few systemic changes on the ground at this stage. Whilst there have been champions advocating for the cause of WEE within ministries, these commitments have not translated into budget provisions expect in the case of Oromia in Ethiopia (see below Paragraph 136) or Nepal where three municipalities have agreed to allocate a budget towards WEE activities.³⁶ In Ethiopia,³⁷ for example, there have been plans to undertake a gender analysis of the agriculture sector, but this has not yet happened (in part delayed by COVID-19). In Rwanda,³⁸ despite policy progress, access to land and other resources remains problematic and respondents have voiced their concerns that the Government is not very active in translating policy into long-term change.
89. Table 12 below reports on the answers from the e-survey to the question: "From your personal experience, whether at a global or national level, please rate the performance of the JP RWEE on achieving results in the following areas." The respondents gave a star rating from 1 star to 4 stars, where 1 star represented no results achieved and 4 stars significant results achieved. The average response across all areas was in the region of 3 stars, and this was almost equally true for respondents from the four UN agencies as it was from other respondents, including government, NGOs and donors. An average of over 3 stars was obtained in the first three outcome areas: improved nutrition and food security of rural women farmers; increased income to secure livelihoods; and enhanced leadership and participation in public life. For Outcome 4 that asked whether a more gender-responsive policy environment was secured or not, the average responses were slightly lower, with an overall average of 2.77 stars. Looking at the same results broken down by country (see Annex 12), the average result remains around 3 stars, ± 0.3 . Notably, some countries had a higher score than others, particularly for Outcome 4, which received an average rating of 2.4 in Guatemala, and 3.2 in Liberia, but overall ratings reflected a strong positive perception of the outcomes achieved by the programme.

Table 12 Performance of the JP RWEE on achieving results in key outcome areas, e-survey perception results³⁹

Results achieved by JP RWEE (average stars 1-4)	Total	4 UN	Other
Rural women's improved food and nutrition security	3.09	3.18	2.95
Increased incomes to sustain livelihoods	3.15	3.15	3.14
Enhanced leadership and participation in making decisions	3.07	3.03	3.14
More gender-responsive policy environment	2.77	2.77	2.78

Rating from 1 to 4 stars where 1 star = No results achieved and 4 stars = Significant results achieved.

³⁶ JP RWEE annual consolidated report 2019 confirmed by field interviews February 2020.

³⁷ JP RWEE global evaluation interviews 2021, Ethiopia KII.

³⁸ JP RWEE global evaluation interviews 2021, Rwanda KII.

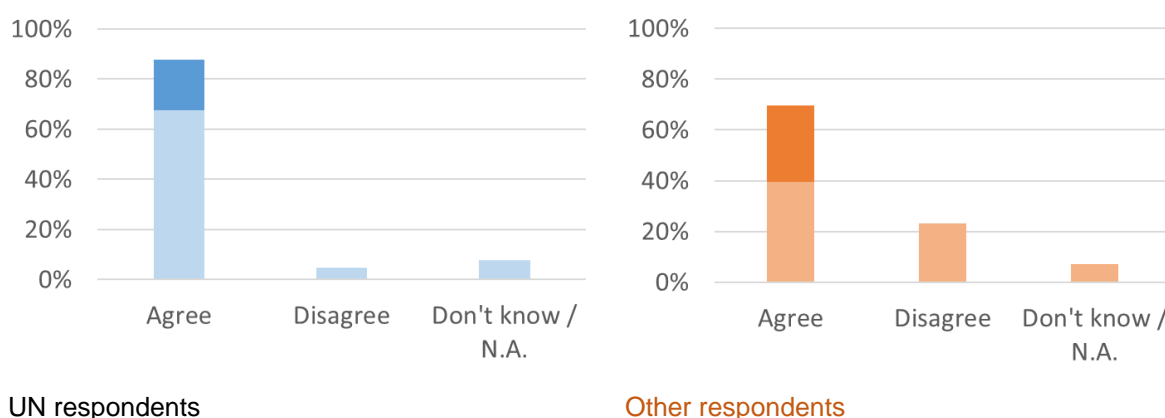
³⁹ There were very few skipped ratings, only the fourth rating had more than one abstention, and it had six, which is still very low. The average figure obtained excluded skipped ratings – the final rating was low because more people gave it a low rating.

90. Though the e-survey did not include direct beneficiaries, the overall positive findings need to be treated with care as biases cannot be excluded. However, these results merely confirm what is reported in the documentation and what interviewed beneficiaries shared.
91. Despite consistency between data reported and qualitative feedback from beneficiaries, achievements need to be considered with caution because the JP RWEE has focused its data collection on outputs (see discussion around M&E below) rather than on outcome. We know for instance the numbers of beneficiaries reached for different activities, but we do not have measurements for outcomes: for example, how effective has training in leadership or entrepreneurship been? There is also limited reference to the national context: For example, in Nepal, it is true that more women have roles at the local level and have been elected as local representatives in the new administrative structures, but how much is this due to programmes such as the JP RWEE or to legislation and positive discrimination demanding a quota for women’s representation (see comments on constraints)?
92. There is also no data on progress towards gender equality and though the JP RWEE aims have a “transformative” agenda, there is no data on the degree of transformation or a measure of how transformative these results are.

Extent of unintended positive or negative outcomes

93. There have been a number of unexpected positive results.
94. In Nepal, a drop in migration of men from households where a woman has been involved in the programme has been reported during field visits. An estimated 25 percent of men who used to migrate seasonally to Kathmandu or India now stay home as increased agricultural activity has provided opportunity for generating income. There is also anecdotal evidence of a dip in migration flow towards Nigeria from Niger for the same reasons. Though the evaluation has not been able to ascertain a direct contribution, some of the men interviewed have explained that new local opportunities provided through the JP RWEE motivated them not to travel. This dip in migration flow may also have been accentuated in the COVID-19 pandemic, during which movement has been more restricted and border crossings have carried added risks.
95. Although the evaluation did not focus on this issue, interview data from all countries have indicated that rural households with women involved in the JP RWEE programme have managed to be more resilient to the impacts of COVID-19 because of the increased availability of assets (see Box 2 below). This was backed up by the e-survey where over 80 percent of respondents agreed that beneficiaries of the JP RWEE were more resilient to shocks such as pandemics as a result of the programme, though the evaluation has not compared the resilience of beneficiaries with non-beneficiaries.

Figure 4 Results from the e-survey statement “Beneficiaries of the JP RWEE are more resilient to shocks (e.g. natural catastrophes, pandemics etc.)”



Source: JP RWEE Evaluation Global e-survey. Dark colours = strong agreement/disagreement with the statement

96. Whilst it was intended to create a momentum for change at policy level, in Nepal there has been unexpected support from the local government, which donated land where a storage centre was constructed. The local government has been supportive of the formalization of farmers’ groups into cooperatives, and the Baghmati municipality, which donated the land, would like to see more groups formed and formalized.

97. FAO, WFP and IFAD have been given USD 5 million by the EU for a global gender transformation programme which builds on the experience from JP RWEE, but it does not include UN Women in Guatemala.

Box 2 COVID-19 resilience across JP RWEE countries

Impact

The impacts of COVID-19 on JP RWEE beneficiaries have been acutely felt across all seven countries. Commonly identified impacts on women include: increased unpaid care and domestic work, gender-based violence in the home, loss of income, increased school dropouts amongst girls, reduced mobility including access to markets and others.

In specific relation to the JP RWEE programme, face-to-face interventions such as training sessions have had to be postponed. Anecdotal evidence reveals a reduction in communication and coordination of cooperatives as well as decreased levels of savings as individuals face multiple financial threats resulting from COVID-19. In countries such as Ethiopia, beneficiaries are not only dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 but also from environmental shocks and political instability. The combination of these factors creates increased threats to sustainability.

Resilience

There is some evidence suggesting that the JP RWEE programme increased peoples' resilience during COVID-19. Three Rapid Gender Assessments were conducted in 2020 in Guatemala, Niger and Ethiopia whilst evidence from the other JP RWEE countries is largely anecdotal.

In Niger, the Rapid Assessment states: "The resources acquired during the JP RWEE helped participants to face the pandemic; social networks and strengthened solidarity have helped beneficiaries to support each other; credit savings banks and income generated through the various collective activities provided easy access to cash without having to sell livestock when prices had fallen; cereal stocks and cereal banks have reduced impact on household food insecurity." (JP RWEE, 2020l) Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that diversified sources of income have helped strengthen resilience to shocks.

In Ethiopia, the Rapid Gender Assessment (JP RWEE, 2020k) identified that cooperatives have enabled members to withdraw credit from the association to deal with the economic shock, whilst others were able to sustain their livelihoods by drawing on income raised through business activities formed during the JP RWEE programme. Training sessions have also helped significantly as beneficiaries were able to cope with the impacts of the pandemic by utilizing their savings in an efficient manner. JP RWEE training also encourages good hygiene practices which help to mitigate against the spread of disease. This type of resilience has also been recorded in Rwanda where similar training has taken place. Beneficiaries have also reported that financial reserves earned through JP RWEE have helped (interview with an implementation partner, Rwanda 2021).

In place of face-to-face training, beneficiaries in Kyrgyzstan have benefited from some online training which, despite its shortcomings, has provided a continuation of the programme. As a result, social isolation was reduced as beneficiaries supported one another whilst also mobilizing new members even during lockdown. The self-help groups were used for disseminating health guidance and produced masks for sale (evaluation interview, Kyrgyzstan, 2021).

Evidence from Liberia also highlights some resilience of JP RWEE beneficiaries to COVID-19 who utilized food reserves and cash savings. However, UN Women mobilized emergency resources that provided finances to savings and loans groups so that they could restart operations. In Guatemala the Rapid Assessment (JP RWEE, 2020m) found that 98 percent of women indicated that the Savings and Credit Groups continued to operate despite the challenges of COVID-19. Finally, in Nepal, anecdotal evidence suggested that JP RWEE beneficiaries had demonstrated greater resilience, relying on food stocks, some cash reserves and benefiting from various awareness-raising sessions.

Negative unintended results

98. Surprisingly perhaps, given the existing body of evidence in the literature on the subject beyond the JP RWEE, during the field visits beneficiaries or KII did not report any negative effects on women's increased workload, tensions within the family or jealousy between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. None of these potential negative effects have been reported to the best of our knowledge in the programme documentation.

99. In Ethiopia, the FAO Country Programme evaluation (FAO, 2020c) found that some women in Afar region were in debt as a result of the cows granted by JP RWEE – unsuitable “borena” cattle breeds were given, which required intensive care and resources to sustain the cattle in the hot arid Afar environment. As a result, the cattle had negative return in terms of milk productivity versus fodder and water inputs.

JP RWEE governance

Finding 6. Governance of the JP RWEE has consisted of global and country-level steering and technical structures established specifically for the JP RWEE, supported by a global coordinator and national coordinators. Effective technical coordination has evolved over time through the global TAC and the country NAC. The NAC at country level has supported collaborative programme design, planning and information sharing, progressively ensuring unity and coordination amongst agencies. The global TAC has provided appreciated inputs into country planning. The Steering Committee at global and national levels in most countries, comprising the four agencies, and government and service providers at country level has not provided input to its full potential.

100. The dedication of staff at global and national level has been critical for the programme. The capacity of the national coordinator to communicate, motivate focal points, liaise with government, agency and IP staff and maintain momentum has been very important. In Niger the NC was recruited through a competitive process and is a full-time staff member dedicated entirely to the JP RWEE. In Nepal on the other hand, the NC was an existing UN Women staff member for whom the JP RWEE role is part of a larger portfolio of activities. In Kyrgyzstan there has been a succession of appointees over the life of the programme (five in total) and since 2019 the deputy head of the lead agency acts as the NC. In Liberia the National Coordinator (NC) is working full-time on the JP RWEE and was already working as a coordinator for the Joint Programme on Gender Equality and Women’s Economic Empowerment (JP GEWEE), which is seen as a predecessor for JP RWEE in Liberia. In Rwanda, Guatemala and Ethiopia the NCs work full-time on the JP RWEE.

“The quality of the National coordinator is key to the success of the process: not just in terms of skills set but also personality and legitimacy within the context. It needs diplomatic skill but also sufficient assertiveness to push back and ensure agencies deliver.”

Source: JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews, global level 2021

101. One remit of the NSC in countries is to ensure coordination and harmonization of gender interventions, with representation from the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRC) and key government ministries, including the ministries responsible for Agriculture as well as Gender. However, in some countries (e.g. Rwanda, Liberia and Kyrgyzstan) continuity of the NSC was impacted by changes in government officials, or, in the case of Liberia, change in the UN Resident Coordinator. In Guatemala, the NSC was reported to be less effective in ensuring real coordination and joint approaches among the agencies by some of the country and global respondents. For example, they did not meet to coordinate for the COVID-19 response. As a result, reports and plans are not being routinely shared nationally, which poses issues for ensuring external coherence. There are, however, some examples of activities linking the JP RWEE with other initiatives showing the potential for greater collaboration with other actors and programmes.
102. Joint annual work planning between UN agencies, government partners, and communities, has been key to allowing the programme to adapt and respond to needs. In Niger for example the NAC meets on a monthly basis to review progress and adjust planning of activities as needed. With the existence of the actors’ platform, meetings also happen at local level and feedback into the national-level discussion. In both Guatemala and Rwanda, the NAC has met frequently and technical cooperation according to interviewees is considered good (in Rwanda) and adequate (in Guatemala). In Guatemala a challenge is the remoteness of the implementation area, and the fact that the coordination happens nationally when the implementation happens in the field.

Internal and external constraints

Finding 7. Internal constraints: Gaps in data occur at the monitoring and evaluation process. The current quantitative focus on data collected with a lack of disaggregation beyond sex makes it difficult to know who is being reached, and who is being left out. It is thus difficult to assess whether amongst the marginalized rural women targeted some extremely vulnerable women might

be left out. External constraints across all the countries suggest contextual factors which impede progress.

103. The results framework that focuses on outputs, makes it difficult to monitor closely who exactly is being reached and even more so who benefits from multiple inputs. This is especially important for countries like Nepal, where the JP RWEE operates within a socially heterogeneous and hierarchical context and multiple layers of exclusions apply. The absence of disaggregation makes it difficult to identify what kind of women (single mothers, single women, widows, for example, tend to be more marginalized in many countries amongst the category of marginal women) are more likely to be involved or to benefit from the packages on offer. Similarly, households living further away from markets or road networks are less likely to be able to benefit from market linkages. These are just some examples of constraints some groups of women may encounter on top of being poor, unskilled and marginalized. The concept of intersectionality is not explicitly discussed in the documents.
104. The evaluation team has not been made aware of studies which assess the level of social inclusion and whether the selection criteria for participating in groups may have resulted in exclusion of some groups in some contexts. Overall, the JP RWEE targets marginalized rural women, such as in Rwanda where the JP RWEE targeted including households from lower socioeconomic status, women living with HIV/AIDS, and survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). However, within the category of “marginalized rural women” there are different levels of marginalization: for example, having access to land as a condition for membership of groups in Nepal can be exclusionary as many of the marginalized women do not have access to land because of social norms and caste discrimination.
105. The gaps in monitoring data collected makes it unclear how many of the rural women benefit from one, more or all, of the interventions. For example, in 2017,⁴⁰ it was found that across all the countries, “26,500 women were trained on innovative agricultural techniques, 9,000 women received nutritional advice, 3,000 women participated in leadership trainings and 11,600 women accessed financial services”. This sort of reporting has limitations because (i) the number of attendees to trainings for example does not provide much information about progress made or outcomes of the newly acquired skills, and (ii) it is not possible to know which women out of the 26,000 women trained, received all or only some of the other types of support. At this stage, analysis has not been conducted to gauge, out of the women who reported progress and improvement in their lives, how many had had access to different types of support.. This also means that the data does not allow for an assessment of the effectiveness of some inputs or some combinations of inputs, nor can an assessment of the added value of the different agencies be conducted.
106. Similarly, there has been no monitoring of the effect of specifically targeting men in the programme. Men have been involved in Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia and Niger, but not in Nepal; they have been targeted in Guatemala and Rwanda but not initially. This would have been an opportunity to assess for example what kind of interventions are more effective in changing men’s behaviour. This was beyond the scope of the evaluation but anecdotal evidence from the field visits would suggest that men are receptive to gender norm changes as they can see the economic benefit to them and the household. In Niger men have reported that having their wives able to contribute to men’s expenses (like schooling) was key to realizing the potential of women and to men accepting a share of some of the household chores in return (in Nepal).
107. COVID-19 has stopped and delayed work; the irregularity, the delays and the small amounts of funding have also affected the smooth implementation of activities; natural disasters, floods, hurricane, landslides, earthquake, Ebola, have impeded mobility, put activities on hold and affected agricultural production (also affected by unreliable seasons); and finally, structural and political changes at country level have also slowed down the process as government staff turnover is high.

2.4. EQ 4 – Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient?

Finding 8. Agencies have worked together to decide on priorities and deliver against programme results. Nonetheless decision making and funding have remained insufficiently aligned with the rhythm and needs of implementation. Differences in disbursement procedures reduced synchronization of delivery and capacity to deliver in line with needs. Working with multiple

⁴⁰ The JP RWEE pathway to women’s empowerment in JP RWEE, 2018b.

agencies and implementation partners has aligned with UN reform but efficiency gains could be made. Annual work plans have provided an opportunity for review and learning, with corresponding adjustments, but monitoring overall has suffered from significant weaknesses affecting knowledge management and communication of results.

Achievement of results

108. Various factors have affected the JP RWEE from achieving results. Significant efforts were put into mobilization of funding at the start of the JP RWEE. In spite of these efforts, and although the JP RWEE was reportedly considered a flagship programme by donors,⁴¹ there was a significant (more than two-year) delay in mobilizing funds which produced a challenging start in all countries. At the start-up and once funding had been mobilized, the amount of funding secured fell considerably short of initial plans which created challenges in terms of rolling out the programme. In addition, funding has been provided in annual tranches without visibility of the total amount that the programme would receive.
109. Annual funding, different disbursement rates and procedures, and lack of long-term visibility are found by this evaluation to have affected the achievement of results. Annual work plan cycles – although important in terms of providing technical inputs, clarifying priorities, and creating joint ownership – affected speed of implementation. Agencies in country have had to wait for approval of plans by the International Steering Committee, and for information on amounts allocated. Differences in disbursement procedures – due to different systems and processes within each agency – produced further delays with knock on effects in terms of synchronization of delivery and capacity to deliver in line with needs. These factors were found to have compromised a more coherent and planned response amongst Implementing Agencies and Partners on the ground.⁴²
110. In addition, annual allocations by donors created a lack of visibility on future funding and further uncertainties, and this has meant that at times it has been unclear whether the programme would continue. Lack of visibility on amounts of funding and when it would be available have affected the performance of the programme, for example in Guatemala where this factor led to partners being informed that the programme was closing, only to start up again a few months later.
111. The annual funding cycles also affected internal processes such as delays in starting up activities and needing to select/re-contract implementation partners, where in some cases implementation partners did not wish to continue. It has also resulted in additional transaction costs in bringing new partners up to speed and in a loss of continuity, all of which has had implications on efficiency. The evaluation notes that these issues are not unique to the JP RWEE and reflect broader challenges that have also been identified in evaluations of other multi-agency programmes. Addressing these challenges requires a commitment to long-term funding by donors, and reforms at the level of the UN agencies to facilitate and speed up processes for disbursement (UNICEF & UNFPA, 2018).
112. Annual work plans and technical working group meetings have guided the delivery of the JP RWEE. The existence of a system of annual planning has been important. For technical staff and partners at country level, annual plans were reported to have provided an opportunity for reviewing progress and for making adjustments. These opportunities have been valued by agencies, and implementation partners, and have allowed for helpful/important adjustments. For example, in Ethiopia, annual planning and regular technical working group meetings were seen as essential for improving initial challenges of joint working, including duplication of activities between agencies. It was also important in allowing the programme to adapt and respond to needs, including the introduction of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to the programme. In Niger the technical working group met monthly to discuss operational issues. Feedback provided to countries on their work plans from the TAC have mostly been reported as being helpful and has focused on effectiveness of joint delivery.
113. Selected efficiency issues have progressively been addressed and changes have been made in approach and coverage. In some countries, there were initial challenges with regards to the lack of geographical focus as a result of agencies working in different areas and not coinciding with the same beneficiaries. Reducing the number of geographical locations (e.g. in Rwanda and Nepal), better defining complementarity, and improving overlap of activities on the same beneficiaries enabled the programme to be more efficient. However, in Liberia, the programme was seen as too geographically spread out, which meant that FAO and WFP were not able to reach all beneficiaries with their activities, which reduced synergy between agencies and meant that rural women were not all receiving an integrated

⁴¹ Interview with global stakeholders by this evaluation.

⁴² A point also highlighted in Hollister, 2019.

package of support from all agencies. In Guatemala, changes were also made over time to improve the programme's efficiency by reducing the number of implementation partners (e.g. by working with a single implementation partner). This was reported in interviews and focus groups to have improved communication, reduced delays, and allowed for better synchronization of activities.

114. Nonetheless, at the time of the evaluation it was evident that further gains on efficiency could be made by considering whether agencies all need to have an implementation role and by continuing to reduce fragmentation among implementation partners.

Monitoring of results

115. Monitoring of programme processes and results has been weak with duplicate systems producing additional inefficiencies. The JP RWEE programme did not include a monitoring framework from the start but rather foresaw that “a comprehensive Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) will be developed as an integral part of the programme, highlighting the performance indicators, data sources, collection methods and frequency, responsible actors and baselines and targets for each result (goal, outcomes and outputs) ... in collaboration with local partners and with technical support from the monitoring and evaluation sections of the four entities.”⁴³ This has been a significant limitation. For agencies monitoring at country level this has been a double task – with agencies having to report internally to their headquarters against corporate indicators and the requirements of their M&E systems and having to comply with the JP RWEE monitoring requirements once these were made clear.
116. IFAD has had a role working on M&E in some of the countries, including Guatemala and Rwanda. In Guatemala IFAD designed a monitoring framework across the four agencies. This experience has highlighted the significant challenges of reconciling the JP RWEE monitoring requirements and those of individual agencies, as well as trying to align monitoring between four different UN agencies, combined with initial misunderstandings about the role of IFAD (with some agencies assuming IFAD would conduct all the monitoring on behalf of the agencies when in fact this remained the responsibility of the individual agencies).
117. Annual work plans have provided an opportunity for review and learning, with corresponding adjustments, but monitoring overall has suffered from significant weaknesses. This has made it difficult to understand how processes have evolved, and to monitor what inputs beneficiaries have received (and what gaps exist). The evaluation noted that the planned Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the programme, which could have provided an important moment for adjustment and learning, did not take place. Instead, four separate country evaluations were commissioned. These evaluations have provided insights into country implementation but could not provide a broader view on the global dimensions of the programme.
118. In the field, agencies have carried out supervision/monitoring visits together which was reported by technical teams and implementation partners to have been an effective way of providing technical advice and feedback, and has also been important in bringing out areas that need improvement (mentioned in interviews in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Guatemala, Niger). Interviews at country level suggest this has helped to enhance joint work and this was reported in Niger⁴⁴ as an effective way of feeding real monitoring data into the annual plans.

Relevance and effectiveness of the criteria were used to guide decision making on the use of resources by the programme

Finding 9. The JP RWEE prepared a work plan compliance guidance note which included expectations on resource use. In practice, a pragmatic choice was made to divide resources equally between agencies to overcome biases in resource allocation, in part in light of limited funding. In some countries, attempts were made to align funding with priorities of the work plan, although these efforts were only moderately successful.

119. The JP RWEE project document allocated the role of decision making for financial resources to the global and national steering committees (JP RWEE, 2012, p. 23). Specifically, the document contained the following provisions for decisions around funding:
- The ISC is tasked with the allocation of funds mobilized at international level, and responsible for discussing the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) requirements and priorities regarding the

⁴³ FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP (2012). Joint Programme Document – Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women Economic Empowerment, p. 25.

⁴⁴ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews National level Niger 2021.

implementation modalities, results-based reporting, and information management including donor visibility.

- The NSC in each country oversees the allocation of funds to the different components of the programme, with a provision in the programme document for different ways of proceeding for earmarked and non-earmarked funding.

120. However, in practice, as limited guidance was initially provided when it came to dividing the resources, competition between agencies undermined the commitment to work jointly. In the first round of funding this resulted in unbalanced sharing of funds. For example, in Nepal FAO did not receive any funding.⁴⁵ In Liberia FAO was not involved properly from the start of the process causing Liberia to almost drop the JP RWEE programme altogether. It took considerable efforts at the global level to rectify the situation.
121. At country level allocation of funding has taken place based either on principles of equal division between agencies (Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Ethiopia) or has attempted to reflect the work plan/specific roles of agencies in implementation (Guatemala, Liberia, Kyrgyzstan). Thus, in Guatemala, IFAD received a smaller share of the resources given its allocated role of doing JP RWEE programme monitoring and evaluation. In all countries, additional funds are then allocated to the agency at country level that is the lead agency and hosts the national coordinator position (see Figure 3 above in section 1.3).
122. In the field, the consequences of some of these decisions and their efficiency (and effectiveness) were noted from anecdotal evidence. Thus, across countries, there have been challenges in delivery because of insufficient resources overall and because of insufficient attention to funding needs across agencies that produced situations where not all beneficiaries could be reached with the full package of support. This reflects differences in costs of different activities. As a result agencies were not able to deliver the same input to all beneficiaries.⁴⁶
123. Processes of equal division between agencies are acknowledged to be common in joint UN programmes and thus not unique to the JP RWEE.⁴⁷ However, a pragmatic choice is often made to divide resources equally to overcome biases in resource allocation, as agencies expressed the view that the benefits of working together are perceived as outweighing some of the potential inefficiencies of doing so. In addition, from a practical perspective, interviewees from the global TAC and country-level advisory group stressed that the reduced amounts of funding available (given that funds raised fell short of budgeted amounts, and were provided in annual tranches as discussed earlier) made it even more challenging to assess equal division between countries and agencies.

How efficient was the governance structure surrounding decision making in general and in particular, related expenditures and fund allocation?

Finding 10. The governance structures have been a critical component of the JP RWEE design and support to implementation. Technical coordination at global and country levels has improved and became more efficient over time, in part through dedicated staff positioned at JP RWEE. NSCs and the ISC have functioned below expectation in terms of providing guidance on expenditure and fund allocation. Analysis of costs and cost-efficiency has not received attention. Coordinating among four different agencies at technical level and in implementation results in transaction costs.

124. The JP RWEE Programme Document provided specific provisions in terms of the structures to be established.
125. It took time across the different countries to establish good technical coordination between the agencies – both at the level of the TAC (global) and the NAC – in part reflecting that the JP RWEE was an innovative programme at the time. At the time of the evaluation, in most countries technical coordination had improved and benefited from the existence of dedicated persons and from the feedback that countries receive on annual plans. However, some differences persist between countries.
126. At the level of programme decision making, the NSCs and the ISC have been challenged to provide a sufficiently strong level of guidance on resource allocation (see also preceding sub-EQ 3 (section 2.3)). In particular, the evaluation noted that analysis of costs and cost-efficiency has not received attention. The evaluation team noted that contrary to what had been planned in the JP RWEE Programme

⁴⁵ IFAD also did not get funded but initially did not have human resources to be active in implementation.

⁴⁶ Rwanda interviews with IP highlighted this challenge with targets being set for reaching beneficiaries with certain inputs but insufficient funding being provided to do so.

⁴⁷ Global interviews by this evaluation.

Document, the office of the Resident Coordinator has not had a co-chairing role in the NSC for the programme.⁴⁸ Various interviewees regretted that this has not happened, in particular given the UN reform agenda, as it could have provided an opportunity to help ensure a more objective allocation of resources.

2.5. EQ 5 – What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will remain for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life?

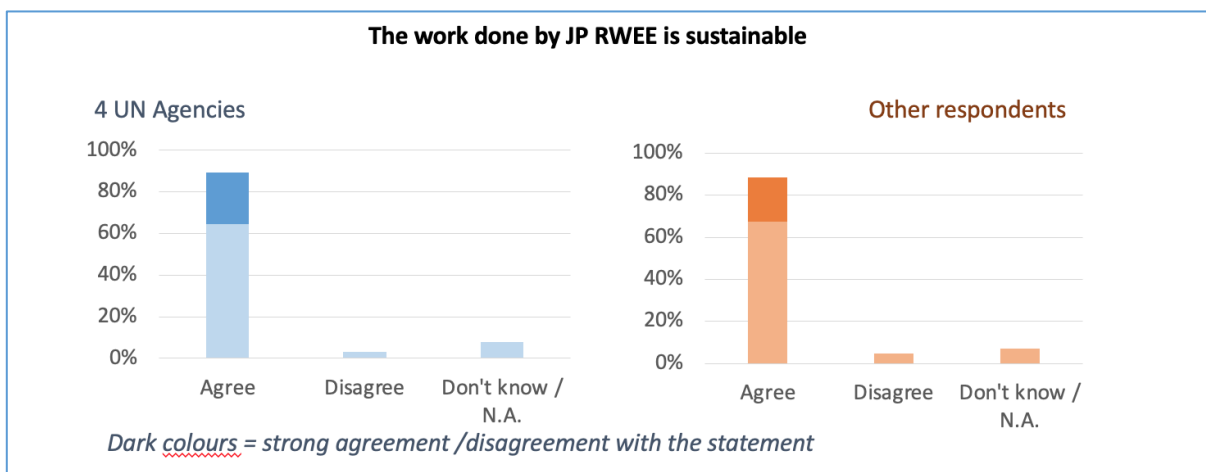
127. A first approach to answer the question of sustainability is to gauge the extent to which there are indications that the JP RWEE programme has led to transformative results.

Sustainability of results achieved

Finding 11. Selected elements of the JP RWEE show signs of sustainability that are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme. The savings groups that have been established through JP RWEE emerge as a powerful transformative element of the programme with considerable likelihood of being sustained.

128. The survey responses suggest a positive perception by survey respondents of the sustainability of JP RWEE activities. Figure 5 below reveals that almost 90 percent of those surveyed agree or strongly agree that the work done by JP RWEE is sustainable, without a significant difference between those respondents working for a UN agency, and those who do not.

Figure 5 Survey respondent views on the likely sustainability of JP RWEE activities



Source: Evaluation team analysis of survey responses

129. Country studies broadly confirmed the views on sustainability. From the country studies it is clear that significant transformative results have been achieved by the JP RWEE programme for direct beneficiaries, which will continue beyond the duration of the programme.

130. Thus, the country case studies – which systematically reviewed documentary evidence, and involved interviews and focus groups that triangulated perceptions (in addition to fieldwork in some countries) – consistently brought to the forefront the changes in the level of self-esteem and self-confidence of individual women, how they were able to make decisions at household level, their involvement in community life, and their role in making decisions in the community as a group. These changes have put into motion individual and collective processes of change which informants at country level were mostly confident should be able to continue without further intervention. In the next phases of the programme it will be critical to monitor and understand to what extent these changes are structural, and allow women to take decisions beyond those in the traditional sphere of the education of children and small household consumption, and to monitor that these changes are not eroded if activities such as Food for Work (FFW) – which bring income to women – end. As illustrated by a survey response “The

⁴⁸ The Programme document specified on p. 23 that the National SC will be co-chaired by the designated government official, and the UN Resident Coordinator in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, or the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (DSRSG) in Liberia.

self-help groups form a social networking instrument for local women to join and advocate for their rights, access resources and being able to voice their opinions” (UN agency respondent). This is very clear in Niger where the Dimitra Clubs are a powerful space for women to share and for men and women to listen to each other.⁴⁹

131. The savings groups that have been established across the different countries emerge as a very powerful transformative element of the programme with considerable likelihood of being sustained (see Box 3 below). Many of these savings initiatives worked with existing groups of women to start up saving schemes. The importance of the savings group has been demonstrated by the role these have played in enabling women and their families to be more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the different countries, there is also evidence from the field (in countries where the evaluation conducted beneficiary interviews) and from key informant interviews, of the fact that savings groups have helped women cope with the impact of the pandemic (see Box 2 above).

Box 3 Guatemala experience of savings and credit cooperatives – on the road to sustainability

Community savings and credit cooperatives are an informal microfinance modality whereby group members pool funds to lend to one another, or to invest in their communities (Schechter, 2017). Through these arrangements, those with limited access to formal financial services can obtain sums of money that enable them to engage in economic activity at a scale that would not be otherwise possible. The community savings modality is well established and widespread in Guatemala, and IFAD’s Sustainable Rural Development Programme for the Northern Region (PRODENORTE) supported more than 150 savings and credit groups during its implementation from 2008 to 2020 (IFAD, 2020a). PRODENORTE has strategic linkages with JP RWEE, which provided a framework for the replication and scale-up of the savings and credit modality by the other JP RWEE agencies (IFAD, 2020b), and from 2016, activities to strengthen women’s savings groups were integrated into JP RWEE activities under Outcome 2. The JP RWEE Guatemala 2019 Annual Report records USD 106,062 saved by 46 groups during that year.

During data collection for the Guatemala country study, there was wide acknowledgement, across all stakeholder groups, that access to finance through savings groups has been important in achieving economic empowerment, bolstering sustainability of the women’s organizations, and increasing resilience in the face of crises, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, agency staff also pointed out that the savings themselves are just one aspect of this methodology: what gives these groups real potential for impact and sustainability – and where JP RWEE support has been key – is the combination of access to finance with the opportunity for women to organize themselves. Savings and credit groups can provide spaces for ongoing capacity building, formal trainings, and scale-up and diversification of entrepreneurial activities, and establishment of market linkages. The emphasis on organizational strengthening has sought to develop the cooperative structures through which women’s groups can take advantage of gainful opportunities and operate sustainably after the end of the intervention.

As women’s groups become more formalized, more opportunities become open to them, such as linkages to wider and more lucrative markets for their products. The “Centro Certificado” in Polochic is a case in point. Here, one of the women’s groups reached a level of organizational development that positioned it to apply (with JP RWEE and Ministry of Economy (MINECO) support) for certification on the environmental and sanitary registers, which if successful, will allow it to sell its products in formal establishments such as supermarkets and pharmacies. Thus, in the framework of the JP RWEE, community savings and credit are part of a broader modality of organizational strengthening and diversification of activities that can enhance results and sustainability, and ultimately contribute to rural women’s economic empowerment.

132. More broadly, the country studies and the open-ended survey responses identify the following key factors as being critical elements contributing to sustainability of selected elements of the programme:
- The **focus on training and skills provided to women** (all countries, and most frequently mentioned survey response), with a particular emphasis on the behaviour change methodologies and leadership skills. An example of this is the approach of Dimitra clubs in Niger which focuses on empowering men and women to participate in their own development and has contributed to changing social norms.
 - The **quality and breadth of partnerships** (mentioned in most countries, and second most frequent survey response). Key characteristics of partnerships include the linking of beneficiaries and government through partnership, work with local organizations to allow them to capitalize on experience and enable links to other activities outside of the JP RWEE, and integrated programming

⁴⁹ JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews, national level Niger 2021.

by partners. In Liberia, for example, strategic partnerships have been built with a range of stakeholders. For example, a private-sector partnership with Orange Mobile has enabled expansion of the programme with an innovative way of empowering rural women through savings; strong partnerships have also been built with local civil society networks enabling social mobilization and advocacy for raising awareness and fostering local leaders' support for rural women's land tenure security.

- **Strengthening local groups, including savings groups** (all countries, and the third most important survey response). This includes VSLA groups which have seen the JP RWEE successfully combining access to finance with the opportunity for women to organize themselves (see Box 3).
- **Government and community/local level ownership** (most countries, and fourth most important survey response. In Ethiopia, the foundation of JP RWEE is working within existing government structures (agricultural office, women's affairs office, cooperative unit etc.), which creates government ownership and has built capacity of government organizations and enabled a multisectoral approach to the programme and to addressing women's economic empowerment. Design and annual work planning of the programme has always been done jointly with Government, allowing the programme to adapt and respond to national needs. For example, IDPs were introduced into the programme in Oromia, following conflict in 2020.
- **Recruiting and training trainers and facilitators locally** and in some cases from amongst former beneficiaries (e.g. Liberia, Guatemala). For example, in Liberia the utilization of community women as facilitators has been seen as an effective model to provide beneficiaries with one-to-one literacy and business skills training and support.
- **Linking community groups to external markets** (e.g. by bringing in social entrepreneurs in Guatemala to enable women to improve their products and better position them in the market).
- **Linking women and community groups with existing services** in contexts where because of a range of constraints (such as access, lack of literacy skills, social barriers) women were having difficulty accessing these prior to JP RWEE support (e.g. Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Guatemala).

133. **Country studies also clearly highlighted where nuancing on prospects of sustainability is needed.** Country ownership, especially at national level, remains fragile in most countries (and is discussed in the next sub-question). There are also particular concerns about those activities which require investments to be sustained. These are further discussed below.

Finding 12. Sustainability remains challenging for activities that require sizeable investments, activities that remunerate women for their work, and those that require capacity to purchase inputs. In addition, sustainability is challenging where implementation partners have key roles and where government services cannot take over these roles.

134. While the evaluation evidence indeed highlights that key elements of the programme are sustainable, there are also areas of the programme where sustainability remains challenging. This concerns activities that:
- Are dependent on investments (e.g. greenhouses – Rwanda and Nepal – or technical maintenance of multifunction platforms – Niger). Efforts made in some of the countries to connect beneficiaries to other sources of financing have been an important avenue to attenuate this risk.
 - Remunerate women for their work through Food for Work (FFW) initiatives (e.g. Kyrgyzstan) and which are dependent on external funding.
 - Require capacity to purchase inputs – e.g. poultry and small husbandry – in particular when programme beneficiaries also face other external challenges such as droughts or the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Guatemala).
135. The challenges to sustainability of certain activities are illustrated by the difficulties that women have faced when transitioning out of the programme. In Guatemala, the evaluation fieldwork found that when withdrawing from the programme, women faced challenges in maintaining the required level of feed for the animals and, as a result, women have had to reduce their own food consumption in order to sustain animal feeding. In Kyrgyzstan, champions were trained by implementing partners to implement GALs and BALI methodologies. However, evaluations of both the GALs and BALI methodologies in 2020 showed that regular support and follow-up is needed to ensure motivation of participants over time, and that if support is paused for one or two years, the pace of implementation can be lost. Continued mentorship is vital for success of business initiatives. This means sustainability is currently reliant on ongoing support provided by implementing partners. These difficulties suggest that it will be critically important to review some of the approaches and activities so that they can be consolidated or adapted in the next phase of the programme for the current beneficiaries/intervention areas. Due to a high level

of vulnerability of the targeted women, most countries require sustainable practices at the design phase of every activity.

Extent to which the JP RWEE is contributing to national ownership to sustain JP RWEE efforts

Finding 13. Replication of the JP RWEE has been occurring at a modest scale in most contexts. This has happened through elements of the programme being taken over by partners (including government). It has also taken place through the design of other projects that integrate lessons from the JP RWEE, as has been done by subgroups of JP RWEE partners. These efforts do not yet constitute a sufficient guarantee of sustainability.

136. Progress towards national ownership has been made in some contexts but remains limited and will need to be considerably consolidated if the programme benefits are to be sustained. Thus, in Ethiopia, the JP RWEE has been working within existing government structures (agricultural office, women's affairs office, cooperative unit etc.), creating government ownership, and building the capacity of government organizations across all sectors, which is seen as a key sustainability factor for Ethiopia. In a rare example, Oromia Region has shown commitment to allocating a budget to the JP RWEE, including the revolving fund activity. In Niger, the decentralized agriculture and veterinary services have been increasingly involved in JP RWEE activities by participating in training and monitoring visits and by responding to demands for support from rural women.
137. There is evidence of efforts in various countries to coordinate with government, especially at decentralized levels, with a lot of focus on training. For example, in Liberia, at the county and district level, the programme is coordinated with government structures, with WFP and FAO implementing their activities through Government and investing in the training of staff, which contributes to sustainability. In some countries at decentralized level (e.g. municipal level in Guatemala, regions in Ethiopia) selected practices have been adopted. However, this does not in itself constitute an assurance of continuity. In Rwanda, the programme has also been well coordinated with local government and has included a focus on training. However, the country study highlighted a need for a more holistic approach of involvement which goes beyond training and planning so that focus is on strengthening local government commitment and capacity to implement gender policies (which in the case of Rwanda are relatively strong). These policies need to remain significant to translate into permanent changes for women in terms of their de facto chances of equal access to land, services and credit. In Liberia, the programme has also built important partnerships with the private sector and CSOs which contribute to sustainability. Partnerships with private sector have also been a focus in Guatemala through the intermediary of the Ministry of Commerce.
138. There is evidence that among the partner agencies and the implementation partners, some of the methodologies and approaches are being replicated (RERP in Nepal is helping with the dissemination of the GALS methods within JP RWEE formed groups). There is also some evidence of replication of activities at national level, but these remain incipient. Thus, in Guatemala, some processes/approaches, such as agricultural technologies that help farmers increase efficiency/productivity (promoted by FAO), have been taken up by MAGA (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food/Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación, Guatemala); WFP has provided organizational strengthening for women's groups, and UN Women was at the time of this evaluation in the process of signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MINECO to continue supporting the development and commercialization of products after the JP RWEE ends. However, these activities by themselves do not constitute a sufficient guarantee of sustainability and cover only a part of the overall package of support (activities, policies, budgets, targets) which are essential to make durable inroads into women's economic empowerment.
139. Replication has occurred in part through JP RWEE agencies that have designed new initiatives that include areas of focus to replicate the success of the programme; in Guatemala for example WFP used the experience to get funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for a collaboration with UN Women on supporting women affected by violence where the women that are identified are referred to WFP for food assistance (mostly child-mothers). IFAD has also submitted proposals based on the experience of the JP RWEE through the SDG fund for a project in Guatemala with UNDP and UN Women which was not approved, and a project in Mexico with FAO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) which was funded.

Box 4 Barefoot College

Barefoot College is an international non-profit organization based in India whose work revolves around installing solar power systems in marginalized communities, and training women from those communities in

solar engineering so that they can then operate and maintain the systems. In 2017, the JP RWEE in Guatemala formed a partnership with Barefoot College, and through cooperation with the Municipality of Tukurú, two women were selected as scholarship recipients and sent on a six-month solar engineering course in India. Upon their graduation, the women returned and installed solar panels in three villages, giving electricity to 100 homes that are not connected to the national power grid.^{50 51}

The partnership with Barefoot College adds value to the JP RWEE in several ways. First, it empowers female scholarship recipients by giving them specialist skills in solar engineering, as well as the opportunity to travel and experience life in another country. Second, it empowers communities by providing them with electricity, which brings wider implications and possibilities for community development. Furthermore, the results achieved through the JP RWEE-Barefoot College partnership carry a degree of sustainability: the women solar engineers are encouraged to pass on their skills to other members of their communities, and the solar systems themselves are durable. The first solar system that Barefoot College installed in Guatemala in 2013 was still providing electricity to the community in February 2021.

A final aspect of added value is the partnership's inherent relation to climate considerations. During data collection for this country study, many respondents called for climate-sensitive measures to be integrated into the programme design, and with its emphasis on renewable energy, the JP RWEE-Barefoot College partnership offers a potential entry point through which to explore how climate change mitigation might be built into future programmes.

Finding 14. The extent to which activities are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme varies by country and by activity. The extent to which government and other actors can provide a comprehensive range of services to support transformation remains fragile and is critical to sustainability.

140. Table 13 below provides the evaluation team's assessment from the evidence reviewed as part of the country case studies measuring the level of sustainability of different elements of the JP RWEE in each country.⁵² The table does not seek to grade countries against these criteria but rather seeks to provide a visual reflection of elements of sustainability that the evaluation team identified as being important. As can be seen from the table, the activities that have focused on individual and community/group transformation are mostly considered as sustainable. On the other hand, the activities on the right-hand side of the table, which relate to women's capacity to generate value addition,⁵³ and the more systematic elements by which the benefits of the programme can become accessible to other women (through uptake by government, partners, etc.), remain fragile.

⁵⁰ <https://www.barefootcollege.org/womens-day-2021-celebrating-guatemalan-grandmother-solar-electrifies-100-rural-homes/>

⁵¹ JP RWEE, 2018h.

⁵² The evaluation team used a grading scale of one to three stars based on evidence reviewed: one star = very limited evidence that the activity will continue beyond the duration of the direct support provided by the JP RWEE; two stars = progress is being made on sustainability for example through uptake of the approach methodology by institutions that will continue beyond the lifetime of the JP RWEE but some challenges remain (e.g. funding, scaling up etc.); three stars = sustainability is judged likely because structures and/or processes are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme.

⁵³ This refers to the importance of getting women into a position where they can add value to farm produce by ensuring that crops/produce can bring higher levels of income and/or that produce can be marketed, processed, and transformed in ways that increase the income of the family. This is linked to being able to access finance and opportunities which women may not have access to.

Table 13 Evaluation team’s assessment of selected elements of sustainability (based on country case study evidence)

Sustainability assessment by criterion by country	Sustainability of individual changes	Sustainability of household changes	Sustainability of changes in women leadership	Sustainability of savings groups	Sustainability through value addition	Sustainability through uptake by Gov. at decentralized level	Sustainability through transfer/uptake by National Government	Sustainability through partnership with other organizations
Ethiopia	***	***	**	***	**	***	**	**
Guatemala	***	**	**	***	*	*	*	**
Kyrgyzstan	***	***	***	***	**	**	*	**
Liberia	***	***	**	***	*	**	*	**
Nepal	***	***	**	***	*	**	*	*
Niger	***	**	**	***	*	***	**	***
Rwanda	***	***	**	***	*	*	**	**

Source: Evaluation team assessment

141. It is evident that the degree to which transformation can be sustained is to some extent compromised by the level of vulnerability at the start of the programme, with most countries, but not all, focusing on beneficiaries who are extremely vulnerable and for whom the trajectory to exiting from poverty and being able to engage in making decisions in the community is particularly challenging. A second element is that the value added to the activities that JP RWEE women engage in, is not sufficient to be able to achieve fully transformative results. Women are very poor and though the JP RWEE helps to increase income, the programme needs to bring women to a level where they can use their income to invest in further income-generating activities beyond supporting household expenses. In Ethiopia, for example, there is evidence that sustainability is provided by the increasing demand for loans, the increase in membership of cooperatives, and the success in business with value addition (e.g. dairy processing, production of butter).
142. Various country studies, including Rwanda and Guatemala, suggest that a stronger focus on decentralized government structures and on making sure these become more focused on ensuring that women’s rights are prioritized to safeguard access to land, credit, services etc. is critical. Efforts have been made in this respect in all countries, but country studies suggest that a stronger focus on transforming local government is needed (see paragraph 88).

Are the JP RWEE management and governance arrangements sustainable?

Finding 15. The operational arrangements for the programme have been set up specifically for the JP RWEE and have been replicated in other joint programmes as a good practice. While some ways of working have been adopted by partners, the governance arrangements have not been embedded in national structures that will continue beyond the duration of the programme. Opportunities exist to establish better linkages with existing coordination structures, both within government and within the UN reform.

143. The operational arrangements for the programme with international and national steering groups and technical groups, as well as dedicated staff, have been set up specifically for the JP RWEE. These structures are considered to be a good practice as evidenced by the perceptions of interviewees, and the structures have been replicated by the agencies in other joint programmes. However, these governance structures, while effective in supporting the implementation of the JP RWEE, have not been embedded in national/government structures that will continue beyond the duration of the programme. Thus, beyond the direct duration of the JP RWEE it is unlikely that the NSC will continue to function at country levels, which would effectively end the joint programming around women’s economic empowerment in the targeted countries.
144. At global level, the JP RWEE is perceived as having enhanced coordination and dialogue among the RBAs and as having contributed to a better and more solid understanding of gender issues. This

coordination is likely to continue and is expected⁵⁴. Coordination and alignment with UN Women have been somewhat more challenging (interviews – see paragraph 69).

145. The national and international coordinator positions – as highlighted in EQ 4 (section 2.4) – are critical for the functioning of the programme. Countries where full-time coordinators are not in place or where there has been a turnover of coordinators, have performed less well. However, without the JP RWEE programme these positions will not continue and there is insufficient evidence that senior management at the level of the UN agencies will prioritize joint work on rural women’s economic empowerment among the agencies in the absence of the national coordinator position. Senior management commitment to joint work is critical. However, no incentives internally for this kind of engagement exist, and the programme has been too small (financially) to really attract the interest of senior management, especially within the budgets of bigger UN agencies (FAO and WFP).
146. Finally, as also noted under EQ 4, there is room to strengthen the involvement of the UN Resident Coordinator in the JP RWEE to assist priorities and make decisions.

Has JP RWEE followed sustainable environmental practices and standards?

Finding 16. All JP RWEE countries are experiencing the effects of climate change (see paragraph 55), with some facing particularly high levels of vulnerability. Environmental practices have been selectively pursued in some of the countries and by some agencies but have not been consistently incorporated in the design of interventions.

147. Attention to environmental and climate practices was not part of the programme design. Some countries targeted by the JP RWEE are highly vulnerable to climate events and have seen significant climate events in the recent period. For example, beneficiary interviews in Guatemala highlighted that the impact of floods has been much greater than that of COVID-19.
148. The JP RWEE programme has applied selected climate-smart agricultural techniques in countries, but there is little information on what was done. Out of the final country evaluations in 2019 only the Rwanda report contains an overview of climate-related activities – this has included climate-smart techniques on field preparation, fertilization, irrigation, crop rotation and disease control. It also includes information on how community empowerment tools and justice trainings identify the causes of reduced harvests and identifies solutions. The other country evaluations (Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ethiopia) provide little information on how climate issues were addressed. The Ethiopia report only notes that inputs would work better if climate change is taken into consideration. The Liberia evaluation notes that FAO should work with UN Women and WFP to ensure “timely implementation of farming initiatives” given that climate change is becoming an increasing threat to food security. The Kyrgyzstan evaluation report concludes that there has been limited access by women covered through the JP RWEE to climate resilient assets.
149. JP RWEE reporting has also not consistently included attention to climate approaches. Only the 2019 and 2016 JP RWEE Annual Reports provide more than a passing reference. These two reports highlight the key interventions of capacity building and provision of climate-smart technology (greenhouses, bio-intensive gardening, drip-irrigation used in Liberia). The challenges of some of the technologies are noted in the JP RWEE Lessons Learned brochure (2017) which identifies that “the greenhouse approach is proving to be a good adaptation method given the drought situations in many of the participating countries” but notes that the scale is very limited due to the challenges of access to land (often unaffordable for many groups of women farmers). A review by the evaluation team of the minutes of the ISC meetings (five in total) and of the (TAC) (29 meetings) similarly reveals very limited attention to climate issues with the exception of some reporting from Guatemala and Liberia on activities (2017), a mission to Rwanda on programming (2019), and a reference to planning activities around a new proposal on WEE through climate-smart agriculture (2017).

2.6. EQ 6 – What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)

Finding 17. The synergy, the complementarity and effective national coordination has been the main contributing factors to delivering results and sustainability. The main hindering internal factor has been issues surrounding funding which has impacted the capacity to invest in knowledge management and learning. Whilst a conducive policy and government interest have been

⁵⁴ Source: Key Informant Interviews

contributing external factors, natural disasters (including pandemics) and political instability have hindered progress.

Internal contributing factors

150. The relevance of the JP RWEE to national contexts and major national policies on sustainable agriculture and the role of women in economic rural development are key positive attributes of the programme. The components of the JP RWEE are also addressing the needs of rural women, which strengthens its relevance. This relevance creates interest from national governments and local stakeholders and increases opportunities for national ownership in the long term.
151. The comparative advantages brought to the programme by each agency together with a solid coordination at national level in most of the countries has created a positive synergy between the agencies.
152. The solid national coordination representing the JP RWEE that has acted as the link, not only between agency staff but also government actors and implementing partners, has been a critical positive element in the process. The intense investment at the beginning of the programme in communicating objectives with all actors, including at the field level, has helped to overcome potential inter-agency misunderstandings.
153. This synergy between the agencies facilitates joint planning of complementary activities and joint monitoring visits. The annual planning organized through the technical working committees at national level, which includes agency staff and, in some countries, the government focal points (in Niger and Ethiopia), ensures a frequency of delivery of support to rural women, who are visited regularly and feel supported.
154. In some countries (particularly Niger and Ethiopia) the development of partnerships between implementing partners, government actors and rural communities is strong.
155. The participatory approach promoted through group approaches such as Dimitra in Niger, and GALS in Rwanda, Kyrgyzstan and Liberia, has ensured a strong relevance of the JP RWEE. Rural women have been able to identify and express their needs, and as a result of positive outcomes (on economic as well as social levels) the JP RWEE has continued to generate an increased demand from all stakeholder groups, including rural women, for continued involvement.

Internal hindering factors

156. However, issues surrounding funding have been a constant hindering factor. The uncertainty and irregularity of the funding – with funding provided only in annual tranches without visibility over whether a further year would be funded – added to the differences between agencies in the disbursement process, have resulted in activities at the field level being delayed, all of which has made it harder to plan jointly and maintain the logical sequencing of interventions. The funding levels may also have had an influence on the staff turnover in some of the countries; there have been five national coordinators in Kyrgyzstan.
157. The overlap of mandates and differences in processes, procedures and approaches by UN agencies in some countries, especially at the beginning (Liberia and Guatemala), created practical challenges in implementation which were not fully solved through national coordination.
158. The decision to prioritize the use of resources to activities in the field resulted in limited resources available for knowledge management. Consequently, the potential for learning about processes within the countries and sharing knowledge between the countries has not been achieved to its full potential.
159. The focus of the results-based framework on monitoring quantitative output indicators has created a gap in data which slows down the learning process. The harmonized global level framework has erased some critical levels of data disaggregation needed to assess levels of social inclusion at country level. The absence of a baseline in some countries and the focus on output monitoring, detracts from the opportunities to learn from outcomes; the absence of M&E focal points and the limited learning activities strengthen the upward accountability role monitoring to the detriment of the downward potential for learning.

External contributing and hindering factors

160. The high level of interest and commitment of the government to issues around JP RWEE and the high level of involvement in the programme have created a conducive environment for the programme. In Ethiopia, Nepal and Niger government interest and involvement has been strong.

161. The government capacity, for example, in Rwanda, has also strengthened the incentive for good implementation.
162. More recently, fundraising at country level with the help of national governments has also been positive in some countries.
163. However, the overall context of funding in middle income countries such as Rwanda or Guatemala, also makes fundraising a bigger challenge. In Nepal the recent policy change at the federal level relative to the channelling and managing of Official Development Assistance (ODA) has also made funding more procedural and government controlled.
164. High levels of staff turnover within the public administration in all the countries is a problem for the JP RWEE and leads to a lack of continuity, a loss of institutional memory, and makes organizational learning a bigger challenge. Governments may be supportive of the JP RWEE at the administrative level, however, commitment often depends on individually motivated staff; their replacement requires additional investment from the national coordinator to maintain links between the JP RWEE and government.
165. All the countries where the JP RWEE work are prone to natural disasters. The 2015 earthquake in Nepal delayed the start of the programme. Floods (Ethiopia and Nepal), hurricanes and drought (Ethiopia and Guatemala), pandemics including Ebola (Liberia) and COVID-19 (in all countries), and unreliable agricultural seasons (Niger, Ethiopia, Liberia and Rwanda) or pest attacks (Ethiopia, locusts) obstruct implementation at field level.
166. Political instability (Guatemala, Ethiopia, and Kyrgyzstan) or drastic changes (like the transition to a three-tier government system in Nepal) have added delays to implementation.

Lessons

167. Despite differences of achievement and results between the countries pertaining to the national context, a number of general lessons at the programme level are emerging. Country specific lessons can be found in Annex 15.
168. Lessons for relevance
 - A conducive policy environment for joint programmes and WEE interventions, is paramount.
 - The inclusion of all stakeholders at the design stage ensures a higher degree of relevance. In countries where there has been higher involvement from the start, the outcomes in terms of agency synergies and partnerships with governments have been higher.
169. Lessons for coherence
 - It is important to develop a coherent approach from the outset. All agencies should be involved in joint planning and targeting to ensure integrated activities and a shared vision of the programme. Consultative meetings with all government partners, implementing partners and community groups should be assisted during the initial design of the programme, and during annual planning.
 - Lessons learned from other joint programmes or global joint programmes might have been reviewed and learned to better guide the design and structure of the RWEE to avoid repetition of things that did not work and to build in mitigating strategies from the onset.
 - Synergy on the ground should be built and consolidated through coordination between implementing partners to ensure benefits of joint programming. This is developed through an investment in communication and programme team building (between UN agencies and with actors in the field).
 - The role of the national coordinator to foster, nurture and facilitate coherence at the onset and then to maintain fluid communication between the actors is critical. The JP RWEE national coordinator needs to be a full-time position dedicated to the programme.
 - Despite commitment to UN reform, agencies which have different procedures and mandates face internal hurdles to working smoothly in a joint programme. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in developing relationships between agency staff – especially the JP RWEE focal points – to address these challenges openly.
 - The importance of securing multi-annual funding has been demonstrated by the JP RWEE as it will stabilize staff and allow for more strategic, multi-year planning.

“The quality of the National coordinator is key to the success of the process: not just in terms of skills set but also personality and kudos within the context. It needs diplomatic skill but also sufficient assertiveness to push back and ensure agencies deliver.”

Source: JP RWEE Global evaluation interviews, global level 2021

170. Lessons for effectiveness

- The approach to working through groups which can become legally recognized structures (e.g. cooperatives) and increasing women’s participation in those groups is important to give women’s work legitimacy and recognition. These groups can then become formal platforms for women to claim their rights, approach local government for support or have more visibility as economic actors.
- The synergy developed between agencies at the global and national level must translate into synergies on the ground between implementing partners and between local actors and implementing partners. Mechanisms for coordination between implementing partners are needed to ensure benefits of joint programming/planning.
- As social norms, gender imbalance and, in particular, men’s perception of women’s roles in society, have been hindering factors to women’s empowerment; involving men and boys is critical. Men should not feel threatened in their roles and they should see the benefits from changes in women’s lives for themselves and their families.

171. Key lessons about planning, implementation and monitoring include:

- Lack of consistency and harmony of indicators between the results framework of each country makes it difficult to see patterns and learn from those at the global level; it is not possible to compare contexts and draw lessons about what works well in what kind of context.
- Lack of robust quantitative data to monitor the progress of different types of women receiving a combination of different components of the JP RWEE package. Therefore, it is impossible to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of specific interventions or combinations of interventions.
- The absence of systematic mid-term programme level reviews at global level prevented reflection on the programming process. Mid-term reviews in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, and Liberia have provided insights in the national level implementation performance but the scope for global level analysis has been missed. The focus has been on delivering at the field level. This is not to say that focusing on real practical inputs to promote WEE was wrong but that the purpose of a global programme to try and test similar approaches in different contexts only makes sense if critical insights can be elicited. Several respondents have described the JP RWEE as a “pilot” in their own context, and its purpose being to generate lessons from testing innovative approaches.
- Funding also limited the opportunities for intra- and inter-country workshops and sharing of best practice between agency staff, government and implementing partners. FAO and UN Women both organized one learning event and one event brought all the national coordinators together in Rome in 2018.

172. Lessons for efficiency

- Joint programming ensures efficiency if coordination work is shared and activities are not duplicated. This requires strong coordination and bottom-up planning.
- Annual funding cycles reduce efficiency, as recruiting new IP or renewing their contacts is costly. Annual funding also stops programme staff from being able to concentrate on the longer-term vision of the programme. Insecurity of funding reduces employment security for staff and is more likely to result in a high staff turnover.
- An efficient way of allocating resources between the agencies is based on unit costs of activities and dependent on bottom-up planning.

173. Key lessons of resource allocation include:

- Ensuring all agencies receive resources at the start of the programme, to ensure that all agencies are equally involved in the design, mobilization and planning stages.
- Ensuring that resource allocation reflects the activities that are planned at implementation level.
- Making sure mechanisms are in place to monitor joint delivery. The situation of overburdening beneficiaries or excluding support to beneficiaries because some agencies/IPs lack sufficient funding will be avoided. The use and allocation of resources will improve.

174. Lessons for sustainability

- A clear vision of sustainability needs to guide the efforts of the programme from the start.
- Investing in government ownership at the sub-national level when implementing activities contributes to sustainability and needs to be fostered.
- Linkages between local actors – local municipalities, line agencies, cooperatives or community-based organizations – are important to develop local ownership of the various processes.

2.7. Conclusions and recommendations

175. Based on the findings presented in the previous section, an overall assessment that responds to the evaluation questions is provided below.

2.8. Conclusions

Relevance

176. The evaluation finds that the JP RWEE has been highly relevant. It has been aligned to the national policy framework in each of the countries where WEE is recognized as a target or an important component of agricultural development. It is also very closely aligned to the needs of rural women involved in the programme and addresses the social and structural barriers that limit the capacity of women to participate in making decisions in their community, and that stand in the way of their economic empowerment. The holistic approach tested by the JP RWEE to address women's practical needs through technical support for increased agricultural production combined with addressing women's strategic needs through awareness raising and capacity building, is also very relevant to WEE across the different countries.

Coherence

177. Bringing together four UN agencies, each with their comparative advantages, to address the multiple facets of challenges faced by WEE, was very innovative in 2014 and coherent with the aim of jointly testing several approaches to create momentum at country level. It allowed the programme to offer a range of interventions that meet the needs of women, and to learn lessons to raise the profile of WEE on the international agenda. However, given issues around funding and differences of organizational cultures, processes, and procedures, working together resulted in a steep learning curve for the agencies. Full collaboration at the delivery level has not been easy although progress has been made over time and the UN reform efforts are providing additional impetus for collaboration. Thus, the value added of working jointly should be strengthened through better collaboration and coordination between all actors at the level of delivery, with implementing partners and local authorities. For this, a full-time national coordinator is necessary solely for this task.

Effectiveness

178. THE JP RWEE first phase has brought about change for women beneficiaries. Women and men have reported greater economic autonomy of women but also changes in social norms: the perceptions by society, men, implementing partners and women themselves that "women can do" is a huge step forward for rural women who have long been considered unable to make decisions or to contribute to the economic well-being of their households. This has been possible through the participatory approach embedded within the groups formed using different approaches (such as GALS or Dimitra), the formalization of these groups into cooperatives providing linkages to the market, and ongoing financial and technical support to women. Success has been recognized by the fact that various other programmes are replicating the approach used by the JP RWEE. However, it is not yet clear how this budding transformative process can snowball to impact on a wider number of women. The involvement of men, critical for social change, has been unequal and non-existent in some countries. For the next phase, the JP RWEE needs to have a greater focus on robust quality data collection throughout the process of programme implementation to be able to analyse which practices or combination of packages offered to rural women are more effective. Design mechanisms should also include greater connection with and involvement of local partners. Additionally, more activities are necessary that target the involvement of men.

Efficiency

179. The JP RWEE was set up as a global programme with a global coordinating structure and country programmes. The global framework was critical in mobilizing resources for the programme, without

which it would not have been implemented, and also developed the overall approach/framework for the programme as well as technical guidance to the countries. Whilst working together has created gains in efficiency over time, limited internal coherence, issues around the predictability, regularity, and allocation of funding between agencies within countries and the lack of a solid monitoring and evaluation process overall has limited the efficiency of the JP RWEE. The global governance structure of the programme has provided important technical inputs to the planning processes for countries, but the capacity to provide strategic guidance in ways that would reduce transaction costs, and share experience between countries has been more limited. It is crucial at the next phase to focus on developing a theory of change at country level, to develop multi-year programmes, and focus on reflection and learning to understand better how the process of change is happening and at what cost. Securing funding, even at national level, has been an issue even though women are prioritized within the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and now the SDG agenda. However, multi-annual funding will be an essential pre-condition for an effective second phase.

Sustainability

180. Though there was no exit strategy developed from the onset, there are encouraging signs that some aspects of the JP RWEE will be sustainable. Selected elements of the JP RWEE show signs of sustainability that are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme. The savings groups that have been established through JP RWEE emerge as a powerful transformative element of the programme with considerable likelihood of being sustained. Sustainability remains challenging for activities that require sizeable investments, activities that remunerate women for their work, and those that require capacity to purchase inputs. In addition, sustainability is challenging where implementation partners have key roles and where government services cannot take over these roles, suggesting careful attention is needed to make sure that women's groups and activities are not transitioned out of the programme too early and without conditions for continuing. The increasing impacts of climate change in communities with already levels of vulnerability, places an additional threat to the sustainability of the programme.

2.9. Recommendations

181. Based on the findings and conclusions of this evaluation, the recommendations of the evaluation team are outlined in Table 14 below and organized around the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of the evaluation. The target groups for each recommendation are identified.

Table 14 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. At the start of the second phase, the JP RWEE should consolidate support to the same women and continue to strengthen outcomes. The second phase should also allow for the expansion of the approaches and strategies to a larger group of beneficiaries. This will create a critical mass of resilient and sufficiently empowered women who can become catalysts for change in their communities and will extend the benefits to other women and communities.			
Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Use the second phase of the programme to consolidate transformative change for the women who benefited from the first phase	TAC	As part of the design of the second phase	High
Explore ways to involve men and youth in ways that will strengthen support to women's empowerment	National Advisory Committee (NAC) supported by TAC	As part of the design of the second phase	High
In the second phase of the programme find/develop mechanisms to scale up within the countries	National Advisory Committee (NAC) supported by TAC	Start in third quarter of second phase	High
Explore, based on lessons learned, the possibility to expand from single JP RWEE countries to other countries in the same region	ISC/TAC	After year 1 in the second phase	Medium
Rationale: Transformative change is a long-term process. The JP RWEE has been able to bring about important changes for women but these need more time to be consolidated. Expanding in a regional level would allow lessons to be learned and shared between similar cultural and geographical contexts.			
Recommendation 2. JP RWEE should identify and share best practices on building strong partnerships between UN agencies and within countries, to ensure stronger linkages and synergy between all actors.			
Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization

Recruit full-time national coordinators solely dedicated to the JP RWEE in all countries	TAC to lead panel with TAC and NAC members and Global Coordinator (GC)	As soon as second phase starts	High
Understand better where the bottlenecks to coordination are between implementing partners (NGOs, Government, Private Sector), and foster improvement as well as strengthen the NSC and strengthen linkages with existing country structures such as national level women farmers associations or federations of cooperatives (as relevant in different countries) to ensure coherence and sustainability	NAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Identify indicators for monitoring strength of partnerships and joint delivery and ensure these are integrated in the JP RWEE monitoring for the second phase	Global coordination unit (GCU) with the support of TAC and NAC to contextualize	As part of the design of the second phase	High
Review existing guidelines for the different tasks to be delivered by the ISC and NSC, including for how the NSC will monitor joint delivery. Assess whether adjustments are needed based on the UN Reform process and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)	ISC to lead with cooperation from TAC	As soon as second phase starts	Medium
Use the programme ToC to clearly identify respective roles for each agency and consider not having all agencies involved in implementation on the ground	TAC	As part of the design of the second phase	High
Sign multi-annual agreements with implementation partners and agree for more than one agency to work through one IP as relevant to reduce the loss of expertise and knowledge and ensure continuity	National Coordinator (NC)	Once planning of the second phase has been completed	Medium
The JP RWEE has brought together the experience of four agencies in support of a transformative set of interventions for women. However, there is scope for generating significantly greater efficiency in the joint work, which would enhance results and allow for resources to be better coordinated and delivered to beneficiaries fully aligning with their needs.			

Recommendation 3. JP RWEE country teams should focus on generating learned lessons and evidence and share between countries to have a targeted approach to influence policy.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Strengthening of the function of the National Steering Committee to act as a forum for regular sharing and programme learning	ISC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Facilitate larger intra and inter country workshops and sharing of best practices with government	GCU and NAC	Start planning in second quarter of second phase	Medium
Allocating knowledge management and M&E responsibility at the global level to GCU and at the national level to the lead agency to ensure that it is adequately staffed, funded and prioritized in each country	ISC to lead with NSC	As part of design	High
Review and strengthen all M&E systems to ensure collection of robust data to evaluate	GCU to lead with TAC /NAC	At the end of this evaluation as	High

effectiveness (and efficiency including cost effectiveness and value for money (VfM))	member with with M&E expertise	preparation for the second phase	
Collect baseline data in all the countries on gender equality, social inclusion and women's empowerment	NAC lead with technical support of GCU	As soon as second phase starts	High
Develop best practice case studies focusing on lessons from coordination of implementing partners and linkages between government structures, including cooperatives	GCU with support of NSC	At the end of this evaluation as preparation for the second phase	Medium
Increase visibility of the JP RWEE results and activities through a joint website, including showcasing lessons from Phase 1	GCU	In the second quarter of the second phase	Medium
Rationale: The JP RWEE is generating valuable experiences in promoting the JP RWEE across a range of contexts. There are considerable opportunities for enhancing the level of lesson learning and sharing across these different contexts in ways that will benefit a second phase of the programme and enable the JP RWEE to make stronger inroads into influencing policy, which has been the weaker outcome of the programme.			

Recommendation 4. JP RWEE should mainstream and prioritize climate change across all activities, with a focus on capitalizing on the role that women play in leadership and advocacy on climate change to strengthen preparedness and recovery to climate related disasters.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Integrate climate change fully in the design of activities from the start by including climate considerations in the initial assessments and having a strong focus on resilience in programming	NAC	As part of design	High
Continue strengthening synergies with other joint programmes, as well as national programmes, that focus on mainstreaming preparedness and recovery in their plan to build resilience of affected populations	NAC to lead with support from TAC/GCU	As part of design	High
Ensure that baseline and programme monitoring and reporting pay full attention to climate change issues	GCU, to lead with TAC, NC with UN agency and government focal points	As soon as second phase starts	High
Commission external support to explore how best to mainstream at country level, attention to preparedness and recovery in its plans and link to M&E framework	TAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Rationale: JP RWEE countries all face major challenges related to climate change, and rural women who depend on agriculture are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate events. Rural women are also well placed to be part of the solution for climate change through adaptation of resilient agriculture practices. There are opportunities to enhance the attention of the JP RWEE programme to consider activities that address climate change and to mainstream these across the programme.			

Recommendation 5. During the design of future phases of the JP RWEE, longer-term strategic planning should be a priority that includes a stronger prioritization of value addition, market linkages to ensure the gains from the programme can be sustained and to enhance the transformative potential of the JP RWEE in the second phase.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Include in the 5-year plan milestones to be monitored, including for a sustainability strategy, and use annual planning to provide brief updates in line with progress	GCU, in collaboration with NC and TAC	As soon as second phase starts	High
Ensure programming for the second phase comprehensively prioritizes stronger investment in market linkages, product transformation, and value adding, drawing from lessons learned in the first phase and	TAC in coordination with the NAC	As part of design	High

prioritizing partnerships that can contribute to this area of work			
<p>Rationale: The JP RWEE has had strong transformative effects for women at the level of individual self-esteem, self-confidence, and stronger engagement in community processes including leadership. However, fully transformative change will be conditional on women being able to generate sufficient added value from their activities for reinvestment. COVID-19 has shown that women in the programme have mostly been able to manage better than those outside the programme but the long-term effects of the pandemic put these gains at risk and will require support for recovery.</p>			

Recommendation 6. JP RWEE success should be secured by multi-annual funding to ensure that transformative results can be achieved and sustained. Senior management of agencies should advocate for the JP RWEE at headquarter level to prioritize JP RWEE fundraising, as well as at the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRC) in each country.

Sub-recommendations/Specific actions	Who	Timing	Prioritization
Develop a resource mobilization strategy and a corresponding multi-annual resource mobilization plan and strategy for the second phase of the JP RWEE	GCU with support of TAC/ISC	In parallel with/slightly ahead of design	High
Strengthen the global coordination unit with a specific 1-year consultancy position dedicated to resource mobilization	External professional fundraiser under supervision of the GC	In parallel with design	Medium
Identify gender champions at global and national level from among the broader group of gender stakeholders who can support the mobilization of funding for the second phase of the JP RWEE	ISC, TAC and GCU	As soon as possible – before beginning of phase II	Medium
Convene a global meeting of senior directors of the four agencies to present results of this evaluation, together with the funding case and the multi-annual resource mobilization plan to secure support for resource mobilization.	TAC	Before the start of the design	High
<p>Rationale: Funding to the JP RWEE has been allocated annually by donors limiting the longer-term visibility and generating challenges to continuity in terms of staff and implementation partners, among others. The lack of predictable funding has been a major challenge to implementing the programme and, in particular, to bringing about the expected benefits of a joint programme. Multiyear funding is a requisite for making joint programming successful. A professional fundraiser in the first year would help strengthen and implement the fundraising strategy as the GC already has many roles.</p>			

Annexes

- Annex 1. Terms of Reference
- Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix
- Annex 3. Theory of Change
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- Annex 5. JP RWEE Governance structure
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Annex 1. Terms of Reference

Joint Global Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Introduction

The purpose of these Terms of Reference (ToRs) are to provide key information to stakeholders about the proposed Joint Global Evaluation of the Joint Programme on “Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women” (JP RWEE), and to guide the evaluation team by specifying expectations during the various phases of the evaluation. The evaluation will be conducted by a qualified firm and cover the global programme and seven JP RWEE countries of Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda during the period of October 2014 to 2020.

This global evaluation is commissioned by the JP RWEE International Steering Committee (ISC) and guided by these ToRs. These ToRs were developed in consultation with stakeholders from each of the JP RWEE participating Agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) (lead Agency), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The Evaluation Reference Group will include focal points from each participating Agency, and the evaluation process and deliverables will be guided by United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards, United Nations System-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) and WFP’s Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS).

2. Context and Background of the Evaluation

2.1 Context

Rural women are the backbone of the rural economy, especially in the developing world. They represent one fourth of the world population and account for a great proportion of the agricultural labour force. As leaders, decision-makers, producers, workers, entrepreneurs and service providers in primarily rural agrarian areas, women are positioned at the forefront of food production, processing and distribution. In addition, rural women spend more time than urban women and men in reproductive and household work, including time spent obtaining water and fuel, caring for children and the sick, and processing food. This is because of poor rural infrastructure and services as well as culturally assigned roles that severely limit women's participation in employment opportunities.⁵⁵

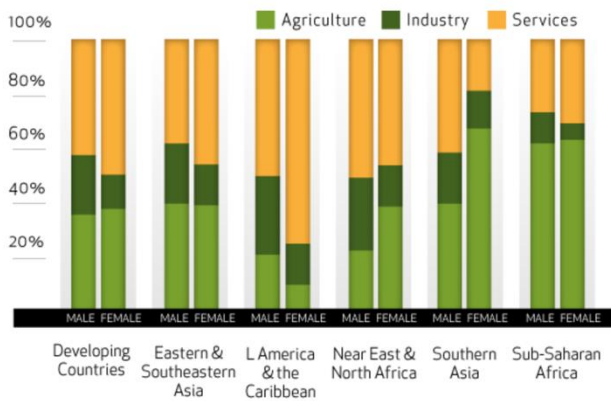
In South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, more than 60 percent of employed women remain in agriculture, and women’s involvement in agriculture is primarily unpaid, or as contributing family workers.⁵⁶ In many developing economies, women are concentrated in time- and labour-intensive agricultural activities.⁵⁷ Evidence indicates that if these women had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their

⁵⁵ Interagency Task Force on Rural Women (2012). WomenWatch. Information and Resources on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women: <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/ruralwomen/facts-figures.html>

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ International Labour Organisations (2016). Women at Work: Trends 2016: Geneva p. 23.

PERCENTAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYMENT (%) Source: FAO



farms by 20 to 30 percent, raising total agricultural output in developing countries by 2.5 to 4 percent and potentially reducing the number of hungry people in the world by 12 to 17 percent.⁵⁸

Yet their potential as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs is limited due to structural gender inequalities and discriminatory socio-cultural norms and practices; evident in, for example, less access to resources, including to quality seeds, fertilizers and tools, agricultural extension services, and to financial services. Moreover, rural women are often excluded from decision-making within their households and

communities. The gender productivity gap for female and male farmers disappears altogether when access to productive inputs is taken into account.⁵⁹ The potential economic gains from reducing the gender gap in agriculture translate into significant poverty reduction and improved nutritional outcomes,⁶⁰ with significant multiplier effects in terms of reduced intergenerational transmission of hunger and malnutrition, as women tend to spend more of their income on children’s health and education.⁶¹

There is increasing evidence that a comprehensive and integrated effort taken by governments, the international community and all relevant stakeholders through measures that combine sustainable agricultural development and food security, economic and social development and enabling policy mechanisms will promote the rights of women and build on the contributions that they make to the development of their communities and countries.⁶² These efforts should include the elimination of gender-specific constraints that women face and the implementation of measures to expand women’s capacities and to ensure enabling policy environments.⁶³

2.2 Joint Programme Background and Structure

Based on these premises, the Rome-based Agencies and UN Women established a results-oriented, Joint Programme titled “Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women” (JP RWEE). The JP RWEE has been implemented in seven countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda. The purpose of the Joint Programme is to collectively address the range of challenges that rural women face as economic agents. By bringing together their expertise, resources and experiences, the four UN agencies combined their efforts for sustainable, transformative impacts on the lives of rural women.

Launched in 2012, the JP RWEE has been implemented since the end of 2014 thanks to the contributions received from the Swedish Agency for International Development (Sida) (approximately USD 23 million) and the Government of Norway (approximately USD 6 million). These contributions are channelled through a Trust Fund (TF) managed by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO), which is serving as the Administrative Agent of JP RWEE.⁶⁴

58 FAO. 2011. [The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011 \(SOFA\)](#). pp. 16-17. Rome.

59 The World Bank (2011). *World Development Report 2012. Gender Equality and Development*: Washington, p.19.

60 The UN Women/World Bank report called *The cost of gender gaps in agricultural productivity in Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda (2015)* demonstrates how closing the gender gap in agricultural productivity has the potential to lift as many as 238,000 people out of poverty in Malawi, approximately 80,000 people in Tanzania and 119,000 people in Uganda. In Tanzania, for example, this gain also translates into a 0.7 percent reduction in the incidence of undernourishment, which implies that roughly 80,000 people would be lifted out of malnourishment per year.

61 Black, RE, Victora, CG, Walker, SP, and the Maternal and Child Nutrition Study Group (2013). *Maternal and child undernutrition and overweight in low-income and middle-income countries*: Lancet.

62 UN Secretary General’s Report (2017) for the 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. *Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*, New York, paragraph 7.

63 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (2011). *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in agriculture, Closing the gender gap for development*: Rome, p. 2.

64 The MPTFO has established a dedicated page for the JP RWEE TF at: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/RWF00>, where more information about the origins of the JP RWEE, including the global programme document, can also be found.

JP RWEE strategies are mapped out in the Performance Management Framework (PMF), which leads the programme to focus on the following four interlinked outcome areas, with a strong intention to address the intersections of these issues: (i) rural women's improved food and nutrition security; (ii) increased incomes to sustain livelihoods; (iii) enhanced leadership and participation in decision making; and (iv) a more gender-responsive policy environment. Within these outcome areas, the PMF details a selection of core indicators adopted by all countries, as well as others which are adapted to the specific country contexts and activities. The Theory of Change and Logical Framework on which the PMF is based are provided in Annex 4 and Annex 5, respectively.

Monitoring data provided through annual reports reveals that more than 58,000 rural women and at least 200,000 members of their households have benefitted from JP RWEE as of end 2019. The JP RWEE coordination team, as well as the four participating agencies have produced several knowledge products summarizing lessons learned and good practices, thereby providing the development community with access to proven approaches for gender equality programming and UN collaboration.

In its implementation, JP RWEE concentrates on:

- improving food security and nutrition at the household level;
- creating job opportunities to sustain women's livelihoods;
- responding to rural women's identified social and economic needs and adding value to existing initiatives;
- partnering with rural women's organizations to strengthen their capacities;
- affirming rural women as leaders, decision-makers and agents of change for their individual and collective advancement;
- helping governments to build comprehensive national strategies for rural women's empowerment; and
- producing lessons that can strengthen the focus on rural women and girls in agricultural activities.

JP RWEE works to address two components of systemic gender inequalities: social norms and institutions, the latter including legal frameworks, formal institutions, formal membership organisations, and informal entities.

Since its inception, JP RWEE has operated through a governance mechanism that supports transparent implementation and ownership by the main stakeholders, including donors and national counterparts at both global and country levels.

Global level: An International Steering Committee (ISC) oversees the allocation of funds and provides strategic vision and direction to the implementing partners, establishing requirements and priorities, including coordination with other initiatives. The ISC consists of the four participating UN Agencies, donors, representatives of the pilot countries and the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of focal points from the four UN Agencies as well as a JP RWEE Global Coordinator, provides operational support to the ISC, including by providing information needed for decision making.

Country level: A lead agency in each country coordinates activities related to the consultative process for the roll out of the programme at country level, including the engagement with the Government and local donors; it is also responsible for the consolidation of a country narrative annual report and the hiring of a national coordinator.

Country	Lead Agency
Ethiopia	UNWOMEN/IFAD
Guatemala	WFP
Kyrgyzstan	UNWOMEN
Liberia	UNWOMEN
Nepal	UNWOMEN
Niger	FAO
Rwanda	WFP

A National Steering Committee (NSC), chaired by the Minister of Agriculture or his/her representative, and consisting of donors, participating UN Agencies, civil society and private sector partners of JP RWEE and representatives of rural women exists in each implementing country. In each country, there is also a Technical Working Group (TWG)

comprised of representatives of the four UN Agencies and technical staff of relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture or Ministry of Labour. Implementing Partners (IPs) have also, in some countries, organized a coordination group to: (i) coordinate activities; (ii) present issues or suggestions to the NSC/TWG with one voice; and (iii) provide a platform for exchange and learning from each other's work. The composition of country level coordination groups varies based on each country's specific context, needs and focus of activities.

Under this framework, the ISC and TAC decided to conduct a joint decentralised evaluation.

3. Reasons for the Evaluation

3.1 Rationale

The evaluation is an important element of JP RWEE's overall accountability and learning framework, as listed in the Indicative Framework on "Strengthening Knowledge Management and Communication in Managing the JP RWEE," approved by the ISC in June 2018.

Routine programme monitoring has supported the tracking of JP RWEE implementation and examining of progress on achievement of the four intended outcomes. Evaluation is, however, needed to independently and objectively assess the results of JP RWEE. The evaluation will also further enable country analysis and an assessment of the value of a global framework and governance mechanism.

While JP RWEE was intended to close in October 2019, activities are continuing with a limited budget of USD \$900,000 per country in order to extend the benefits and increase the number of beneficiaries / rights holders reached through the programme. This extension of funding was provided through to December 2020 and is estimated to reach over 37,000 women who are both new and existing beneficiaries. In the context of COVID-19, participating countries are adapting their work plans to respond to, and innovate, in order to sustain their reach and support rural women.

In the past few years, some countries have undertaken mid-term evaluations or reviews (Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia and Rwanda) or topical studies on nutrition (Niger), which they have utilized to strengthen programming quality and support the sustainability of outcomes. Some of the key results highlighted include:

- 103% average increase in agricultural production;
- Over USD 1.8 million generated from sales;
- 81% of supported POs led by women or with women in key leadership positions;
- Over 16,000 women organized in saving groups;
- 2,000 government officials at all levels with enhanced skills on gender mainstreaming, gender-responsive budgeting, and women's rights;
- National governments of Guatemala, Ethiopia and Nepal supported for the development and implementation of gender policies in the agricultural sector;
- Engagement in key policy forums on rural women's rights.

Recent country evaluations also highlighted the contribution of the JP to the Agenda 2030 and several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 - “No poverty”, SDG 2 – “End Hunger”, SDG 5 - “Gender Equality”, SDG 8 – “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, and SDG 17 – “Partnership for the Goals”.

The joint global evaluation is timely as it meets an unmet need for a systematic assessment of JP RWEE across countries. In addition, it is positioned to support participating Agencies and donors as they consider the progress of their joint efforts through JP RWEE as well as the design and reach of a potential second phase of the programme.

3.2 Purpose and Objectives

The evaluation purpose will be to address the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning.

Accountability: The evaluation will independently assess and report on the performance and results of JP RWEE in supporting rural women’s economic empowerment and promoting gender equality in the seven participating countries, as well as at the global level.

Learning: The evaluation will also provide an important learning opportunity, assessing the reasons why the documented results occurred, and thereby supporting learning about good practices for rural women’s economic empowerment and joint programming in the context of UN reforms and the Sustainable Development Agenda. The evaluation will provide evidence-based findings to inform JP RWEE’s operational and strategic decision-making.

According to the Communication and Learning Plan, a management response to the evaluation recommendations will be prepared by the TAC for the ISC to document the level of agreement with, and the steps to be taken to address the recommendations across Agencies for existing and/or future joint programmes. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders and lessons incorporated into Agencies’ knowledge-sharing systems with the aim of advocating for sustainability, scaling-up, or sharing of good practices at the global, regional and national levels.

Therefore, the specific objectives of the Joint Global Evaluation of JP RWEE are:

1. To independently assess the relevance (including programme design), coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of JP RWEE
2. To assess the adequacy of the governance structure of the Joint Programme, including the quality of the inter-agency coordination mechanism that have been established at the global and country-levels; identifying lessons to strengthen the management of JP RWEE
3. To identify lessons learned, capture good practices and generate knowledge from the first phase to inform a potential subsequent phase of JP RWEE, including identifying what packages of strategies and interventions continue and/or discontinue and in what context, and providing corrective actions on the gaps and opportunities for addressing rural women’s food and nutrition security, livelihoods, and participation in decision-making structures, as well as a gender-responsive policy environment
4. To assess the extent to which Participating Agencies, through the Joint Programme, have effectively positioned themselves as key players in contributing to the broader 2030 agenda

The evaluation will facilitate cross-fertilization amongst participating countries and act as an accountability and learning mechanism for JP RWEE donors and the international community, providing lessons on what has worked, or not worked, and why.

3.3 Evaluation stakeholders and users

A number of stakeholders both inside and outside of the four participating agencies have interest in the results of the evaluation and some of these will be asked to play a role in the evaluation process. A preliminary stakeholder analysis is provided below, which should be elaborated by the selected evaluation team as part of the Inception Phase.

JP RWEE stakeholders exist at country, regional and global levels.

Country-level stakeholders include the NSC and TWG, as well as adjacent government bodies (e.g. Ministries of Agriculture, Ministries of Gender, national gender machinery in the respective countries), the Country Offices of the four participating Agencies, other UN Agencies active in participating countries, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, non-governmental and civil society organisations, including women's groups, and other actors engaged in agriculture and rural development (including the private sector).

Global stakeholders include the JP RWEE global coordination mechanism (ISC and TAC) , including the Global Coordinator and the Knowledge Management consultant, all UN partners (FAO, IFAD, WFP, UN Women), the MPTFO, current donors (Norway and Sweden), and other UN Agencies interested in strengthening their understanding as to how joint efforts towards women's empowerment can contribute to achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

At the regional-level, the Regional Bureaus for all participating Agencies also support the management of JP RWEE and will take part to support the Management Response to the evaluation.

The evaluation will be conducted as a joint evaluation, engaging the Offices of Evaluation of the four participating Agencies under the guidance of the Technical Advisory Committee, which will serve as the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG). At the highest level, the ISC will remain informed and receive recommendations from the ERG, as well as provide final approval of the submitted evaluation report.

The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) is established and comprised of the TAC, the Global Coordinator, the Knowledge Management Consultant, the Evaluation Manager (as secretary to the ERG), and focal points from the Offices of Evaluation of each participating Agency. Any other stakeholders deemed appropriate to join the ERG by the selected evaluation team will be done in consultation with the TAC.

Country Validation Groups (CVG) will also be established to support the coordination of fieldwork and the validation of findings at the country-level. The CVG will include the seven national coordinators and focal points for each agency at the country-level. The government ministry focal point in each country will also be engaged in results validation as part of this group (the specific ministry varies by country). More details on the function of these groups and other stakeholders is provided in section 5.5, "Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders."

The primary intended users of the final evaluation will be participating Agencies, countries and donors - represented in the JP RWEE ISC and TAC - which have a direct stake in the evaluation and an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making, with a particular focus on a potential second phase of the programme. The ISC and TAC will disseminate the results, best practices, and recommendations to relevant internal and external stakeholders to guide learning for joint programmes and rural women's economic empowerment programmes globally. In addition, the four participating Agencies have technical units responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as overarching corporate policies and strategies. These technical units, such as FAO's Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division, WFP's Gender Division, IFAD's Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division and UN Women's Economic Empowerment Section, will also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from the evaluation, as many will have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus.

The findings will also be helpful to Governments, implementing partners, and beneficiaries/rights holders in the seven countries, to ensure accountability and to generate an understanding of JP RWEE outcomes and the capacities needed to sustain them within their respective countries and in light of a potential second phase. In many countries, JP RWEE is a key contributing programme to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (now renamed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework), typically within results group one focused on sustainable economic growth, industrial, rural and agricultural development, food security and nutrition. As such, secondary users include UN Country Teams, the Rome-based Agencies' Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches, and development partners globally who can use the findings to improve the quality and impact of rural women's economic empowerment interventions and inclusive policies.

4 Evaluation Approach

4.1 Scope

The evaluation will assess JP RWEE's overall performance in securing rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda, covering activities conducted from October 2014 to 2020. The evaluation will apply the international evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact. In addition, an important element to be assessed is the extent to which JP RWEE has been able to build effective governance and management mechanisms both at the global and country levels. This will include examining issues such as participation, national ownership, evidence-based decision making, monitoring, inter-agency coordination and reporting mechanisms.

Specifically, the focus will be on evaluating: i) the JP RWEE results at the global- and country-levels and ii) the extent to which the systems, processes and activities developed have collectively contributed to the overall achievements of the JP RWEE objectives and, more broadly, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the contribution of the global component. The global component of the programme capitalizes on the work carried out at country level, with the aim to i) engage in global fora to advocate the relevance of rural women's rights, status and agency; and ii) promote new strategies for addressing inequalities faced by rural women. The ultimate goal is to promote the adoption and strengthening of policies and legislation for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, contributing to the achievement of SDG 5, target 5. c.⁶⁵

The evaluation will thus cover the activities undertaken in this six-year period in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda, as well as to assess the extent to which outcomes have been sustained into 2020.

4.2 Evaluation approach

The evaluation will take a mixed-methods approach, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data, and adhere to the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, as well as the Ethical Guidelines for evaluations in the UN system. It will be guided by the evaluation criteria defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation and UN-SWAP.

As a gender-responsive programme and evaluation, gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) will be mainstreamed throughout; it is expected that the evaluation be comprehensive and explicit in the ways that GEEW is considered in the evaluation design, implementation and content. Accountability to affected populations is tied to each Agency's commitments to include beneficiaries as key stakeholders in their work. As

⁶⁵ The SDG 5 target 5.c relates to the adoption and strengthening of sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

such, Agencies are committed to ensuring GEEW in the evaluation process, with participation and consultation in the evaluation by women and men from different groups. The evaluation team will therefore contribute to the Evaluation Communication and Learning Plan by developing a learning product (e.g. a four-page visual summary) for disseminating results to beneficiaries / rights holders.

In addition, assessment will be made of the elements of JP RWEE that contribute to gender equality outcomes and the challenges encountered in tackling the gender-related structural and socio-cultural norms and practices. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), an innovative survey-based index designed to measure the empowerment, agency and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector, has been used to collect baseline data in Guatemala, Niger, Ethiopia, and Kyrgyzstan. The WEAI is innovative because it measures *who* is empowered in the household (men, women or both) and *how* they are empowered, according to five domains: i) decisions about agricultural production, ii) access and decision-making over productive resources, iii) control and use of income, iv) leadership in the community, and v) time allocation. A WEAI Synthesis Study is expected to occur simultaneously with the Joint Global Evaluation of JP RWEE, collecting WEAI endline data in Nepal as well as the four countries with baseline data. It is expected that the Joint Global Evaluation will draw on the empowerment scores generated through the Synthesis Study to strengthen the analysis of why results were, or were not, achieved. Therefore, the evaluation will follow a theory-based and mixed-methods approach, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analytical approaches.

The evaluation will foster understanding of the reasons for the observed results and draw lessons about good practices in women's empowerment programming. With the view of a possible second phase of the programme, the evaluation will inform future revisions to JP RWEE's scope and activities to maximise value for money programming.

4.3 Evaluation criteria and questions

Aligned to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation will address the following key questions, which will be further developed by the evaluation team during the Inception Phase in close collaboration with the TAC (which is the acting ERG). The Inception Phase will include an evaluability assessment informed by existing JP RWEE frameworks and available data, which will be included in the inception report and inform the development of a detailed stakeholder map and evaluation matrix (including further developed sub-questions or assumptions with operationalized lines of inquiry through indicators).

Relevance: How responsive is the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders needs' as well as national and global development goals and policies? Under this question, the evaluation will assess the extent to which:

- the JP RWEE objectives and strategies are in line with the international development agenda (including the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs), Participating Agency mandates, and with the priorities of participating countries in terms of rural women's economic empowerment;
- the design is relevant and appropriate to the stated purpose (addressing structural inequalities and achieving transformative change), target groups (rural women and members of their households), activities, countries and partnerships;
- GEEW objectives and mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design, and whether the object has been guided by system-wide objectives on GEEW and human rights;
- the design process was collaborative, and yielded a shared vision for delivering results, strategies for joint delivery and sharing of risks among implementing UN entities.

Coherence: To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's empowerment across countries? Under this question, the evaluation will assess the extent to which:

- the JP RWEE is coherent with the mandates and comparative advantages of the four participating Agencies;
- the JP RWEE has maximised on its modality and strategic partnerships to leverage comparative strengths of the four participating Agencies and advantages of 'delivering as one';

- coherence, alignment and complementarity were achieved between the JP RWEE and national country contexts, policies and programmes relevant to rural women.

Effectiveness: To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives / targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? In addition, what factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results?

- The evaluation will analyse the nature, quantity and quality of results achieved (both positive and negative) against those intended. While the focus will be at the outcome level, the evaluation will also analyse whether JP RWEE achieved its intended results at the output level, and to what extent the results and lessons learned are being reflected in policy and planning at the country level.
- The evaluation will consider the operational and policy environments, capacities and resources in the participating countries; governance and management of the JP RWEE, including the ISC, Global Coordination, TAC, Administrative Agent and Country Committees; and partnerships and funding, including whether the necessary commitment, agreement and actions were taken by partners and donors (including UN agencies at country and global levels) to support the JP RWEE to achieve its objectives.

Efficiency: Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient?

- The evaluation will include a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the observed outputs, relative to the inputs; the efficiency of the governance structure; and whether, and how, the results could have been achieved, and monitored, more efficiently.

Sustainability: What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life? The evaluation will review:

- the sustainability of the results achieved and of the JP RWEE operational model;
- the extent to which the JP RWEE is contributing to national ownership of efforts to achieve and sustain rural women’s economic empowerment (through strengthened capacities, advocacy, and transition strategies, etc.);
- the extent to which JP RWEE adheres to sustainable environmental practices and standards;
- the extent to which the programme promoted replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices.

Impact: JP-RWEE seeks to address gender inequities by tackling them across dimensions, using a dual accountability framework, improving women’s access to and control over resources, women’s agency to pursue her rights, and the institutional structures which prevent women from fully realizing their rights. To what extent has the joint programme delivered longer term results from processes, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended, across all dimensions of women’s empowerment? While the impact criterion is challenging to measure for any intervention, insofar as is possible, the evaluation will explore the impacts of the Joint Programme at the individual, community and institutional levels. It will assess the extent to which the Joint Programme has been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of inequalities experienced by rural women.

4.4 Methodology

The detailed evaluation methodology will be designed by the contracted evaluation team and provided in the Inception Report. The methodology will be appropriate in terms of addressing the overarching evaluation questions, with due attention to limitations related to, for example, data availability, available resources and duration. The methodology should demonstrate impartiality, credibility, reliability and validity. i.e., in addition to considering a cross-criterion of information sources (stakeholder groups, including rights holders, etc.), the methods used should demonstrate consistency and replicability.

The evaluation will take a mixed-methods approach to ensure triangulation through a variety of means and involve a review of key documents, including, but not limited to, the JP RWEE's (i) theory of change; (ii) Performance Monitoring Framework; (iii) country-level monitoring data; (iv) country-level work-plans; (v) Consolidated Annual Reports and country level annual reports; and (vi) country-level mid-term reviews and evaluations; (vii) the WEAI Synthesis Report and/or preliminary analysis (as available). Primary data will also be collected through focus groups and/or key informant interviews, as proposed by the evaluation team.

Field data collection will be conducted in three out of the seven participating countries, to be selected jointly during the Inception Phase based on a series of criteria that will include geographic diversity, Lead Agency, availability and rigor of existing country-level evaluations and data, conduct of the WEAI, as well potential travel restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 crisis. The in-depth country field visits should inform the preparation of three case studies, to be distributed as knowledge management products, that provide an in-depth look at thematic areas, quantitative and qualitative results and illustrate key lessons. As such, it is anticipated that some community-level data collection would occur. Data collection methods during field visits might include: (a) focus group discussions to generate broad views on outcomes and issues of concern; (b) in-depth interviews with rights holders to collect data in individual perspectives and experiences; (c) key informant interviews with partners, government and other duty bearers; (d) participant surveys to collect indicator-level data not captured within the WEAI. The evaluation team might also consider identifying a comparison group of non-participating rural women to prepare the case studies.

Ethical protocols should be considered in the methodology. The methodology should be GEEW-responsive, indicating what data collection methods are employed to seek information on GEEW issues and to ensure the inclusion of women, girls and marginalised groups. The methodology should ensure that data collected is disaggregated by sex and age; an explanation should be provided if this is not possible. Triangulation of data should ensure that diverse perspectives and voices of both males and females are heard and taken into account. The evaluation team and the TAC (i.e. ERG) will agree on the sampling process and size in the Inception Phase.

The analysis of the results in the remaining countries will be based on a desk review of available information and other means of data collection (phone calls, videoconferences, individual interviews, surveys etc.). Benchmarking may be used to compare JP RWEE with other joint programmes and international partnership arrangements.

The following potential risks to the methodology have been identified and should be mitigated to the extent possible to ensure a high-quality evaluation:

1. Given the security risks and limited mobility of some women in some contexts, limited access to information and limited participation of women and vulnerable groups may occur in certain circumstances. The methodology and data collection methods employed need to be well planned and realistic, considering the diverse country contexts and potential constraints. Attention should be paid to the time, place and mechanisms for collecting data. In addition, a variety of data sources and methods should be included to allow for triangulation to ensure quality and validity of data.
2. Some of the countries may lack specific clear and/or comparable indicators data. Therefore, it may be difficult to measure/attribute results of JP RWEE separate from the greater environment of ongoing interventions in each country. The evaluation team should consider this in the selection of field visits during the Inception Phase. The evaluation team should review and reconstruct the theory of change, as necessary, in order to understand underlying assumptions and cause and effect links. While developing a counterfactual may not be possible, the proposed methodology and analytical methods should take this into account and the evaluation team should address how they will assess and analyse contribution. The evaluation team might consider and propose contribution analysis, outcome mapping or other participatory approaches.

3. The likelihood of an extended timeline, in order to accommodate international travel restrictions and protect participants against health risks as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. The evaluation team should propose a realistic timeline to ensure the conduct of a high-quality evaluation, which may include three phases of data collection (e.g. remote inception discussions and desk review, initial remote interviews and discussions across countries, and in-depth field work in three countries).

Archival data such as feedback forms collected at training conducted by the programme and content analysis on policy documents that have been influenced by the programme should be used to supplement outcome data. Note also that the focus of data collection should be on outcomes rather than activities and outputs, which should only be used to demonstrate causality/contributions pertaining to the results chain.

Additional limitations and risks, as well as proposed mitigation and safeguarding measures, should be reflected and expanded on during the inception phase.

4.5 Quality assurance and quality assessment

The TAC has agreed to follow WFP's quality standards and protocols for decentralized evaluations within this joint global evaluation.

WFP's Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) defines the quality standards expected from this evaluation and sets out processes with in-built steps for Quality Assurance, Templates for evaluation products and Checklists for their review. DEQAS is closely aligned to the WFP's evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS) and is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community and aims to ensure that the evaluation process and products conform to best practice.

DEQAS will be systematically applied to this evaluation. The Evaluation Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation progresses as per the [DEQAS Process Guide](#) and for conducting a rigorous quality control of the evaluation products throughout the process and ahead of their finalization. WFP has developed a set of [Quality Assurance Checklists](#) for its decentralized evaluations. This includes Checklists for feedback on quality for each of the evaluation products. The relevant Checklist will be applied at each stage, to ensure the quality of the evaluation process and outputs.

To enhance the quality and credibility of this evaluation, an outsourced quality support (QS) service directly managed by WFP's Office of Evaluation in Headquarter provides review of the draft inception and evaluation report (in addition to the same provided on draft TOR), and provide:

- a. systematic feedback from an evaluation perspective, on the quality of the draft inception and evaluation report;
- b. recommendations on how to improve the quality of the final inception/evaluation report.

The evaluation manager will review the feedback and recommendations from QS and share with the team leader, who is expected to use them to finalise the inception/ evaluation report. To ensure transparency and credibility of the process in line with the [UNEG norms and standards](#)^[1], a rationale should be provided for any recommendations that the team does not take into account when finalising the report.

This quality assurance process as outline above does not interfere with the views and independence of the evaluation team, but ensures the report provides the necessary evidence in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.

[1] [UNEG Norm #7](#) states "that transparency is an essential element that establishes trust and builds confidence, enhances stakeholder ownership and increases public accountability"

The evaluation team will be required to ensure the quality of data (validity, consistency and accuracy) throughout the analytical and reporting phases. The evaluation team should be assured of the accessibility of all relevant documentation within the provisions of the directive on disclosure of information. This is available in [WFP's Directive CP2010/001](#) on Information Disclosure.

All final evaluation reports will be subjected to a post hoc quality assessment by an independent entity through a process that is managed by the Office of Evaluation (OEV). The overall rating category of the reports will be made public alongside the evaluation reports.

5 Organization of the Evaluation

5.1 Phases and deliverables

The evaluation will proceed through the following phases. The deliverables and deadlines for each phase are provided in Table 1, though a detailed timeline will be proposed by the bidder in the Technical Proposal and further developed during the Inception Phase.

Table 1: Evaluation milestones

Main Phases	Timeline (tentative)	Deliverables	Responsible Party
1 Preparation	January-May 2020	Terms of Reference Team set up (Recruitment of Evaluation Team/Establishment of Governance Mechanism)	Evaluation Manager TAC / ERG ISC
2 Inception	June – July 2019	Inception mission (likely remote) Inception report	Contracted Firm / Evaluation Team
3 Data collection and analysis	August-October 2020	Data collection / Fieldwork in 3 countries Debriefing PowerPoints x8 presenting an update on the evaluation process and preliminary findings from each country and at the global level	Contracted Firm / Evaluation Team
4 Reporting / Reviews	November-December 2020	Draft evaluation report (including 3 case studies) Remote validation workshop Final evaluation report, including case studies and dissemination document	Contracted Firm / Evaluation Team
5 Finalisation	January - February 2021	Summary evaluation report Management Response	Evaluation Manager TAC / ERG ISC

In the case travel restrictions apply, the evaluation team will propose a plan for limiting international travel for the inception mission and fieldwork.

The Evaluation Team Leader will be responsible for the quality of the evaluation process and all final deliverables detailed within the Inception, Data Collection and Reporting Phases. The Evaluation Manager, supported by the TAC, will be responsible for tasks within the Preparation and Finalisation Phases. Additional details on the roles and responsibilities are included below in section 6.5.

In addition to the final evaluation report, aligned with DEQAS quality standards, the evaluation team will prepare one knowledge management product, in the form of either an information brief or visual four-page document, which will be used for disseminating results to rights holders. This document will be prepared in English and will use a visually accessible format. The Agencies are open to other ideas for dissemination products, which could be put forth within the Technical Proposal.

5.2 Composition and conduct of the evaluation team

The TAC and ISC are seeking to recruit a qualified firm for the conduct of the evaluation. The evaluation team will conduct the evaluation under the direction of its team leader and in close communication with the Evaluation Manager. The team will be hired following the agreement with the TAC and ISC on its composition.

The evaluation team will not have been involved in the design or implementation of the subject of evaluation or have any other conflicts of interest. Further, they will act impartially and respect the [code of conduct of the evaluation profession](#).

The evaluation team is expected to include 4-6 members, including at minimum the team leader and three national evaluators in the selected countries for field visits. To the extent possible, the evaluation will be conducted by a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject as specified in the scope, approach and methodology sections of the ToR. At least one team member should have experience with FAO, WFP, IFAD or UN Women. At least one team member should have gender expertise.

The team will be multi-disciplinary and include members who together include an appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:

- Designing and leading or participating in gender-responsive and human rights-based evaluations utilising participatory approaches and methodologies;
- Experience in management of evaluation systems and processes in diverse contexts, assessing national policies and programmes including joint programmes and subject areas relevant to the work of the four participating agencies (agriculture, nutrition, food security, women's rights, rural economic development);
- Strong experience using a variety of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools and methods suitable for a final evaluation;
- Gender expertise / good knowledge of gender issues, gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and relevant normative frameworks;
- Strong knowledge of food and nutrition security interventions and assessments and rural economic development;
- All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation experience and familiarity with at least three of the seven countries of implementation;
- Ability to work efficiently and responsively within a multicultural environment
- Fluency in oral and written English, and with at least one team member with a good knowledge of French, Spanish and/or Russian. The evaluation report will be completed in English however, some interviews are expected to be conducted in French, Spanish, Russian or other local languages and therefore a plan should be in place to accommodate this expectation.

Qualifications of Senior Expert / Team Leader: The Team leader will have technical expertise in at least four of the areas listed above, and at minimum, will have ten years of experience in designing methodology and data

collection tools and leading similar complex and multi-country evaluations. The Team leader will have Master's degree or higher in gender studies, agriculture, international development studies, human rights, evaluation and statistical methods, or other related field. She/he will also have leadership, analytical and communication skills, including a track record of excellent English writing and presentation skills.

Her/his primary responsibilities will be: i) defining the evaluation approach and methodology; ii) guiding and managing the team; iii) leading the evaluation missions (pending travel restrictions) and representing the evaluation team; iv) drafting and revising, as required, the inception report, the end of field work (i.e. exit) debriefing and validation presentations, the knowledge management product and evaluation report (including case studies) in line with DEQAS.

Qualifications of Team Members: The team members will bring together a complementary combination of the technical expertise required and have a track record of written work on similar assignments. Team members will have, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in gender studies, agriculture, international development studies, human rights, evaluation and statistical methods, or other related fields. They will have, at minimum, five years of relevant professional experience in at least two of the areas listed above.

Team members will: i) contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review; ii) conduct field work; iii) participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders; iv) contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical area(s).

5.3 Security Considerations

As an 'independent supplier' of evaluation services to FAO, the contractor is responsible for ensuring the security of all persons contracted, including adequate arrangements for evacuation for medical or situational reasons.

However, to avoid any security incidents, the Evaluation Manager is requested to ensure that:

- The FAO CO registers the team members with the Security Officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground.
- The team members observe applicable UN security rules and regulations.

5.4 Ethics

This global evaluation must conform to UNEG ethical standards and norms. The contractors undertaking the evaluations are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle (preparation and design, data collection, data analysis, reporting and dissemination). This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results do no harm to participants or their communities.

Contractors are responsible for managing any potential ethical risks and issues and must put in place in consultation with the Evaluation Manager, processes and systems to identify, report and resolve any ethical issues that might arise during the implementation of the evaluation. Ethical approvals and reviews by relevant national and institutional review boards must be sought where required.

5.5 Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders

The JP RWEE International Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Committee (Commissioning Body):

a- The **FAO Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division** will take responsibility to:

- Contract an Evaluation Manager for the evaluation: Ashley Hollister, Gender Consultant, ESP.
- Monitor the independence and impartiality of the evaluation at all stages, including engagement of the ISC, TAC (or reference group), and CVG (see below and [TN on Independence and Impartiality](#)).

- Provide coordination and quality control towards the development of the final ToR, inception and evaluation reports and other products
- Participate in discussions with the evaluation team on the evaluation design and the evaluation subject, its performance and results with the Evaluation Manager and the evaluation team
- Organise and participate in all organized debriefings with country- and global-level stakeholders
- Initiate dissemination and follow-up processes, including the preparation of a Management Response to the evaluation recommendations in collaboration with the TAC (acting ERG)

b- The Evaluation Manager:

- Manages the evaluation process through all phases including drafting this TOR
- Ensures quality assurance mechanisms are operational
- Consolidates and shares comments on draft TOR, inception and evaluation reports with the evaluation team
- Ensures expected use of quality assurance mechanisms (checklists, quality support)
- Ensures that the team has access to all documentation and information necessary to the evaluation; facilitates the team's contacts with local stakeholders; sets up meetings, field visits; provides logistic support during the fieldwork; and arranges for interpretation, if required.
- Organises security briefings for the evaluation team and provides any materials as required.

c- A Country Validation Group has been formed as part of ensuring the independence and impartiality of the evaluation, including the seven national coordinators and agency focal points at the country-level, as well as the government ministry focal points. The Country Validation Group will provide input into the evaluation process, primarily through coordination of fieldwork and stakeholder interviews, as well as commenting on and validating the preliminary findings and draft report.

d- An Evaluation Reference Group has been formed, as appropriate, with representation from senior specialists and advisors of participating Agencies at HQ. The Evaluation Reference Group will include all members of the TAC and supported by representatives from the Offices of Evaluation of each participating Agency. The ERG members will select the evaluation firm, review and comment on the draft evaluation products, including the ToR, inception report and proposed methodology, draft report and final report, and will act as key informants in order to further safeguard against bias and influence. The ERG will advise the Evaluation Manager and support the evaluation process, as required.

e- Relevant Headquarters divisions will take responsibility to:

- Discuss Agency strategies, policies or systems in their area of responsibility and subject of evaluation.
- Comment on the evaluation TOR, inception and evaluation reports, as required.

f- Other Stakeholders (Government, NGOs, UN agencies) will participate as key informants, contributing information to the evaluation team to support a comprehensive review of JP RWEE progress in their respective countries.

g- The ISC will provide the final approval of the evaluation report, and be engaged by the TAC (i.e. ERG) for approvals of other key deliverables, as needed.

To ensure a smooth and efficient process and enhance the learning from this evaluation, the evaluation team should place emphasis on transparent and open communication with key stakeholders. These will be achieved by ensuring a clear agreement on channels and frequency of communication with and between key stakeholders. The main point of contact for the evaluation team will be the Evaluation Manager.

Annex 2. Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
EQ 1 - How responsive was the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders' needs, as well as national and global development goals and policies? (Relevance)				
1.1. Were the JP RWEE objectives and strategies in line with: the international development agenda (including the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs); participating Agency mandates, national context; and priorities of participating countries in terms of rural women's economic empowerment?	<p>Extent to which JP plans were aligned with the Agenda 2030 principles (particularly leaving no one behind, interconnectedness and indivisibility and multi-stakeholder partnerships).⁶⁶</p> <p>Extent to which JP RWEE collaboration agreements were consistent with the strategic plans of the relevant entities.</p> <p>Degree of alignment of JP priorities with country priorities and plans.</p>	<p>Project documents, annual consolidated reports; annual country reports</p> <p>Country national plans, including gender plans (if existing)</p>	Documentation review and analysis (global and country level)	Strength of available evidence: strong (documentary evidence exists and is easily accessible).
<p>1.2. Was the design relevant and appropriate to the stated purpose (addressing structural inequalities and achieving transformative change), target groups (rural women and members of their households), activities, countries and partnerships?</p> <p><i>Assumption 2</i></p>	<p>Extent to which stakeholders (at all levels) were consulted and their views reflected in the design.</p> <p>How clear and coherent was the design (including its causal logic/theory of change) to address the needs of target groups and to challenge structural inequalities?</p> <p>Extent to which the governance structures facilitated (or hindered) a smooth implementation of the JP RWEE and ensured that there was feedback from stakeholders and the target groups on continued relevance.</p> <p>Extent to which design/implementation was adjusted to take account of changes in</p>	<p>National policy/strategy documents for rural women economic empowerment</p> <p>Project documents, annual consolidated reports; annual country reports</p> <p>Gender analysis</p> <p>Primary data collection</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis (country level)</p> <p>Interviews with national coordinator, representative of agencies and relevant government representatives including beneficiaries at the level of</p>	Strength of available evidence: medium. The degree to which documentation and informants are able to provide precise understanding of structural inequality and transformative change will likely vary

⁶⁶ It will be assessed by applying the rationale underlying each principle against the programme relevance, i.e., i) regarding the "Leave no one behind" we will assess whether the project concept and design (Relevance) is reaching out to people in need and deprivation in a manner which targets their specific challenges and vulnerabilities, with a particular focus on rural women; ii) regarding the "Interconnectedness and Indivisibility" we will assess whether or not the programme approach (Relevance) has interfaces with other SDGs, because the 2030 Agenda stresses for the implementation of SDGs in their entirety instead of approaching them as a menu list of individual goals, *per se*.

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
	context/needs and feedback from implementation over the programme period. Existence of complaints and accountability arrangements.		community interventions	depending on context.
1.3. To what extent were GEWE objectives and mainstreaming principles included in the intervention design and guided by system-wide objectives on GEWE and human rights? <i>Assumption 7</i>	Inclusiveness of the consultation process at design stage. Extent to which considerations of GEWE and human rights were explicitly reflected in JP RWEE programming. Extent to which the Programme governance and oversight ensured attention to GEWE and human rights through appropriate guidance and prioritization.	Project documents, annual consolidated reports; annual country reports; evaluations Minutes of governance meetings Key Informants: agency staff at global, regional and country level, partner organizations, government	Documentation review and analysis (country level) Interviews (country and global), representative of agencies and relevant government representatives including beneficiaries at the level of community interventions	Strength of evidence: strong. Agency guidance and project documents should provide information that allows for assessment of attention to these principles.
1.4. What lessons can be learnt from this design process in terms of inter-agency collaboration?	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in JP RWEE design/relevance, drawing on responses to EQ 1.1 through EQ 1.4.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.
EQ 2 - To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's social and economic empowerment across countries? (Coherence)				
2.1 To what extent did the design result in a shared vision for delivering results, strategies for joint delivery, and sharing of risks among implementing UN entities? <i>Assumption 2</i>	Level of coherence of different participating UN agencies of the goals, objectives, and strategies of the RWEE programme, with attention to any difference between global, regional and country levels. Extent to which agencies (at different levels – global, regional country) express/have similar views	RWEE planning documents of different agencies Key informants: agency staff (national coordinator, agency focal points) at	Documentary analysis Interviews e-survey	Strength of evidence: medium to strong. The combination of interviews and documentary

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
	<p>on roles and comparative advantages as part of the JP RWEE.</p> <p>Extent to which the vision of the JP RWEE was shared by external stakeholders who are partners of the JP RWEE (government, implementing partners working in the same field, at different levels).</p> <p>Coherence between agencies in terms of assessment of risks and responsibilities for attenuating these at country level.</p>	global, regional and country level, partner organizations, government (different levels)		analysis should provide a good overview. It may be challenging to obtain the views from decentralized levels (field level staff and stakeholders).
<p>2.2 To what extent is the JP RWEE coherent with the mandates and comparative advantages of the four participating agencies?</p> <p><i>Assumption 1</i></p>	<p>Alignment between the official mandates of agencies and their role in each of the country programmes (planned and actual).</p> <p>Alignment between the objectives of the RWEE programmes at country level and the choice of the agencies (among the group of JP RWEE agencies) that are involved.</p> <p>Extent to which roles played by participating agencies in the JP RWEE aligned with those agreed under the UNSCF in each country.</p> <p>Appropriateness and robustness of lead agency Terms of Reference (if and where they exist) in executing the lead agency function.</p>	<p>Agency documents</p> <p>Project documents (national coordinator, agency focal points) at global, regional and country level, partner organizations, government (different levels)</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis</p> <p>Interviews (global, regional, country)</p> <p>Country case studies</p>	<p>Strength of evidence: medium.</p> <p>Documentation and country UNSDG plans should provide insights into comparative advantage and mandates.</p> <p>Comprehensive documentation may be lacking on interventions of others in the same sectors.</p>
<p>2.3 To what extent has the JP RWEE leveraged comparative strengths of the four participating agencies and maximized advantages of “delivering as one”?</p> <p><i>Assumptions 1 and 4</i></p>	<p>Comparison of the expected roles of agencies in the JP RWEE with the roles they played in practice.</p> <p>Extent to which external partners (including government) perceive “delivering as one” as adding value to the priorities of the sector and to the implementation.</p>	<p>Annual consolidated reports; annual country reports; evaluations</p> <p>Key informants: (UN Resident Coordinator,</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis</p> <p>Interviews (country)</p>	<p>Strength of evidence: medium to strong.</p>

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
	Analysis/identification of the factors that explain differences between expected roles and the role that was played in practice.	government, partners); JP national coordinator, agency focal points and delivery partners representatives	Country case studies	
2.4 What lessons can be learnt in terms of overcoming the challenges of working in different policy and operational environments to bring together four different agencies in different socio-political contexts?	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in JP RWEE added value as per responses to EQ 2.1 and EQ 2.2.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	
EQ 3 - To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results? (Effectiveness)				
<p><i>Programmatic questions</i></p> <p>3.1. To what extent did the JP RWEE achieve its intended results and outcomes?</p> <p><i>Assumptions 4 and 5</i></p>	<p>Analysis of the nature, quantity, and quality of the results (against milestones). Did RWEE achieve its expected outcomes?</p> <p>Extent to which GEWE objectives are reflected in results and outcomes.</p> <p>Overlap, competition and duplication of work avoided at country level.</p>	<p>Country-level monitoring data and annual reports</p> <p>WEAI data</p> <p>Key informants: at relevant ministries (e.g. Agriculture, food and livestock, Women and Children, National planning commission); project partners (national and local levels civil society actors); and JP beneficiaries of men and women</p>	<p>Documentation analysis and review</p> <p>Data review</p> <p>Interviews of agency (national coordinator + agency representative) and partner staff</p> <p>Country case studies/fieldwork</p>	<p>Strength of evidence: medium. Not all countries have baselines and/or end-lines. Qualitative evidence on results and outcomes is generally weak and would only be collected by this team retrospectively for the evaluation period (with challenges likely in data collection).</p>

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
<p>3.2. To what extent has the JP RWEE produced unintended positive or negative outcomes? What explains these?</p> <p><i>Assumption 5</i></p>	<p>The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative unintended, higher-level effects.</p> <p>Extent to which the interconnected and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs were taken into consideration, including existence of synergies and trade-offs between targets.</p> <p>The extent to which the programme leveraged the work of other UN agencies and development organizations <u>on the economic empowerment of rural women.</u></p>	<p>Country-level reports and evaluations</p> <p>WEAI report</p> <p>Agency staff at global, regional and country level, partner organizations and field visits⁶⁷</p> <p>National coordinator, agency focal points and partner focal points</p> <p>Representatives of relevant ministries</p> <p>Semi-structured group interviews of beneficiaries, men and women</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis</p> <p>Interviews of agency (national coordinator + agency representative) and partner agency staff</p> <p>Country case studies/fieldwork</p>	<p>Same as preceding point.</p>
<p><i>Process questions:</i></p> <p>3.3. How effective was the governance and management of the JP RWEE in supporting design and implementation of the programme?</p> <p><i>Assumption 1</i></p>	<p>Comparison of the expectations of the functioning of different elements of the governance and management in terms of decision-making, support to the design, implementation, and monitoring of the programme and the way in which implemented.</p> <p>Examine ISC, Global Coordination, TAC, Administrative Agent and Country Committees.</p> <p>Examine oversight, supervision and backstopping (technical, administrative and operational) of the UN Agencies at country and HQ levels.</p>	<p>Key informants: agency staff at global, regional and country level, partner organizations and field visits</p> <p>National coordinator, agency focal points and partner focal points</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis</p> <p>Interviews of agency (national coordinator + agency representative) and partner staff</p> <p>e-survey</p>	<p>Strength of evidence: medium. There is little independent evaluative evidence on this aspect. Turn-over of staff within agencies, RWEE governance</p>

⁶⁷ Field visits will be planned during the inception process but will remain contingent to the pandemic situation.

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
		Representatives of relevant ministries		structures and in country may affect availability of evidence for the full time period.
3.4. Did partners and donors make the necessary commitment, agreement and actions (including UN agencies at country and global levels) to support the JP RWEE to achieve its objectives? <i>Assumptions 1 and 2</i>	Examine staffing, funding, positioning of the JP RWEE within agencies, oversight/leadership within each organization, degree to which synergies were sought with other activities within the same agency, and quality and type of partnerships for implementation.	Key informants: agency staff at global, regional and country level, partner organizations and field visits ⁶⁸ Semi-structured group interviews of beneficiaries, men and women	Interviews Country case studies Survey	As per above
3.5. What internal and external factors affected the governance and management processes?	Identify and seek to explain any differences in governance and management processes between countries, contexts, and agencies.	Project reports Key informants: at relevant ministries (e.g. Agriculture, food and livestock, National planning commission); project partners (national and local levels civil society actors)	Documentation review Interviews Survey	As per above
3.6. What lessons can be drawn about the planning, implementation and	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in JP RWEE delivery of results as per responses to EQ 3.1 through EQ 3.5.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.

⁶⁸ Field visits will be planned during the inception process but will remain contingent to the pandemic situation

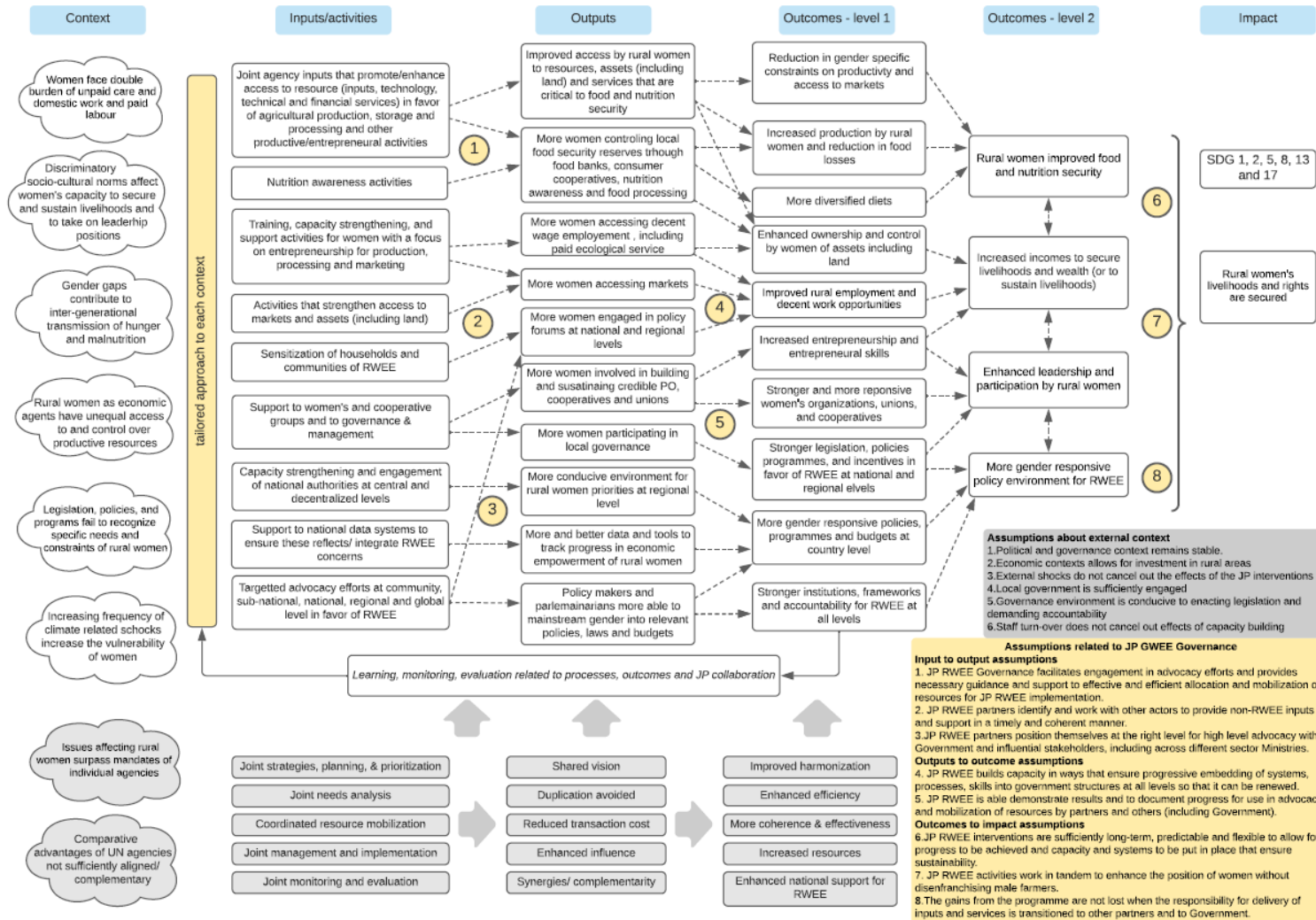
Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
<p>monitoring of the programme that would enhance the results in the future?</p> <p><i>Assumption 5</i></p>				
EQ 4 - Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient? (Efficiency)				
<p><i>Programme question:</i></p> <p>4.1. Could (and if so how) results have been achieved and monitored more efficiently?</p> <p><i>Assumption 1</i></p>	<p>Review achieved results against plans.</p> <p>Compare results against those of comparable activities in other programme countries.</p> <p>Analyse timeliness of results against plans and needs.</p> <p>Analyse extent to which agencies delivered on expected complementarities (i.e. were inputs provided in an optimal synergetic manner and coinciding on the same beneficiaries).</p> <p>Examine and review effectiveness of monitoring arrangements and use of monitoring data for decision-making by the JP RWEE.</p>	<p>Project plans and reports</p> <p>Evaluations reports</p> <p>Interviews with M&E officers, project partner and agency staff</p>	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<p>Strength of the evidence: medium.</p>
<p><i>Process question:</i></p> <p>4.2. How relevant and effective were the criteria that were used to guide decision-making on the use of resources by the programme?</p> <p><i>Assumption 1</i></p>	<p>Review the criteria used by agencies for decision-making on resource allocation against plans and needs.</p> <p>Compare and analyse criteria for decision-making on resource allocation over time, and between countries and contexts.</p>	<p>Internal minutes</p> <p>Internal correspondence with countries</p> <p>Key informants: agency and government staff</p>	<p>Review and analysis of documentation</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<p>Strength of the evidence: medium.</p>
<p>4.3. How efficient was the governance structure surrounding decision-making in general and in particular related to expenditures and fund allocation?</p> <p><i>Assumptions 1 and 5</i></p>	<p>Review coherence, consistency, quality and transparency of decision-making processes.</p> <p>Examine efficiency of decision-making (time lapse, number of tiers for decisions to be made), and communication.</p>	<p>Internal minutes</p> <p>Internal correspondence with countries</p>	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Survey</p>	<p>Strength of the evidence: medium.</p>

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
		Key informants: agency and government staff		
4.4. What lessons can be drawn about the resource allocation to the programme that would enhance the results in the future?	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in JP RWEE resource allocation as per responses to EQ 4.1 through EQ 4.3. Analysis of the resource allocation towards programme needs at country level.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.
EQ 5 - What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life? (Sustainability)				
5.1. How sustainable are the results achieved? <i>Assumption 4</i>	Extent to which the programme led to transformative results. Extent to which the programme promoted replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices. Extent to which there is evidence that activities are likely to continue beyond the duration of the programme.	Key informants: at relevant ministries (e.g. Agriculture, food and livestock, Women and children, National planning commission); project partners (national and local levels civil society actors); and JP beneficiaries WEAI report	Interviews (global and national and sub-national) levels Country case studies e-Survey	Strength of the evidence: medium.
5.2. Is the JP RWEE operational model sustainable? <i>Assumption 6</i>	Extent to which operational arrangements for the programme have been embedded in structures that will continue beyond the duration of the programme.	Key informants (as above)	Interviews (global and national and sub-national) levels Country case studies	Strength of the evidence: strong.
5.3. To what extent has the joint programme delivered long-term results? Is there evidence the JP RWEE is contributing to national ownership of efforts to achieve and sustain rural women's	Evidence that results and lessons learned from implementation informed country-level policy/ planning and implementation.	Project documentation End of programme evaluations	Country case studies	Strength of the evidence: strong.

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
economic empowerment (through strengthened capacities, advocacy, and transition strategies, etc.)? <i>Assumptions 1 and 3</i>	Evidence of impact and/or replication or adaptation of approaches implemented through the JP RWEE.	Key informants (as above)	Interviews (country and sub-national) levels e-survey	
5.4. Has JP RWEE followed sustainable environmental practices and standards? <i>Assumption 6</i>	Review evidence of environmental practices and standards in project plans, reports, and practices across different countries. Assess contribution of RWEE to SDG 13 in terms of achievement towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change.	Project plans and reports, annual reports Evaluations Key informants, government staff	Documentation review and analysis Country case studies	Strength of the evidence: strong.
5.5. What lessons can be drawn to increase the likelihood of sustainability of process and results? <i>Assumption 4</i>	Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of programme sustainability as per responses to EQ 5.1 through EQ 5.4.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.	This question will draw on the analysis above.
EQ 6 – What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)				
6.1. What have been the key internal and external factors to the JP RWEE contributing to or challenging the successful implementation of the JP RWEE? What does this imply for the future? <i>Assumptions 4 and 8</i>	Possible internal factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management structures, processes and functions • Human resources (numbers/quality/ appropriate skills/retention and/or turnover) • Financial resources (volume, timeliness and predictability of financial resources) • Monitoring and evidence development systems, communication and knowledge management, lessons learning • Compatibility of systems between participating agencies. Possible external factors:	Document synthesis of past evaluations Country case studies Interviews (global, regional, country) WEAI data e-survey	Documentation review and analysis e-survey	This EQ requires conclusions to be drawn from the findings against previous EQs. We will highlight any weaknesses in the evidence for our conclusions.

Evaluation Sub-Questions	Measure/Indicators	Sources of information	Data collection methods	Evidence availability & reliability
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Reform process in each country (i.e. Resident Coordinator system, UN Country Teams, UNSDCF) Quality of external partnerships Changing context (political change, natural disaster, wars, health crisis, political crisis etc.). 			
<p>6.2. What are the main opportunities and risks?</p> <p><i>Assumption 4 and 8</i></p>	<p>Key opportunities and risks as identified from secondary and primary evidence review.</p>	<p>Documentation</p> <p>Key informants' agency and project partner staff</p>	<p>Documentation review and analysis</p> <p>KI interviews</p> <p>Survey</p>	

Annex 3. Theory of Change



Annex 4. JP RWEE Logical Framework

Results	Indicators	Means of Verification/ Sources of Information	Assumptions/ Risks
Goal: To secure rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development and the post MDGs	<u>Quant:</u> % of decrease in the number of undernourished population <u>Quant:</u> proportion of rural women owning or –co-owning land	Data from agricultural surveys and censuses Official government reports FAO reports	
Outcome 1 Rural women have improved food and nutrition security	<u>Quant:</u> Increase of agricultural production of women farmers <u>Qual:</u> Evidence of improvement of rural women dietary diversity and consumption patterns	Reports of ministries of agriculture/rural development Crop assessments Reports of local councils Programme's progress reports	
Output 1.1. Rural women have increased access to resources, assets and services critical for their food and nutrition security.	<u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women's cooperatives accessing credit <u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women accessing integrated services <u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women utilizing improved production techniques	Reports of local banks and microcredit institutions Records of the joint service bureaus in rural areas Programme's progress reports	
<p>Activity 1.1.1. Work at household and community level to foster changes of gender-based roles, ensuring equitable access to and control over productive resources to reach a more adequate share of benefits and workload between men and women (all).</p> <p>Activity 1.1.2. Work with communities to raise awareness about land tenure and land use rights to promote women's equal access to and ownership of land for agricultural production (Lead: FAO and UN Women)</p> <p>Activity 1.1.3. Advocate with governments and financial institutions for rural women's increased access and remittances, and promote better linkages between informal and formal financial services to financial services and products such as savings, credit, insurance, domestic payment services (Lead: IFAD and UN Women)</p> <p>Activity 1.1.4. Support Governments to promote rural women's access to critical integrated services (e.g. personal identification documents, land registration, extension advice, marketing services, medical checkup, legal advice). (Lead: UN Women)</p> <p>Activity 1.1.5. Support Governments to relieve the burden of women's work through research innovations, labour-saving technologies, child care services and fuel efficient stoves (Lead: IFAD and UN Women)</p> <p>Activity 1.1.6 Support rural women's access to critical inputs for agricultural production such as tools, high quality seeds and machinery (Lead: FAO)</p>			
Output 1.2 Rural women have greater capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves.	<u>Quant:</u> Number of sustainable women led and managed local food security reserves <u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women accessing innovative food	Programme's progress reports WFP activity reports FAO activity reports	

	processing plants		
<p><u>Activity 1.2.1:</u> Support women's led and managed local food reserve systems through food banks, consumer cooperatives and nutrition awareness initiatives, as well as the role of women in men-women systems (Lead: WFP)</p> <p><u>Activity 1.2.2:</u> Strengthen rural women's productive capacities through promotion and improvement of food processing and storage, using innovative, productivity enhancing and culturally and ecologically acceptable technologies (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 1.2.3:</u> Build the capacities of women farmers in agricultural technologies, including crop planting, cultivation and harvesting, through bottom up approaches such as Farmer Field Schools (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 1.2.4:</u> Enhance the capacities of women-led associations to jointly manage productive assets and to deliver effective services to their members (Lead: UN Women)</p>			
<p>Outcome 2 Rural women have increased income to secure their livelihoods.</p>	<p><u>Quant.:</u> Income generated by rural women's cooperatives from their sales to WFP and other markets</p> <p><u>Qual:</u> Evidence of better quality of life and status of rural women</p>	<p>Reports of WFP on P4P and school feeding programmes</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	<p><u>Assumption</u> Rural women's groups have the capacities to meet the standards of WFP for P4P</p>
<p>Output 2.1 Rural women have enhanced entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets for their products.</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women's cooperatives procuring agricultural products and home grown school meals through WFP programmes</p>	<p>Reports of WFP on P4P and school feeding programmes</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	
<p><u>Activity 2.1.1.</u> Strengthen entrepreneurship and support rural women's businesses through access to credit, other financial and business development services, capacity building and training, including in rural service provision and non-traditional roles (Lead: IFAD, UN Women and WFP)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.2.</u> Support women led associations and small scale businesses to supply agricultural products and home grown school meals in low income and food insecure countries and areas (Lead: WFP)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.3.</u> Support women POs to address their supply side constraints including their transport capacity so that they so that they can procure agricultural products within the framework of the P4P programme and access other market opportunities (Lead: WFP)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.4.</u> Strengthen provision of, and linkages to, value addition, marketing and market information, using ICT and sustainable and environmentally sound tools and technology (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.5.</u> Support women and their groups to decide for themselves what they want to farm and provide information on the benefits and limitations of each crop in terms of nutritional benefits and possibilities for income generation (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.1.6.</u> Support the capacities of women led associations to develop and manage savings and loan associations (UN Women)</p>			
<p>Output 2.2 Rural women have increased access to decent wage employment opportunities.</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women's cooperatives providing paid ecological services</p>	<p>Reports from the Ministry of environment</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	
<p><u>Activity 2.2.1.</u> Promote access of rural women to decent work, while addressing issues related to childcare, occupational safety and health, minimum wages, child labour prevention (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 2.2.2.</u> Support rural women's groups to access opportunities for paid ecological services, within the framework of climate change adaptation and mitigation (eg. watershed management, forest nursery, etc.) (Lead: UN Women)</p>			

<p>Outcome 3 Rural women have enhanced leadership and participation in their communities and in rural institutions, and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Proportion of rural women elected representatives in rural councils</p> <p><u>Quant:</u> Proportion of rural women who are members of land committees</p> <p><u>Quant:</u> Proportion of POs led by women</p> <p><u>Qual:</u> Evidence of rural women's empowerment in intra-household decision making</p>	<p>Reports of local councils</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	<p><u>Risk</u> There is resistance against rural women's leadership and participation</p>
<p>Output 3.1 Rural women, including young women have enhanced confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance.</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Number of rural girls enrolled in secondary education</p> <p><u>Quant:</u> Number of women candidates for elections in rural councils</p>	<p>Reports of the ministries of education WFP activity reports</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	
<p>Activity 3.1.1. Support rural girls/women to get primary and secondary education and vocational training (Lead: WFP) Activity 3.1.2. Strengthen rural women and young women's self confidence and capacity to take on leadership roles in local governance (land committees, community development initiatives) and producer organisations (POs). (Lead: UN Women)</p>			
<p>Output 3.2 Rural women have greater organisational capacities to form, sustain and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Number of informal rural women's groups who join formally registered POs, cooperatives and unions</p> <p><u>Quant:</u> Number of POs, cooperatives and unions that adopt a gender policy/strategy and/or a women's quota for their board</p>	<p>Programme's progress reports</p>	<p><u>Risk:</u> Resistance of leaders of POs, cooperatives and unions to have more transparent, accountable and gender equitable organisations</p>
<p>Activity 3.2.1. Develop the capacities of rural women to organize into and participate in cooperatives, service provider and producer organizations, and/or worker unions (Lead: WFP, FAO, IFAD) Activity 3.2.2. Assist informal rural women's groups to affiliate with formal organisations (Lead: all) Activity 3.2.3. Support POs, cooperatives and unions to make their corporate governance more transparent, effective, accountable, gender equitable and age inclusive through: developing quotas on board; setting up gender committees; implementing gender policies and strategies; and providing managerial and leadership training (Lead: FAO)</p>			
<p>Output 3.3 Rural women including young women have increased capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels.</p>	<p><u>Qual:</u> Extent to which rural women's coalitions adopt common positions to influence national and regional policy forums on the Post MDG Plus 15 and Rio Plus 20 follow up</p>	<p>Reports of rural women's networks</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	
<p>Activity 3.3.1. Strengthen rural women's advocacy platforms so that they can engage in regional processes (e.g. CAADP) and key policy debates (e.g. Rio +20 and Post MDGs +15), and advocate with their own Governments to hold them</p>			

<p>accountable at national and local levels. (Lead: UN Women)</p> <p><u>Activity 3.3.2:</u> Provide women, youth and men with information and means of communication in isolated areas so as to be able to network and exchange experiences and know-how (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 3.3.3.</u> Support regional level dialogues among rural POs, both mixed and women and youth only through participatory communication, networking, exchange of experiences, dissemination of information, and stakeholder consultations (Lead: IFAD)</p> <p><u>Activity 3.3.4.</u> Facilitate networking of rural women's organisations at sub-national and national levels, and their stronger links with the women's movement for better information exchange, advocacy, coordination and participation in national policy and decision making processes (Lead: FAO and UN Women)</p>			
<p><u>Output 3.4</u> Rural women, including young women have enhanced awareness on their rights in a more supportive community/local environment.</p>	<p><u>Quant:</u> Number of rural women and youth participating in community listening clubs</p>	<p>Reports of the FAO Dimitra Programme</p> <p>Programme's progress reports</p>	<p><u>Risk:</u> There is male resistance to women's empowerment at local level</p>
<p><u>Activity 3.4.1.</u> Raise awareness on rural women's rights (land, water,.) through legal literacy, community listening clubs and community radios (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 3.4.2.</u> Foster a supportive and enabling environment, including by involving/sensitizing male advocates at all levels to champion and support change: sharing of knowledge, networking, participatory methodologies and consultative mechanisms (Lead: UN Women)</p>			
<p>Outcome 4 A more gender responsive policy environment is secured for the economic empowerment of rural women</p>	<p><u>Quant.:</u> Proportion of government budgets and donor funding allocated to programmes benefitting rural women</p> <p><u>Quant:</u> number of countries passing laws to secure rural women's land ownership</p>	<p>National budgets</p> <p>OECD/DAC reports</p> <p>National CEDAW reports</p> <p>Reports of NWM</p>	<p><u>Assumption:</u> There is political will to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment</p>
<p>Output 4.1 Policy makers and parliamentarians have enhanced capacities to effectively mainstream gender into land, food, agriculture, nutrition and rural employment policies, laws and budgets.</p>	<p><u>Qual:</u> extent to which national land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies and laws make provisions for gender equality and women's empowerment</p>	<p>Reports of sectoral ministries dealing with: land, food, nutrition, agricultural and rural development policies</p> <p>Reports of parliamentary commissions</p>	
<p><u>Activity 4.1.1.</u> Provide Policy Assistance to countries: to mainstream gender into their food, agriculture, nutrition and rural development policies and legal frameworks; improve national governance for food and nutrition security; and facilitate the establishment and development of gender equitable POs (Lead: FAO and UN Women)</p> <p><u>Activity 4.1.2.</u> Advocate and strengthen capacities for the implementation of policies advancing women's land rights, including granting of titles to land, joint titling, land distribution programmes and other changes in land law by providing: capacity development among decentralized officials; awareness building and advocacy with parliamentarians, land commissions, and other relevant stakeholders; and legal aid and appeal mechanisms in relation to land and property issues, both in statutory and customary law (Lead: FAO, IFAD and UN Women)</p> <p><u>Activity 4.1.3.</u> Strengthen national institutions and donor coordination mechanisms to deliver evidence based gender responsive rural development and agricultural programmes, policies (eg. GFP in Ministries, support for GRB, etc.) and investments. (Lead: UN Women and FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 4.1.4.</u> Enhance agricultural and rural development policies to advance rural women's rights within the decent work agenda, through policy support, advocacy and implementation (Lead: FAO)</p> <p><u>Activity 4.1.5.</u> Advocate with Governments for rural infrastructure development and investments in environmentally sustainable technologies and enterprises (Lead: UN Women and WFP)</p>			

<p>Output 4.2 Greater availability of tools and data to track progress in the economic empowerment of rural women</p>	<p>Quant: Number of countries where the women's empowerment in agriculture index is piloted</p>	<p>Reports of USAID on the Women's empowerment in agriculture index Reports of national statistical offices Programme's progress reports</p>	<p>Risk Gender disaggregated data are not available to compute the women's empowerment in agriculture index in the programme's priority countries</p>
<p><u>Activity 4.2.1.</u> Pilot a 'women's empowerment in agriculture' index/national scorecard for rural gender equality (Lead: all) <u>Activity 4.2.2.</u> Provide TA to mainstream gender in agricultural censuses and surveys (Lead: FAO) <u>Activity 4.2.3.</u> Build the capacities of national and sub-national stakeholders, including national statistical systems and ministries of agriculture in collecting and analyzing gender disaggregated data (Lead: FAO)</p>			
<p>Output 4.3 An enabling environment is promoted to reflect rural women's priorities in regional policy processes.</p>	<p>Quant: Number of regional dialogue mechanisms on agriculture, rural development and land that involve rural women's groups</p>	<p>Reports of regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organisations (e.g. NEPAD's reports on CAADP)</p>	<p>Assumption There are political openings for rural women's participation in regional policy processes</p>
<p><u>Activity 4.3.1.</u> Organize a global conference on rural women farmers in 2014, within the context of the international year of family farmers (Lead: all) <u>Activity 4.3.2.</u> Support regional policy processes and help develop sustainable regional capacities to accelerate rural women's economic empowerment (e.g. in processes such as CAADP, Rural Futures Initiative, Land Policy Initiative, etc.) (Lead: all)</p>			

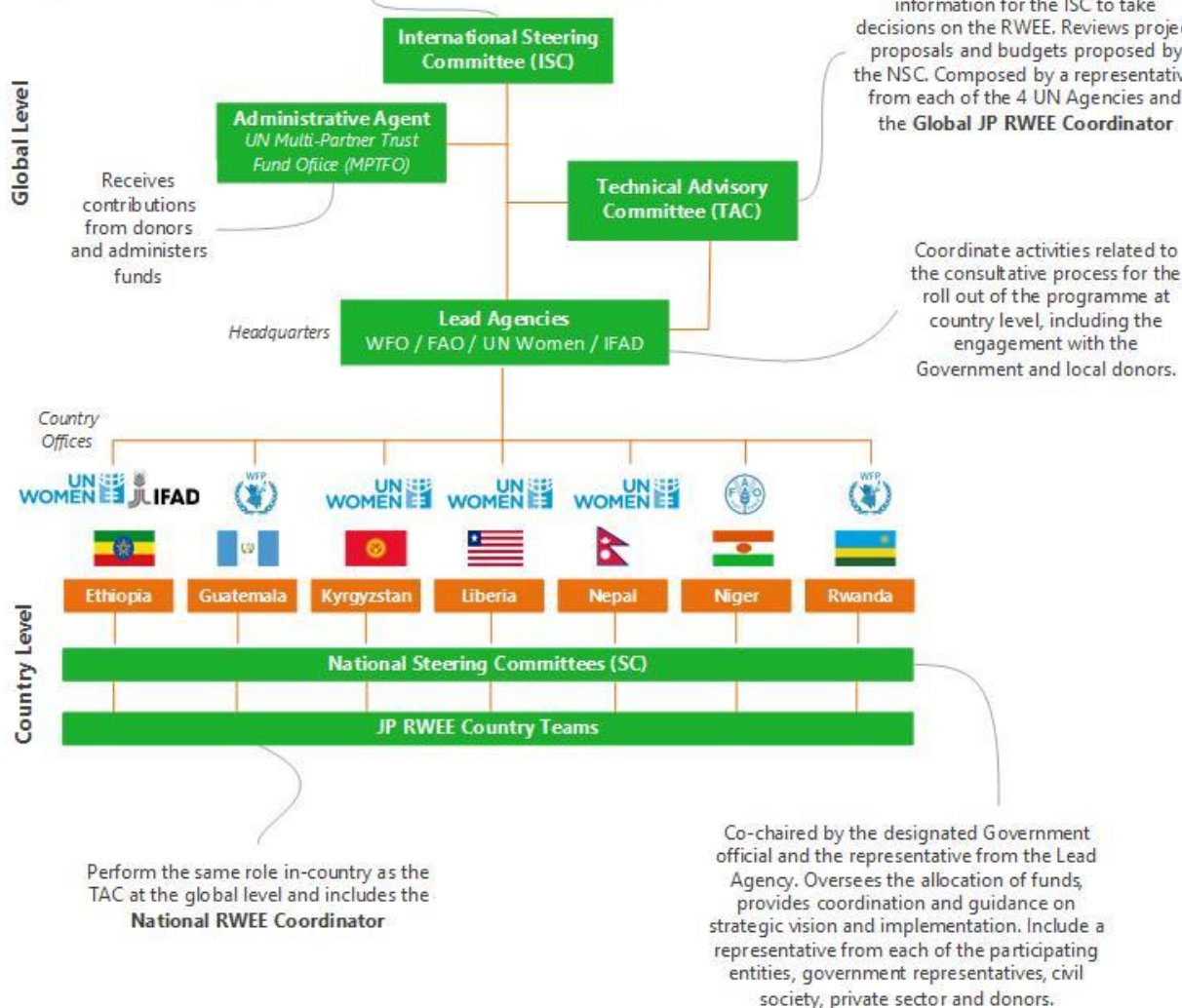
Annex 5. JP RWEE governance structure



RWEE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Oversees the allocation of funds and provides strategic vision and direction to the implementing partners, establishes requirements and priorities, including coordination with other relevant initiatives. Chaired by a Senior Official from one of the 4 UN Agencies, includes country Representatives, donors, and MPTFO.

Provides operational support and information for the ISC to take decisions on the RWEE. Reviews project proposals and budgets proposed by the NSC. Composed by a representative from each of the 4 UN Agencies and the Global JP RWEE Coordinator.



Source: Mokoro Evaluation Team 2020.

Annex 6. Evaluation timeline

Phase	Main activities	Final agreed timing
Phase 1: Inception		
Mobilization /document gathering	Analysis, synthesis and preparation of first draft of Final Report, including three case studies; draft submitted to Mokoro for comment; revisions incorporated.	From 10 October 2020
Briefing	Team briefing with client	w/c 10 October 2020
Analysis and drafting of Inception Report	Preparation of Inception Report, including a detailed delivery plan, a revised theory of change, and an outline of the approach, methodology and tools; draft report submitted to Mokoro for comment; revisions incorporated.	October–November 2020
Remote Inception Mission	Inception interviews, internal team workshop	October 2020
Submission of first draft of Inception Report	Finalization of Inception Report draft based on two working sessions with clients	Draft Inception Report submitted 13 November 2020
Client review of Inception Report	Inception Report with client for review (DEQAS)	Consolidated responses received 30 November 2020
Submission of Final Inception Report	Finalization of Inception Report	Final Inception Report submitted by Mokoro by 4 December 2020
Phase 2: Data collection and analysis		
Document review, country data analysis, fieldwork preparation	Data collection and analysis for country reviews; fieldwork preparation	From 2 November 2020
Survey and global analysis	Survey preparation and implementation, analysis of governance arrangements	January–February 2021
Global and regional interviews	Conducting of global and regional interviews	From 1 December 2020
Desk study interviews	Conducting interviews in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan and Liberia	January and February 2021
Fieldwork: Niger	Fieldwork mission to Country 1	Weeks of 7 and 14 December
Team Learning workshop	Internal team workshop to discuss the pilot country experience	w/c 21 December
Fieldwork: Guatemala	Fieldwork mission to Country 2	Weeks of 1 and 8 February
Fieldwork: Nepal	Fieldwork mission to Country 3	Weeks of 1 and 8 February
Drafting of in-depth case studies	Drafting of in-depth fieldwork case studies	January–March
Debriefing and validation workshops	Preparation and delivery of debrief with client and key stakeholders following completion of all seven country case studies and desk studies	December 2020 – February 2021
Validation workshop	Remote validation workshop with TAC and ISC	10 March 2021
Phase 3: Reporting and reviews		
Analysis and drafting of Final Report	Analysis, synthesis and preparation of first draft of Final Report, including three case studies; draft submitted to Mokoro view for comment; revisions incorporated.	January–March 2021
Submission of draft of Final Report	Draft Final Report submitted	19 March 2021
Client Review of Evaluation Report	Review of Evaluation Report by Evaluation Manager, TAC and ISC	19 March 2021 –14 April 2021
	Consolidated responses shared with evaluation team	15 April 2021

Submission of Final Report	Stakeholder and client comments on draft Final Report; incorporated. Final Evaluation Report including case studies and Dissemination Document submitted.	Final Evaluation Report submitted 30 April 2021
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Annex 7. Detailed evaluation methodology

Introduction

1. The Inception Report constitutes the full description of this evaluation's methodology. This annex provides a summary of key elements of the methodology, building on the information already presented in section 1.4.

Overview of methodological approach

2. This is a mixed-method, theory-based approach, which relied on a number of tools: a Theory of Change (ToC), a stakeholder analysis (SA) and an Evaluation Matrix (EM).
3. It is increasingly recognized by the evaluation community that elaborating its implicit ToC can be a valuable foundation for an evaluation.⁶⁹ There are some similarities between a logical framework and a ToC, but an important distinction is that the latter also sets out why it is expected that something will cause something else. It opens up the black box between programmes and observed changes (or lack of change) and makes explicit the underlying assumptions or conditions on which causal chains depend. This is important for a formative evaluation of this kind. Preparing a ToC is a way to check whether the evaluators' understanding of a programme's intentions and assumptions correspond with those of its protagonists. It provides a basis for identifying key issues for the evaluation to investigate (which, typically, will relate to the testing of the main underlying assumptions outlined in the ToC).
4. In line with the requirements of a theory-based evaluation, the Evaluation Team engaged in an exercise to develop a ToC, which drew upon the JP RWEE Logical Model and was informed by the documentation review. This ToC does not intend to replace the existing one, but for the purpose of this evaluation, it helped the Evaluation Team to enhance its understanding of the JP RWEE programme by bringing out in more detail the explicit causal links between different levels, introducing finer granularity to the outcomes (by distinguishing between two levels) and through this process facilitating the identification of key internal and external assumptions which the evaluation will assess through its process of inquiry. The ToC (see Annex 3) ensured a shared understanding within the team and between the team and the TAC members of the JP RWEE.
5. The SA helped to construct lists of external and internal stakeholders in the programme at global, country and local levels. The EM provided the structure for the evaluation, detailed the sub-questions and indicators related to the evaluation questions and included material about sources of information and tools used to collect and analyse primary and secondary data (Annex 2). It also provided a link to the ToC through the underlying assumptions.
6. The ToC and the SA were developed based on an initial review of the project documents, which was consolidated through a small number of interviews with TAC members who had known the programme from its inception. The SA and the ToC were used to build the Evaluation Team's understanding of the subject of the evaluation. This helped us to define the EM by identifying some indicators that would help us to decide on the sub-questions we would need in order to respond to the evaluation questions set out in the ToR.
7. From the list of indicators and sub-questions, we were able to decide which sources of information might be more relevant and, by inference, whether secondary or primary data collection and analysis was preferable.
8. The team adopted a participatory approach throughout the evaluation process to interact with and involve the main stakeholders.
9. The ToR provided a set of guiding questions which fell under the different Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria, whilst also identifying the respective key points to be considered in this evaluation. These are as follows:
 - **Relevance:** How responsive is the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights-holders' needs as well as national and global development goals and policies?
 - **Coherence:** To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition and women's empowerment across countries?

⁶⁹ https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/resources/guide/theory_of_change

- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? In addition, what factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results?
 - **Efficiency:** Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient?
 - **Sustainability:** What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life?
 - **Impact:** To what extent has the joint programme delivered longer-term results from processes, whether positive or negative, intended or unintended, across all dimensions of women's empowerment?
10. Based on the ToR guidance, the team conducted a series of interviews during the Inception Phase with key stakeholders and several discussions with the Evaluation Management Group (EMG), which resulted in the detailed EM (see Annex 2), commented on by the TAC and amended accordingly. Similarly, the ToC was shared and commented on by the TAC and the Global Coordination Unit and subsequently revised as part of the inception process. After consideration of the assessment of impact (paragraph 52 of the ToR) the team estimated that a thorough impact assessment was beyond the scope of this evaluation, partly because of the timing (the programme activities are not yet fully completed) but also because an impact assessment requires a different methodology. However, an analysis of impact is implicit in EQ 3, and even more so in the sub-questions and indicators under EQ 5. The team included another indicator in EQ 5 (5.3) to make this more evident.
 11. Discussion with the TAC members also led to the selection of three country case studies. The ToR provided some of the criteria to consider when choosing the country cases, including geographic and leading agencies representation, the availability of data and the ability to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team also considered the availability of the A-WEAI data (especially the existence of a baseline) and the potential for drawing lessons applicable at programme level.
 12. On this basis, Ethiopia and Rwanda were dismissed as potential country cases because of the additional and recent data already provided by reviews. Liberia was also dismissed because of limited activity and data, and because the lead agency, UN Women, also leads in some of the other countries in the partnership. Niger and Guatemala were considered to be strong candidates from the outset because of their geographic location, and because the FAO and WFP only lead in these two countries. The fact that mid-term review (MTR) and A-WEAI baseline data existed also supported our choice. The data from countries not considered for the country visits will of course still be considered during the evaluation.
 13. The choice between Kyrgyzstan and Nepal was less clear cut, but ultimately, after discussion with TAC members, it was decided that given that data already exists from a mid-term evaluation in Kyrgyzstan, a focus on Nepal was desirable and would generate some missing data/insights.
 14. Thus Guatemala, Nepal and Niger were chosen as the country case studies. Ultimately these choices were based on a combination of factors and though data available for each country may not always be comparable or of equal quality, the team followed advice from the TAC and key informants with a historical understanding of the programme.

Data collection methods and tools

15. The teams used a number of different tools to gather data from different sources and sought to make use of both qualitative and quantitative data.
16. Gender was considered during data collection through a gender-balanced selection of interviewees at community level, and by ensuring that men and women's perspectives and opinions were recorded and considered. During fieldwork the team endeavoured to respect social norms whilst at the same time providing space for women to express themselves freely. This was achieved by organizing women-only group discussions, for example. Whilst organizing interviews with beneficiaries, the team ensured that the visits took place at times and places culturally suitable for the beneficiaries. It was also important to actively seek the participation of the most vulnerable women by providing specific criteria for invitations to the field contact person. The team sought to ensure a fair representation of different categories of beneficiaries by taking into account social differences, such as caste, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

In-depth documentary review

17. Following the preliminary review of key documentation, a systematic review of programme documentation was conducted using the indicators identified in the EM. Each team member was assigned one or two of the countries to review. Documents to review included the following: Performance Management Framework; country-level monitoring data; country-level work plans; Consolidated Annual Reports; country-level annual reports; and country-level mid-term reviews and evaluations.
18. The documentation review helped to refine interview templates prepared for primary data collection in the country case studies; where there was ample data, interviews were used to validate the documentary data, and where evidence was weaker or lacking, there was a greater focus on determining the facts during interviews.

Global and national stakeholder interviews

19. Besides the semi-structured interviews conducted during the country field visits, the team also interviewed a selection of respondents at global level to explore questions around inter-agency cooperation and organizational factors, as well as perspectives on the implementation and outcomes of the programme. In addition, interviews were conducted as part of the desk studies. A target of ten interviews per country was set for desk studies (including with the national coordinator, the agency lead and a representative from each agency, at least one ministry representative and a member of the NSC, and representation from implementing partners). The key informant groups interviewed can be found in Annex 9, which also includes a summary of the interviews conducted.
20. The stakeholder mapping helped us to prioritize the key stakeholders to be consulted at each level. These interviews formed the bulk of qualitative data collection at programme and process level (see Annex 11 for interview templates). The interview notes were anonymized and coded and stored centrally in a database which is accessible only to the team.

Online survey

21. After the in-depth document review and the first country case study visit, an online survey (see Annex 10 and Annex 12) was designed and implemented with a particular focus on the governance of the JP RWEE. The online survey was sent out to all key JP RWEE stakeholders involved in implementing the programme, including relevant United Nations staff at the four organizations at country and HQ levels, as well as regional levels where relevant. All seven countries were targeted by the survey.
22. Inspired by the United Nations Guidance Note on Joint Programming,⁷⁰ especially focusing on the key steps for establishing a joint programme (see section 2.4 of the guidance note), the survey provided an opportunity to explore perspectives on the governance of the programme and decision making within it, and to obtain views on these issues in a structured manner across the seven participating countries, at global level, and, where relevant, at regional level. The survey also enabled further triangulation of emerging findings from the document review, country studies and global interviews.

Country visits as part of country case studies

23. There were three country visits, though because of international travel constraints resulting from the ongoing pandemic, only the national consultants were able to collect primary data in the countries. The purpose of the country visits was to gather data at the field level from beneficiaries, partly in order to assess change and results from their standpoint, as well as to “provide an in-depth look at thematic areas in WEE, quantitative and qualitative results and illustrate key lessons”.⁷¹
24. Country case studies provide a depth of analysis that is not available from global-level data. They systematically address the evaluation questions for the country concerned, thus delving into issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, with some tailoring of the sub-questions in line with the country focus. Each country study, as part of the evaluation inquiry, provided an opportunity to understand how joint programming and implementation took place and to examine how and to what extent the governance arrangements of the JP RWEE worked in practice to support planning, implementation and results. The country case studies also provided a context-specific lens on whether and to what extent the comparative advantages of the agencies worked out in practice, and why.

⁷⁰ UNDG 2014 Guidance note on Joint programming, New York.

⁷¹ JP RWEE end of programme evaluation ToR, page 16.

25. The first country visit to Niger was led remotely by the Team Leader. The Evaluation Team had a remote internal debriefing team workshop to discuss the pilot country experience.
26. Country visits lasted two weeks each (see fieldwork schedules in Annex 85) and all included an initial introductory meeting and a final debriefing meeting with primary stakeholders. The country visit also included interviews at national level with agency staff, partner organizations and key informants. Interviews and the document review were complemented by field visits and meetings with various groups of beneficiaries. Locations for site visits were decided in consultation with the JP RWEE country-level Focal Points.
27. Upon completion of the three country case studies, a virtual country-validation presentation was conducted with relevant stakeholders to present the preliminary results. All stakeholders who had been involved in the evaluation process in the country were invited to this event to provide feedback on initial findings and recommendations.
28. Review of country-level documentation: all the country annual reports and the programme-level consolidated annual report provided relevant information on results, outcomes and progress.
29. During fieldwork in each country, group discussions with men and women (with mixed or single-gender groups, depending on the interventions discussed and the context) took place, guided by the COVID-19 measures that were in place in each context. For each group, a semi-structured questionnaire was developed (see Annex 11); these templates included a series of open questions, together with a choice of participatory exercises to prompt discussions around the different activities and outcomes the beneficiaries were involved in. We also used various types of exercises, such as change-mapping, to obtain in-depth perspectives from informants. In countries where men have also been targeted (like Niger), mixed groups of men and women were selected, to enable us to observe gender dynamics. However, we were cautious about not creating situations where tensions between the genders might arise and we followed a no-harm principle.
30. **Change-mapping** is an adaptation of the Most Significant Change exercise. Participants (women and men) were asked to list what had changed during the recent period. Participants were also asked to allocate a limited number of points to a number of changes. Once the changes had been ranked, women and men beneficiaries were asked to explain them in more detail, especially to articulate why these changes were important, and to identify their causes. As this exercise was repeated many times across the different discussion groups (single-gender and possibly mixed genders, as relevant), it allowed the evaluation to (i) establish a pattern of change and see triggers of change (including by establishing whether there were marked differences between women's and men's answers); (ii) compare the patterns emerging from the field with the change pathways identified in the ToC; and (iii) triangulate information as well as identifying where perspectives were different between different groups and types of stakeholders (including between women and men).
31. **Life stories.** With the help of partner staff (or during group discussions) we identified individuals (men and women) whose life had been positively impacted by the interventions and whose experience had generated useful lessons about what in particular worked.
32. **Workshop for the staff of agencies and partners.** A brainstorming session was held with agency/partner staff, to enable them to give their views on the project activities, say how they had gained from them, contribute their views on the project and say how they saw it progressing. These workshops included a dimension of critical self-assessment in terms of processes and contribution to outcomes.

Data analysis and reporting

33. **Data analysis** followed a number of steps, using both quantitative and qualitative investigation techniques and ensuring full triangulation of evidence. Templates for document reviews, structured by EQ, were prepared and relevant information was extracted from various documents under each EQ. The team also consolidated and analysed financial data, as well as output and outcome data from across annual reports (as presented in Annex 14). Gaps in the data after the document and data review helped shape the interview templates for KII and fieldwork discussions. Interview and field notes were compiled into a single compendium. The compendium ensured that interview notes could easily be searched by topic, and facilitated triangulation of different interviewee perspectives. Thematic analysis of KII and group discussions notes was conducted by each of the interviewers and a consolidation of this work was done through a team brainstorming session where each team member brought forward evidence from their own data sets to answer each EQ. After an initial round of team analysis, initial findings guided the design of the online survey which was used to either fill in any gaps in the data or to verify findings.

34. **Presentation of preliminary findings.** The team prepared eight PowerPoint presentations (one for each of the seven countries and one at global level) in order to present preliminary findings, starting from mid-December 2020 for the desk studies and country case studies. This provided an opportunity to validate the findings with key stakeholders at all levels of the programme.

Annex 8. Fieldwork agenda

Table 15 Summary of field visit locations, by country

Province or district	Municipality, town or village
Guatemala	
Panzós	Santa Maria Corazón de Maíz Canlun
La Tinta	Campur Tampur Barrio San Benito
Tucurú	Cucanjá Pantoc
Cobán	Cobán
Niger	
Maradi	Djirataoua Danja El Kokia Mayahi Guidan Amoumoune Guidan Wari
Dosso	Loga-Sokorbé Madou Baziga Tégoizé Koira Zeno Mallam Koira
Nepal	
Rautahat District	Gujara Municipality Simara Bhawanipur Prasawa Chocha Brindaban Municipality Bishrampur Chandrapur Municipality
Sarlahi District	Barahathawa Municipality Hirapur Lalbandi Barahathawa Municipality

Province or district	Municipality, town or village
	Chandranager Rural Municipality Babarganja Bagmati Municipality

Table 16 Country case-study agenda, Niger 7 - 21 December, 2020

Date	Place, activity
7–21 December 2020	Key informant interviews (KIIs) with key stakeholders in Niger (remote and in-country)
Fieldwork agenda	
12 December 2020	Travel to Maradi KIIs with government representatives KII with Mayor
13 December 2020	Travel to Danja Semi-structured group discussion KII with Village Chief Travel to El Kokia Semi-structured group discussion KII with Village Chief
14 December 2020	Travel to Mayahi Meeting with technical services and communal authorities Travel to Guidan Amoumoune Travel to Guidan Wari Semi-structured group discussion KII with Village Chief Visit to programme activities
15 December 2020	Travel to Loga-Sokorbé Meeting with technical services Travel to Madou Semi-structured group discussion KII with Village Chief Visit to programme activities Travel to Baziga Semi-structured group discussion Visit to programme activities
16 December 2020	Travel to Téhoizé Koira Zeno Semi-structured group discussion KII with Village Chief Visit to programme activities Travel to Mallam Koira

	<p>KIIs</p> <p>Semi-structured group discussion</p> <p>Visit to programme activities</p>
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Table 17 Country case-study agenda, Nepal 1 – 19 February 2021

Date	Place, activity
1–19 February 2021	Key informant interviews with key stakeholders in Nepal (remote and in-country)
Fieldwork agenda	
6 February 2021	<p>Travel to Chandrapur</p> <p>Meeting with field base JP RWEE working group</p>
7 February 2021	<p>Travel to Gujara Municipality-9, Simara Bhawanipur</p> <p>Semi-structured group discussion with women’s cooperative committee at Gujara Municipality-9, Simarabhawanipur</p> <p>Semi-structured group (women, men and young people) Gujara Municipality-9,</p> <p>Visit to vegetable, wheat and maize crop field, plastic tunnels and irrigation scheme; observation of construction of collection centre and interaction with rights-holders</p> <p>Travel to Gujara Municipality-7, Prasawa</p> <p>Visit to vegetable collection centre (under construction) and drudgery-reduction technology</p> <p>Travel to Gujara Municipality-2, Chocha</p> <p>KII with FAO, Gujara Municipality</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview with women’s group representatives, men and young people</p> <p>Travel to Gujara Municipality-9 Simarabhawanipur</p> <p>KII with secretary of women ‘s cooperative</p>
8 February 2021	<p>Travel to Bisharampur, Brindaban Municipality</p> <p>Semi-structured Interview group (women, men and young people); visit and interaction</p> <p>Visit to vegetable, wheat and maize crop field, plastic tunnels and irrigation scheme</p> <p>KII with representative of Brindaban Municipality</p> <p>KII with chair of women’s cooperative</p> <p>Travel to Gujara Municipality</p> <p>KII with Mayor of Gujara Municipality</p> <p>Continue KII with representative of Gujara Municipality</p> <p>Observation of local hat market plus interaction with women farmers selling vegetables</p>
9 February 2021	<p>Travel to Barahathawa Municipality-13, Sarlahi</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview, Barahathawa Municipality-3, Hirapur</p> <p>KIIs with women farmers</p>

	<p>KII with Mayor, Bagmati Municipality</p> <p>Travel to Chandrapur</p> <p>Visit to vegetable, wheat and maize crop field, plastic tunnels, irrigation scheme, drudgery-reduction technology and vegetable collection centre</p>
10 February 2021	<p>Travel to Chandranager Rural Municipality</p> <p>KII with Project Officer, Mandwi</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview with women, men and young people, Babarganja, Chandranager Rural Municipality</p> <p>KII with representative of Chandranagar Municipality</p> <p>KII with chair of women's group</p> <p>Visit vegetable, wheat and maize crop fields, plastic tunnels, irrigation scheme, vegetable collection centre and drudgery-reduction technology</p> <p>KII with manager of vegetable market management committee, Lalbandi, Sarlahi</p>

Table 18 Country case-study agenda, Guatemala 1 – 19 February 2021

Date	Place, activity
1–19 February 2021	Key informant interviews with key stakeholders in Guatemala (remote and in-country)
Fieldwork agenda	
8 February 2021	<p>Panzós:</p> <p>Travel to Municipality of Panzós</p> <p>KII with Mayor of Panzós</p> <p>KII with Municipal Director of Women's Affairs</p> <p>Travel to La Tinta</p> <p>KII with Mayor of La Tinta</p> <p>Travel to Santa Maria, Panzós</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview with community savings group</p> <p>Travel to Tukurú</p> <p>KII with Mayor of Tukurú</p>
9 February 2021	<p>Panzós:</p> <p>Corazón de Maíz, Panzós</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview with Board of Directors of women's group</p> <p>Canlun, Panzós</p> <p>Focus group discussion with Board of Directors of women's group</p>
10 February 2021	<p>La Tinta:</p> <p>Campur, La Tinta</p> <p>Semi-structured group interview with Board of Directors of women's group</p> <p>Tampur, La Tinta</p> <p>Focus group discussion with Board of Directors of women's group</p>
11 February 2021	La Tinta:

	<p>Barrio San Benito, La Tinta Semi-structured group interview with Association of Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs (AMIE)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Box 5 Tukurú:</p> <p>Cucanjá, Tukurú Semi-structured group interview with Board of Directors of women's group</p> <p>Pantoc, Tukurú Semi-structured group interview with Board of Directors of women's group</p>
16 February 2021	<p>Cobán Mobilizers group meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Box 6 Cobán:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Box 7 KII with Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food</p> <p>KII with Presidential Secretariat for Women</p> <p>KII with Swiss Contact</p>

Annex 9. List of people interviewed

Table 19 Summary of Focus Group Discussions conducted, by country

Country of FGD	Location	Details of group	Number of men	Number of women
Guatemala	Pantoc, Tukurú	Women's group, members of the boards of staff	0 ⁷²	5
	Barrio San Benito, La Tinta	Members of the boards of staff, Association of Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs (AMIE)	0	9
	Tampur, La Tinta	Women's group, members of the board of directors	0	8
	Cucanha, Tukurú	Women's group, members of the boards of staff	0	6
	Corazón de Maíz, Panzós	Women's group, members of the board of directors	0	9
	Canlun, Panzós	Women's group, board members	0	7
	Campur, La Tinta	Members of the board of directors	0	6
	Santa Maria, Panzós	Community savings group members	0	7
	Cobán	Field Promoters	0	10
Nepal	Gujara Municipality	Women's Cooperative Committee	0	7
	Gujara Municipality	Beneficiaries	5	17
	Gujara Municipality	Women's group	3	12
	Brindaban Municipality	Beneficiaries	4	17
	Barahathawa Municipality	Beneficiaries	5	16
	Chandranager Rural Municipality	Beneficiaries	5	9
Niger	Danja, Maradi	Beneficiaries	11	11
	El Kokia, Maradi	Beneficiaries	11	10
	Guidan Wari, Maradi	Beneficiaries	13	10
	Mallam Koira, Dosso	Beneficiaries	11	10
	Madou, Dosso	Beneficiaries	10	10
	Baziga, Dosso	Beneficiaries	11	10
	Tégoiyzé Koira Zeno, Dosso	Beneficiaries	11	8

⁷² Due to constraints of remote fieldwork in Guatemala, and to fit with the evaluation timeline, the evaluation prioritized speaking to women's groups in Guatemala to understand how the groups have functioned and contributed to changes in women's lives. This was following close consultation with the National Coordinator on how best to use fieldwork time.

Table 20 Summary of participants in debriefing sessions

Country	Number of invited attendees (target)	Total attendees	Number of men	Number of women
Ethiopia	20	10	5	5
Guatemala	29	18	8	10
Kyrgyzstan	21	16	5	11
Liberia	14	5	3	2
Nepal	23	10	6	4
Niger	22	12	5	7
Rwanda	17	13	8	5

Table 21 Summary of evaluation participants

	KII (% female)	Number of FGD participants (% female)
Global	20 (75%)	n.a.
Ethiopia	11 (30%)	n.a.
Guatemala	37 (65%)	67 (100%)
Kyrgyzstan	21 (71%)	n.a.
Liberia	12 (33%)	n.a.
Nepal	48 (42%)	100 (78%)
Niger	45 (27%)	147 (47%)
Rwanda	15 (40%)	n.a.

Table 22 List of participants, inception phase

Name (sex)	Position, Organization
Ana-Paula Bedoya (f)	JP RWEE Knowledge Management Specialist, Global Coordination Unit
Clare Bishop (f)	Independent Consultant/Formal Gender Lead, IFAD
Azzura Chiarini (f)	Former JP RWEE Global Coordinator/Head of Resilience, WFP
Beatrice Gerli (f)	JP RWEE Coordinator, IFAD
Ashley Hollister (f)	Evaluation Manager, FAO
Ndaya Beltchika (f)	Lead Technical Specialist – Gender, Targeting and Social Inclusion, IFAD
Susan Kaaria (f)	Senior Gender Officer, FAO
Carla Kraft (f)	Policy Specialist, UN Women
Catherine McCarron (f)	JP RWEE Global Coordinator
Kawanzi Muiu (f)	Director, Gender Office, WFP
Tacko Ndiaye (f)	Gender Team Lead, FAO
Venge Nyirongo (m)	Thematic Lead, Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition, UN Women
Anne Clemence Owen (f)	Evaluation Manager, FAO
Veronique Sainte-Luce (f)	Head of Partnerships & Communications, WFP HQ
Mona Selim (f)	Evaluation Officer, WFP
Libor Stloukal (m)	Gender Team, FAO

Table 23 List of participants (interviews and debriefing sessions), main evaluation phase

Name (gender)	Position, organization
GLOBAL	
Amir Abdulla (m)	Deputy Executive Director, WFP
Mats Aberg (m)	Global Programme Advisor, Sida
Ana Paula Bedoya (f)	Former JP RWEE Knowledge Management Specialist, Global Coordination Unit, WFP
Clare Bishop (f)	Former TAC member/Independent Consultant, Former IFAD
Azzura Chiarini (f)	Former JP RWEE Global Coordinator
Carla Kraft (f)	Policy Specialist, UN Women

Name (gender)	Position, organization
Theodora Frisk (f)	Programme Officer, Department for International Organisations and Policy Support, Sida
Beatrice Gerli (f)	JP RWEE Coordinator, IFAD (Rome)
Silje Maria Hanstad (f)	Adviser, Department for Climate, Energy and Environment, Section for Environment and Food Security, NORAD
Steve Jonckeere (m)	Senior Technical Specialist – Gender and Social Inclusion, IFAD
Susan Kaaria (f)	Senior Gender Officer, FAO
Mari Matsumoto (f)	Portfolio Manager, Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, UNDP
Catherine McCarron (f)	Global Coordinator, JP RWEE
Kawinzi Muiu (f)	Director of Gender, WFP
Tacko Ndiaye (f)	Senior Gender Officer, FAO
Seemin Qayum (f)	Former TAC member, Policy Advisor, UN Women
Elena Ruiz (f)	Regional WEE Policy Officer, UN Women (Dakar)
Veronique Sainte-Luce (f)	Former Focal Point TAC-WFP, WFP
Abiral Singh (m)	Project Officer
Libor Stloukal (m)	Policy Officer, FAO
ETHIOPIA	
Kabede Assefa (m)	JP RWEE coordinator, WFP
Selam Beyene (f)	RWEE Country Coordinator, UN Women
Desta Beyera (m)	Field Office Coordinator, FAO
Letty Chiwara (f)	RWEE Rep, UN Women
Ulac Demirag (m)	RWEE Rep, FAO
Kinfe Gebriel (m)	Technical Focal Officer, FAO
Etagegehu Getachew (f)	Former RWEE Country Coordinator, UN Women
Workicho Jateno (m)	Assistant Representative, FAO
Mekonnen Tefera (m)	Technical Focal Person, FAO
Yaregal Zelalem (m)	Gender and Nutrition Specialist, Ministry of Agriculture
GUATEMALA	
José Gilberto Arteola (m)	Mayor of La Tinta
Lilian Artola (f)	Field Promoter
Kimberly Burgos (f)	Field Promoter
Gladis Caal (f)	Field Technician, UN Women
Kelly Caal (f)	Field Promoter
Deysi Choc (f)	Field Promoter
Sandra Chu (f)	Field Promoter
Eugenia Close (f)	JP RWEE Focal Point, UN Women
Anabella Cordón (f)	Technical Staff Gender Unit MAGA
Dilia Coy (f)	Gender Unit SC, Swiss Contact
Irene Del Rio (f)	Deputy Country Director, WFP
Maynor Estrada (m)	Assistant Representative, FAO
Perla Euler (f)	Coordinator, Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM)
Klemen Gamboa (f)	JP RWEE Focal Point, FAO
Kemberly Gonzales (f)	Field Promoter
Oscar Grajeda (m)	Country Programme Officer, IFAD
Leonel Guzmán (m)	Mayor of Tucurú
Francisco Ismalej (m)	Department Head, MAGA

Name (gender)	Position, organization
Nery Josué (m)	Adviser Vice Minister of MSME Development, Ministry of Economy
Julio Juárez (m)	Field Technician, FAO
Leticia Juc (f)	Field Promoter
Ana Judith (f)	Technical Staff Gender Unit MAGA
Manuel Lemus (m)	Technical Assistant, UN Women
Laura Melo (f)	Representative, WFP
Mildred Ortiz (f)	Field Promoter
Rodrigo Paris (m)	Latin American CEO, Barefoot College
Adriana Quiñones (f)	Representative, UN Women
Ernesto Ramirez (m)	Mayor of Panzós
Ricardo Rapallo (m)	Representative, FAO
Marilú Rosales (f)	Municipal Director of Women's Affairs, Municipality of Panzós
Juan Diego Ruiz Cumplido (m)	Country Programme Manager and Sub-Regional Coordinator Central America, IFAD
Josefina Tamayo (f)	JP RWEE Focal Point, WFP
Petrona Tiul (f)	Field Promoter
Emiliano Tux (m)	M&E, IFAD
Oscar Vaides (f)	Field Technician, WFP
Alma Rocío Valdez (f)	National Coordinator, WFP
Carmen Xol (f)	Field Promoter
KYRGYZSTAN	
Munawwar Alam (m)	Head of Office, UN Resident Coordinator's Office
Andrea Bagnoli (m)	Country Director, WFP
Sherip Berdaliev (m)	Programme Manager, Talas
Umutai Dauletova (f)	Gender Specialist, FAO (Regional Office, Ankara)
Hilke David (f)	Deputy Country Director, WFP
Gulnara Debisheva (f)	Head, Insan Leilek Public Fund
Sagipa Djusaeva (f)	Head of Programmes, UN Women
Aizhan Dzakshylykova (f)	Head of Legal Department and Gender Focal Point, Ministry of Agriculture
Dilshod Ismanaliev (m)	Programme Assistant, WFP
Ulziisuren Jamsran (f)	Representative, UN Women
Asel Kuttubaeva (f)	Program Manager, Community Development Alliance
Omurbek Mambetov (m)	JP RWEE Focal Point, Agronomist, FAO
Indira Musabekova (f)	Regional Department, Ministry of Economic Development
Asel Myrzabekova (f)	Gender Specialist, FAO
Ghulzan Niiazalieva (f)	JP RWEE Focal Point, UN Women
Ozonnia Ojielo (m)	Resident Coordinator, UN Resident Coordinator's Office
Avazkan Ormonova (f)	Women Leadership Expert, Community Development Alliance
Dinara Rakhmanova (f)	Assistant Representative, FAO
Zharkynai Rustomovna Amrakulova (f)	Chief, Department on Gender Issues, Ministry of Labour and Social Development
Murgul Suran (f)	JP RWEE Programme Officer, WFP
Kyial Tilebaldieva (f)	Director, Community Action for Rural Development (CARD) Public Fund
LIBERIA	

Name (gender)	Position, organization
Amos Ballayan (m)	WFP National Programme Officer, Head of Programmes, WFP
Abraham Barchue (m)	Vice-President, Liberia Marketing Association
Ramon Garway (m)	JP RWEE National Coordinator, UN Women
Carrie Morrison (f)	Deputy Country Director, WFP
Zaza Mulbah (m)	Senior Manager, Orange Mobile
Mariatou Njie (f)	Representative, FAO
Octavius Quarbo (m)	Assistant Representative, FAO
Naomi Saydee (f)	Director, JP RWEE Focal Point, Ministry of Gender Children and Social Protection
Michael Vawah (m)	JP RWEE Focal Point, WFP
Deroe Weeks (f)	Former Assistant Ministry, Former JP RWEE Focal Point in Food Security and Nutrition Unit, Ministry of Agriculture
Jesse Yuan (m)	JP RWEE Focal Point, FAO
NEPAL	
RamKali Mahato (f)	Chairperson, Shree Laxmi Women's Group, Chandranagar Municipality
Shrawan Adhikary (m)	Project Officer, FAO
Hari Bahadur (m)	Joint Secretary, Government
Aryal Bashu (m)	Head of Country Office, IFAD
Sara Beysolow Nyanti (f)	Resident Coordinator, RCO
Keshari Bhatta (m)	Field Engineer (CP), Civil Society
Rachana Bhattarai (f)	National Coordinator, UN Women
Binda Chaudhari (f)	Women's Department, Local Government
Misha Chaudhari (f)	Treasurer
Rinku Chaudhary (f)	Farmer/Manager, Women's Cooperative, Gujara Municipality ward number-8, Rautahat district
Sabita Chaudhary (f)	Facilitator, FAO
Parbati Gautam (f)	Agriculture Section, Local Government
Shambhu Ghimire (m)	Manager, Lalbandi Vegetable Marketing Committee, Sarlahi, Private Sector
Krishna Jogi (m)	Deputy Head of Programme, WFP
Bivek Joshi (m)	Programme Analyst, UN Women
Pradyumna Kandel (m)	Program Manager
Bijay Karki (m)	Centre Programme Coordinator (CP), Sappros
Alok Karna (m)	IFAD
Kanta Khanal (f)	M&E officer, WFP
Champa Kumari Chaudhari (f)	Farmer/Chairperson, Women's Cooperative, Gujara Municipality-9, Rautahat District
Manju Kumari Chaudhari (f)	Member of women's group, Barahathawa Municipality-3, Sarlahi District
Pramila Kumari Chaudhari (f)	Member of women's group, Barahathawa Municipality-3, Sarlahi District
Santa Lal Prasad Chaudhary (m)	Mayor of Gujara Municipality, Rautahat District
Naoki Maegawa (m)	Head of Programme Unit, WFP
Ramkali Mahato (f)	Farmer, Chandranagar Rural Municipality-2, Sarlahi
Ram Dharesh Mahato (m)	Agriculture Representative, Chandranagar Rural Municipality, Sarlahi

Name (gender)	Position, organization
Mahendra Mahato (m)	Chairperson of Chandranagar Rural Municipality, Sarlahi District
Sanjaya Mishra (m)	Katahariya FM, Rautahat
Shivkali Mukhiya (f)	Farmer, Brindawon Municipality-1, Rautahat district
Ramchandra Pandit (m)	Field Officer
Paridhi Pathak (f)	FAO
Bikash Paudel (m)	Programme Policy Officer, WFP
Tribhuban Paudel (m)	Consultant, IFAD
Anandi Pokharel (f)	Farmer, Barahathawa Municipality-3, Sarlahi district
Keshari Prasad (m)	Field Engineer (CP), Civil Society
Santalal Prasad Chaudhari (m)	Mayor, Gujara Municipality, Rautahat
Rabin Rai (m)	M&E, UN Women
Binod Saha (m)	Assistant Programme Coordinator, FAO
Shankar Sapkota (m)	Under-Secretary, Government
Navanita Shanwar (f)	Head of Programme Unit, UN Women
Binita Shrestha (f)	Executive Director, Equal Access
Loksastra Shrestha (m)	Field Coordinator
Rajman Shrestha (m)	Technical Coordinator
Kshetra Shrestha (m)	Technical Officer, FAO
Navanita Sihna (f)	Gender Specialist, UN Women
Abiral Singh (m)	Project Officer
Nabodita Subedi (f)	Equal Access
Bharat Thapa (m)	Mayor, Bagmati Municipality, Sarlahi
NIGER	
Garba Abayyé (m)	Deputy Mayor
Salifou Abdou (m)	FAO
Ousmane Abdou (m)	Ministry of Agriculture
Mamane Abdourahamane (m)	ASADI (NGO)
Nouhou Adamou (m)	Director, Dosso Cooperative Action
Moussa Ali (m)	Regional Director of Plan and Community Development of Dosso
Almoustapha Amadou (m)	Diko, NGO
Ibrahim Bangana (m)	Secrétaire General Ministry of Agriculture
Vincent Curis (m)	Attaché Coopération, humanitaire, stabilisation, santé, Coopération Française
Abdoulaye Falla (m)	Director, Ministry of Agriculture
Ibrahim Farmo (m)	Technical Expert, FAO
Adboukharin Hachimou (m)	Secretary-General, Ministry for Women
Idi Halimatou Moussa (f)	National Coordinator, FAO
Youssef Harouna (m)	Loga-Sokorbé Departmental Director of Agriculture,
Solange Heise (f)	FAO, Former Niger country team
Seybou Ibrahim (m)	AEDL
Moussa Jiji (m)	Village Chief
Kadre Kadei (m)	Former Country Programme director IFAD
Abdoulaye Kassoum (m)	UN Women
Miakorema Zeinabou (f)	Ministry of Agriculture
Niandou Maimouna Oumarou (f)	Ministry for Women, focal point
Amadou Malam Koira (m)	Village Chief

Name (gender)	Position, organization
Hannatou Mamadoubadjie (f)	Focal Point, WFP
Dallou Mamane (m)	Village Chief
Hadiza Mammadou Abba (f)	Consultant, JP RWEE focal point in Niger IFAD
Abdou Mani Fourera (m)	Chargée de nutrition et sécurité alimentaire, FAO
Christiane Monsieur (f)	Consultant FAO club Dimitra
Adama Moussa (m)	Country Representative, UN Women
Oumarou Moussa (m)	Village Chief
Eliane Najros (f)	FAO, former Dimitra consultant
Djibrina Nalokoyo (m)	Departmental Director, Loga-Sokorbé Women's Promotion
Harouna Nana Aïchatou (f)	Director of Women's Promotion and Child Protection
Ousmane Oumarou (m)	Co-operative Action Director
Djibey Ramatou (f)	Focal Point, Ministry of Agriculture
Boubakar Saidou (m)	Mayor
Kaka Saley (m)	Agronomist, Lakalkaney (NGO)
Sahadatou Saley (f)	Femmes unies contre la malnutrition (NGO)
Mahaman Salissou Baoua (m)	Directeur départemental de l'agriculture, Dosso
Radi Sidikou (m)	UN Women
Mamoudou Soumana Nassamou (m)	UN Women
Ahmed Wardougou Tchou (m)	Focal Point, UN Women
Amadou Yayé (m)	Village Chief
Maikorema Zeinabou (f)	Agricultural Engineer, Ministry of Agriculture
Bogari Zourkalleyni (m)	Haut commissaire aux 3N
RWANDA	
Gualbert Gbehounou (m)	RWEE focal point, FAO
Olivier Habimana (m)	Representative, Safe
Edith Heines (f)	Country Director, WFP
Jeannine Kabanyana (f)	JP RWEE Focal Person, IFAD
Innocent Karangwa (m)	Director, Inades-Formation
Fatou Lo (f)	RWEE Focal Point, UN Women
Joseph Mukamana (f)	JP RWEE Focal Person, FAO
Sarah Mukantaganda (f)	Director of Women's Economic Empowerment, Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
Dativa Mukeshimana (f)	Representative, Duterimbere
John Bosco Murangira (m)	RWEE Country Coordinator, WFP
Jean de Dieu Ndacyayisenga (m)	JP RWEE Focal Person, UN Women
Felicien Ngiruwonsanga (m)	Project Officer, Imbuto Foundation
Peter Ntaganda (m)	Advisor to Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
Aimable Ntukanyagwe (m)	RWEE Focal Point, IFAD country programme Officer
Patrice Nzeyimana (m)	JP RWEE Focal Person, WFP

Annex 10. Data collection tools: online survey

Introduction

FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women have commissioned Mokoro Ltd, a not-for-profit company, to undertake an end term evaluation of the Joint Programme 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' (JP RWEE), a programme which operates in seven countries, with the overall goal to improve rural women's livelihoods and rights in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This survey forms part of the evaluation and is intended to reach a broader range of stakeholders to obtain their views on a number of key issues.

The survey consists of nine questions and should take around 5 - 10 minutes to complete.

All individual answers will remain strictly confidential and will only be seen by the External Evaluation Team.

You have been selected by Mokoro Ltd, in consultation with FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women, to participate in this survey.

Background

1) Who do you work for?*

- FAO, IFAD, WFP, or UN Women
- Other United Nations organisation
- SIDA, NORAD, Governments of Sweden or Norway
- Other Government
- Non Governmental Organisation (NGO)
- Other – please state: _____

Have you worked for or with the Joint Programme “Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women” (JP RWEE)? Please include work that you have done with them in the past.*

- Yes, this is a large part of my work (50 - 100% of my time)
- Yes, this is a part of my work (20 - 49% of my time)
- This is a small part of my work (less than 20% of my time)
- I do not do any work for JP RWEE and have not done so in the past

You have selected that you do not work for or with JP RWEE. Please confirm this below and select 'Next' and you will be exited from this survey.

If you have selected this in error, please change your answer above.*

I have not worked with JP RWEE

* signifies required information

JP RWEE's Advantages

The Joint Programme 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women' (JP RWEE) is a collaboration between four organisations, FAO, IFAD, WFP and UN Women, and runs in seven countries.

2) Where do you think the JP RWEE adds most value?*

- Advocacy and policy influence at a global level
- Bringing in ideas and influencing Government policy at national level
- Implementation work done by UN agencies
- Implementation work done by partners
- As an effective means of raising funds
- Bringing together the skills and resources of four UN agencies
- Other – please state: _____

3) What do you think has been the main advantage of JP RWEE being a global programme with projects in multiple countries and a global governance structure?*

- Efficient resource mobilization
- More comprehensive programming
- Better understanding of issues surrounding rural women's economic empowerment
- Cost-effectiveness
- Ability to learn lessons across countries

- () Global advocacy and communications
- () Technical expertise
- () Other – please state: _____

Internal obstacles

4) What is the biggest internal obstacle to the JP RWEE achieving its overall objectives?*

- () Difficulty of realising synergies between the participating UN agencies
- () Administrative burden; lack of compatibility in systems of participating UN agencies
- () Insufficient staff at national level in the UN agencies
- () Lack of timeliness in funding decisions and/or disbursement
- () Insufficient support to national programmes from UN agencies at global level
- () Other - please state: _____

JP RWEE Overview

5) Please consider the following statements in relation to JP RWEE, and select whether you agree or disagree with them.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/Not applicable
At country level, JP RWEE has	()	()	()	()	()

raised the profile of women's economic empowerment in national policies and strategies.					
JP RWEE's global advocacy gives rural women's economic empowerment a higher profile within UN agencies	()	()	()	()	()
Global-level management has little impact on JP RWEE's national programmes	()	()	()	()	()
Beneficiaries of the JP RWEE are more resilient to shocks (e.g. natural catastrophes, pandemics etc.)	()	()	()	()	()
The work done by JP RWEE is sustainable	()	()	()	()	()

What is the main factor contributing to the sustainability of this work?

What is the main factor preventing the work of JP RWEE being sustainable?

Results achieved

6) From your personal experience, whether at a global or national level, please rate the performance of the JP RWEE on achieving results in the following areas.

Please rate from 1 to 4 stars where 1 star = No results achieved and 4 stars = Significant results achieved.

0 stars = 'Not applicable' or 'Don't know'.

	Results achieved by JP RWEE
Rural women's improved food and nutrition security	<hr/>
Increased incomes to sustain livelihoods	<hr/>
Enhanced leadership and participation in decision making	<hr/>
More gender-responsive policy environment	<hr/>

Balance of benefits & disadvantages

7) Based on your experience with JP RWEE, please consider the following summary statements and select whether you agree or disagree with them.*

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/Not applicable
On balance, the benefits of having a joint programme , between the four UN agencies, outweigh the disadvantages	()	()	()	()	()
On balance, the benefits of having a global programme , with projects in multiple countries, outweigh the disadvantages	()	()	()	()	()

Final comments

8) If you could change or improve one thing about JP RWEE, what would you change?

9) Any final comments on the JP RWEE, including examples of best practice or lessons learned, that you would like to contribute to this evaluation?

Thank You!

Thank you for taking this survey. Your response is appreciated and will contribute to our evaluation of the JP RWEE.

Annex 11. Data collection tools: interview guidelines

1. The following annex includes a checklist of questions for interviews at the global and country level, detailing who questions should be directed to. Following the questions for interviews, field-level guidelines are presented for semi-structured group discussions with women, men and youth, as well as for key informant interviews with local government and implementing partners.

Table 24 Global and country-level interview questions

EQ 1 - How responsive was the JP RWEE to beneficiary/rights holders' needs as well as national and global development goals and policies? (Relevance)
1.1 Were the JP RWEE objectives and strategies in line with: the international development agenda (including the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs); participating agency mandates, national context; and priorities of participating countries in terms of rural women's economic empowerment?
<i>Documentation review and analysis (global and country level) only.</i>
1.2 Was the design relevant and appropriate to the stated purpose (addressing structural inequalities and achieving transformative change), target groups (rural women and members of their households), activities, countries and partnerships?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government</i>
<p><u>Donors/agency staff (global and country level):</u></p> <p>Could you tell me how the idea of the programme came about: Who was involved and what was the motivation/incentive/rationale? How was the idea translated into a design? On what basis (was there, for example, criteria for selection)? and who was involved? How were the seven countries selected?</p> <p>From the perspective of your agency (role / mandate), do you think the project design (<i>briefly recap the JP casual logic</i>) was adequate to address structural inequalities and promote transformative changes? Is it clear and does it make sense or not? Why?</p> <p>How relevant was the programme to the objectives of your organization? How relevant is this joint programme in the context of the UN reform and the UNSCF?</p> <p>Do you remember if there were any important or significant changes or adjustments over the JP implementation? If so, what were these changes due to and did they enhance the relevance of the programme? Who made or proposed such changes?</p> <p><u>Government/partners:</u></p> <p>Do you have any idea why your country was chosen? Did you participate at any point in the discussion about the programme design?</p> <p>Were you involved in the choice of types of activities, the design of activities? Did you have a say in the selection of types of beneficiaries?</p> <p>How were the programme sites chosen? Did you participate in that discussion/choice?</p> <p>How were beneficiaries involved in the programme design? Were women and men given equal voice in the design process and did the design adequately take account of their different needs?</p> <p>What are the main policies/strategies in place in your country in regard to rural women's economic empowerment? Do you think the programme's approach responds to the country's priorities? In what sense?</p>

Do you remember if there were any important or significant changes or adjustments over the JP implementation? If so, what were these changes due to and did they enhance the relevance of the programme? Who made or proposed such changes?

1.3 To what extent were GEWE objectives and mainstreaming principles included in the intervention design and guided by system-wide objectives on GEWE and human rights?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, agency staff at global and country level, government

If you had to pinpoint an idea, an approach, a consideration reflecting that GEWE and human rights are explicitly reflected in JP RWEE programming, what would it be?

In what way would you say that the programme governance and oversight helped to ensure attention to GEWE and human rights through appropriate guidance and prioritization? What could have been done better in this respect?

1.4 What lessons can be learnt from this design process in terms of inter-agency collaboration?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

Which would you say were the two most positive and two most negative aspects of the approach/methodology for programme design?

Based on your experience in the JP, would you be able to identify any important lesson/conclusion, in particular regarding the inter-agency collaboration at the design phase?

EQ 2 - To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women's social and economic empowerment across countries? (Coherence)

2.1 To what extent did the design result in a shared vision for delivering results, strategies for joint delivery, and sharing of risks among implementing UN entities?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, agency staff at global and country level, government

Agency staff (global and country level):

Could you explain, briefly and in your own words, what is your agency's view on and main role in the programme?

To what extent has there been a shared vision among the different partners on how to deliver results? What contributed to this?

To what extent has the UN reform and the UNSCF at country level contributed to/enhanced the shared vision?

What would you have to say about how risks were shared or managed between agencies? Any specific example you would like to point out?

Country level: Please provide examples of added value, or synergy/complementarity, of the JP with other interventions of your agency in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition or women's empowerment in the country?

Government/partners:

In your perspective, what do you think are the main advantages and disadvantages of having a "joint programme between UN agencies," compared to the single intervention of each agency in the country?

In your view, have the partners of the JP had a coherent and joint vision? How did this come about/what explains this or if the joint vision was lacking why was this the case?

How well has the joint vision of JP partners been translated into joint strategies in favour or achieving the results? What opportunities were missed? What more should/could have been done?

2.2 To what extent is the JP RWEE coherent with the mandates and comparative advantages of the four participating Agencies?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, agency staff at global and country level, government

Agency staff (global and country level):

What would you say is the main added value or comparative advantage of your agency within the JP?

Do you think the choice of Agency XXX to lead in Country XXX was the most appropriate, considering the objectives of the JP? Looking back, do you think that such a role should have been played by another agency? If so, why?

Country level: Do you consider the choice of your agency to lead the JP in the country was adequate, taking into account the objectives/priorities of your intervention in the country (namely within the framework of the UNSCF)? Do you think that your role, as lead agency, was clearly defined? Are there any terms of reference?

Government/partners:

Do you think that the choice of Agency XXX to lead the JP in the country was appropriate? Would you have chosen another one? if so, why?

Did the JP bring together the right combination of agencies given the objectives of the JP in your country?

2.3 To what extent has the JP RWEE leveraged comparative strengths of the four participating agencies and maximized advantages of “delivering as one”?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, agency staff at global and country level, government

Agency staff (global and country level):

Looking back, do you think the role your agency played within the JP corresponded to what you envisioned? Or was it different? If so, in what sense and why?

Was there any important factor that influenced changes in your role?

To what degree have the comparative strengths of the four participating agencies been fully taken advantage of in the planning and implementation of the programme? Did this correspond to your expectations? Please give examples.

Government/partners:

In the design and implementation of the programme have the agencies been able to work together in a manner that has maximized their comparative advantages? In what ways? What more could have been done?

Do you think this model of “joint intervention” brings any added value to your sector? In what sense?

2.4 What lessons can be learnt in terms of overcoming the challenges of working in different policy and operational environments to bring together four different agencies in different socio-political contexts?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

Based on the programme's history, which would you say were the two greatest strengths and two greatest weaknesses of JP RWEE in “delivering as one”?

Based on your experience in the JP, would you be able to identify any important lesson/conclusion, in particular regarding the challenge of bringing together four different agencies in such different socio-political contexts?

What conditions need to be in place/what needs to be done differently to enhance synergies and joint action by agencies working on the same programme?

EQ 3 - To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results? (Effectiveness)

3.1 To what extent did the JP RWEE achieve its intended results and outcomes?

Who should this question be asked to?

Agency and partner staff, national and local government officials, donors, beneficiaries (some of the questions only)

What in your mind are the most striking results achieved (in terms of nature, quantity, and quality) in relation to what was expected? Why are these results so important, what do they teach us? What do you think contributed the most to these outcomes? (was it the collaborative approach between agencies, the synergies between the activities proposed, the choice of implementing partner?) **(For beneficiaries see fieldwork templates)**

Any result not achieved? Why?

In what way would you say that GEWE objectives are reflected in results and outcomes and which ones?

Would you say there were issues around overlap, competition and duplication of work at country level? If so, how were these mitigated and avoided?

3.2 To what extent has the JP RWEE produced unintended positive or negative outcomes? What explains these?

Who should this question be asked to?

Agency staff, government officials

Can you give examples of unintended high-level effects (positive or negative) the programme may have had (on policy for example, or agriculture extension approach, the local economy)?

In what way would you say the programme was driven by the SDGs, any specific SDGs and target in mind?

3.3 How effective was the governance and management of the JP RWEE in supporting design and implementation of the programme?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government, partners

TAC, donors, agency staff (global):

What is your opinion on the overall governance structure of the programme? Were the roles and responsibilities of the different bodies well understood? Was the composition of the different bodies adequate? Was the existence of a national coordinator essential or not, and why? What worked well or not so well? Did the governance structure change/evolve over time and did this improve the functioning? Would you change anything in the structure/functions at global or national level?

What were the most positive and negative aspects of this governance structure in relation to: i) decision-making; ii) support to implementation; iii) monitoring of the programme? What could have worked better and why?

Country level: Agency staff/government/partners:

How did project governance work in the country? Who participated in the NSC? Was the composition adequate? What was the regularity of the meetings? Was the existence of the NSC essential or not? Why? Did the governance structure change/evolve over time and did this improve the functioning?

Who took part in the JP RWEE Country Team? How was the relationship between this and the NSC? Do you think the roles and responsibilities of the different structures were well understood by all involved?

Overall, has the governance structure been conducive/supportive of implementation, in what ways/in what

ways not? What was the role of the national coordinator? Was the existence of a national coordinator essential or not? Why?

What kind of support (administrative, technical, operational) did you receive from TAC in terms of oversight/supervision/backstopping? What could have worked better and why?

Did you have any visits from the TAC or the global coordination? When? Did they visit programme sites or just met in the capital? Were their visits and support helpful? Did you used to get any feedback after the visits?

3.4 Did partners and donors make the necessary commitment, agreement and actions (including UN agencies at country and global levels) to support the JP RWEE to achieve its objectives?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

TAC, donors, agency staff (global):

Do you consider the staff and resources allocated to the program was adequate? How difficult was it for you to follow / support the programme? Was it too time-consuming? Did you have an excessive workload? What could have worked better?

Were there any synergies or partnerships worth noting at global level? If so, which ones? If not, how could this have been better achieved? Were there any missed opportunities

Country level: Agency staff/government/partners:

Do you consider the staff and resources allocated to the program at country level was adequate?

What could have worked better in terms of commitments, agreements and actions at country level to strength the effectiveness of the programme?

Could you give any examples of relevant partnerships or synergies with JP at country level? Were these partnerships important to the programme or not? Why?

3.5 What internal and external factors affected the governance and management processes?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

To be asked directly but it will also be answered based on the 3.3 questions and document review

3.6 What lessons can be drawn about the planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme that would enhance the results in the future?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

Which would you say were the two strengths and two weaknesses regarding the overall funding, planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme?

Based on your experience in the JP, would you be able to identify any important lesson/conclusion that could contribute to achieving a better effectiveness in a possible future JP?

EQ 4 - Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated and split between the four participating agencies strategically to achieve the programme outcomes? Were the capacities to manage and implement the programme sufficient? (Efficiency)

4.1 Could (and if so how) results been achieved, and monitored, more efficiently?

Who should this question be asked to?

Agency and project staff, evaluation officers

Can you explain the monitoring process you had to follow? How easy/complex was it to collect data from a varied number of partners within countries and at programme level?

Could the process be improved? How?

Did the monitoring promote reflection and learning? Can you give us an example where the findings from monitoring translated into a change at intervention level?

4.2 How relevant and effective were the criteria that were used to guide decision-making on the use of resources by the programme?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

TAC, donors, agency staff (global):

What were the main challenges in finding resources and obtaining donor commitments to the programme? How could this have been improved before starting and over the programme's implementation?

What were the criteria for resource allocation to countries? Did the criteria change over time and if so in what way? What worked well or not so well and why?

Country level: Agency staff/government/partners:

How did the flow of reporting, funding and disbursements work in your country? What worked well or not so well and why? How could this be improved?

Do you consider that the criteria for resource allocation to the different countries were transparent? And were the criteria aligned with objectives of the programme?

Did the JP in your country have any other resources available (human, financial, material) besides those supported by the programme?

4.3 How efficient was the governance structure surrounding decision-making in general and in particular related to expenditures and fund allocation?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

TAC, donors, agency staff (global):

How did the decision-making and communication process work at (and between) different levels? Would you like to point out any challenges you have encountered? What could have worked differently in terms of decision-making and fund allocation and why?

Country level: Agency staff/government/partners:

How did the flow of reporting, decision-making and fund allocation work in the country? What worked well or not so well and why? How could this be improved?

How did communication and information sharing between different stakeholders in the country work? Would you like to point out any problems? What could have worked better?

4.4 What lessons can be drawn about the resource allocation to the programme that would enhance the results in the future?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

Which would you say were the two strengths and two weaknesses regarding the criteria and process for resource allocation of the JP?

Based on your experience in the JP, would you be able to identify any important lesson/conclusion that could enhance efficiency of decision-making and resource allocation in a possible future JP?

EQ 5 - What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life? (Sustainability)

5.1 How sustainable are the results achieved?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>Agency and implementing partners, government officials</i>
Is there evidence (can you provide examples) of activities/approaches taken up locally by other development partners or local actors (community groups, local government structures)?
Can you see signs that some activities/approaches will be continued? What are they and why do you think these activities in particular are likely to be carried on (is it motivated by local government staff, policy change, community interest)?
What is necessary for sustainability to be achieved in the foreseeable future?
5.2 Is the JP RWEE operational model sustainable?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government</i>
In your view, can the JP's operational model (<i>Note: in particular the ISC and TAC at global level and the NSC JP Country Team at country level</i>) continue, even if there is no second phase? In other words, do you think that the existence of these structures can be maintained (even if ad hoc) to reinforce the synergy between agencies and promote a better coordinated action?
5.3 Is there evidence the JP RWEE is contributing to national ownership of efforts to achieve and sustain rural women's economic empowerment (through strengthened capacities, advocacy, and transition strategies, etc.)?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>Agency and implementing partners staff, government officials</i>
Did the project/programme promote, organize activities to ensure adoption of lessons learned at country level? Any specific event or communication product you can think of which you think promoted national ownership?
Is there evidence of replication or adaptation of approaches implemented through the JP RWEE? What do you think was the cause of adaptation/replication (good communication, lessons learned workshops, dissemination activities)?
To what extent has the programme induced policy changes? Please explain.
5.4 Has JP RWEE followed sustainable environmental practices and standards?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>TAC, agency staff at global and country level, government, partners</i>
<u>TAC, agency staff (global):</u>
Has the programme contributed (directly or indirectly) to SDG 13? Would you like to highlight any example in this regard, in particular related to mitigation or adaptation to climate change? What features of the programme contributed to the results/lack of results in this area?
<u>Country level: Agency staff/government/partners:</u>
Could you give an example of how the program in your country contributed to strengthening sustainable environmental practices? Is there any example of how the programme's action on the ground may have contributed to mitigation or adaptation to climate change? What features of the programme contributed to the results/lack of results in this area?
5.5 What lessons can be drawn to increase the likelihood of sustainability of process and results?
Who should this question be asked to? <i>TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government</i>

Which would you say were the two strengths and two weaknesses that may pave the way for the benefits of the programme being maintained after completion?

Based on your experience in the JP, would you be able to identify any important lesson/conclusion that could enhance sustainability or the replication/up-scaling of successful practices in a possible future JP?

EQ 6 – What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)

6.1 What have been the key internal and external factors to the JP RWEE contributing to or challenging the successful implementation of the JP RWEE? What does this imply for the future?

Who should this question be asked to?

TAC, donors, agency staff at global and country level, government

In your opinion, what would you say were the main internal and external factors contributing to or challenging the success of the JP RWEE??

Note: conduct the interview by drawing the interviewee's attention to the following points:

Possible internal factors:

- Management structures, processes and functions
- Human resources (numbers/quality/appropriate skills/retention and/or turnover)
- Financial resources (volume, timeliness and predictability of financial resources)
- Monitoring and evidence development systems, communication and knowledge management, lessons learning
- Compatibility of systems between participating agencies
- Others

Possible external factors:

- UN Reform process in each country (i.e. Resident Coordinator system, UN Country Teams, UNSDCF)
- Quality of external partnerships
- Changing context (political change, natural disaster, wars, health crisis, political crisis, etc.)
- Others

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured group discussions

Women beneficiaries

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; also ask for people's consent to take notes and remind people they are free to stop taking part at any point. Reassure participants that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Number of participants:

In principle women beneficiaries present would have been involved in different activities under JP RWEE (though they may not know this acronym), such as capacity building, leadership training, income generating activities etc. It is best to start by confirming if this is the case and asking women to introduce themselves briefly and keep a tag on which specific activities they have been involved in. Ideally the group should be a maximum of about 10 people. If the group is much bigger, to save time, it may be best to ask for a show of hands, by asking: How many of you have been involved in Activity x?

Participants	Activities involved in:
Participant 1	

1. The story

Start by asking women the story of how they got involved. How did they hear about the project? How were they approached/selected? Was a needs assessment conducted (i.e. were they asked what they needed or were they offered activities to take part in)? Do they know of women who wanted to be involved but were not selected?

Also ask if women present have been involved in other projects with other NGOs/programmes? If so, what about?

2. The outcomes

What are women's views on the main outcomes? What were the main gains from taking part? (For example, if nutrition has improved, have they noticed improved health and a decrease in medical costs? If income has increased, in what way does this improve quality of life?).

What has been the biggest change to their lives since taking part and why? What made this happen?

Has being involved in the activity(ies) had any negative impact? (Challenges to social norms, HH workload, unsupportive HH heads etc.).

When/if women mention additional income, can they explain how this money is being spent and who decides?

When women have been trained in leadership, has that led to any concrete role/responsibility within the community? Has that had any effect on their status within the HH?

Have women's status within the HH changed? (Do not ask this question upfront, wait to see if women mention it as an outcome).

3. Concluding questions on lessons and sustainability

What are the main lessons women take away from this experience? What will happen when the programme stops? Have women been thinking about how to continue certain activities?

Complaints and accountability.

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured group discussions

Men

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; also ask for people's consent to take notes and remind people they are free to stop taking part at any point. Reassure participants that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Number of participants:

Start by a show of hands, asking how many of the men present have a wife/sister/woman of their HH benefiting from the programme? (Just to make sure we have a sense of where their perspective comes from).

With men we are interested to find out what has changed since women have been involved in the programme: What has changed in the HH's community, and perhaps between men and women? *Remember not to influence the group by suggesting areas of change.* It may be that some important changes mentioned are not linked to the programme, which in itself will be important to know.

Organize an exercise asking men to reflect/brainstorm generally on the question:

What has changed since women have been involved in the programme?

Maybe they will need a bit of prompting or an explanation for what we mean by the question (by providing a relevant example and reminding people that it can be a positive or negative change) and then let them talk amongst themselves for a little while. Then you can ask them to list the "changes" and, if there are many, ask them to choose the six most important.

Then take each, one by one, and ask some probing questions:

- Why is this change important to you, your HH and your community?
- How did it come about? What happened? Here we would like them to tell the story in their own words: How did the women hear about the programme, how did they get involved, what exactly did they do, how did that impact on the HH – for example, what happened to women's HH jobs whilst they were involved elsewhere?
- Hopefully, one of the changes will be increased income: if so ask around, how is the money spent? Who decides how it is spent? What material difference has this income made to the HH?
- If women have gained in independence and leadership skills: What effect has this had on the HH dynamics?

Conclude with a closing question such as:

- What lessons did you draw from this programme and for the future of the community and your HH?

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured group discussions

Youth

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; also ask for people's consent to take notes and remind people they are free to stop taking part at any point. Reassure participants that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Ideally, we gather a group of between six and ten youth, preferably mixed boys and girls, hopefully gender balanced; we are not seeking to interview children because of consent issues.

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Number of participants:

Maybe start by a show of hands, asking how many of the youth present have a female family member involved in the programme. Perhaps also ask for age and level and education to get a sense of their skills levels.

With youth, we are interested to gather perceptions on what had changed in the HH, if anything, since the programme and especially looking for a change in perspective on gender roles: Are girls inspired by the female elders? Are boys' views on gender roles evolving?

Do not focus on the programme itself but more on what changes they have seen in their HH and communities.

1. Have you noticed changes happening in your HH in the last three to four years? What kind of changes (more money, better health, mother more busy, more skilled, new income generation activity, mother/sister more assertive/more involved in HH decision-making, in community life)? *NB Do not ask a leading question.*

Depending on what they bring up, probe further: In what way are these changes important? What consequences do they have? Is the change a good or bad thing for the youth themselves?

2. Has your perspective on women's role and contribution to community affairs and HH changed? Is this good or bad?

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured interview

Key informants

(Local level)

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; also ask for people's consent to take notes and remind interviewee that they are free to stop taking part at any point. Also reassure them that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Ideally the KII would be a local leader (either an elder, elected representative, religious leader, someone who has a historical and over-view perspective of the community).

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Name of KII and status/role:

Do not focus on the programme itself but more on what changes they have seen in the community.

1. Have you noticed changes happening in the last three to four years? What kind of changes? (more money, new income generation activity, more economic dynamism lead by women, do women play a larger role in community affairs, or same role but with more skills)?

Depending on what they bring up, probe further: In what way are these changes important? What example can they provide as evidence? Can they name a specific HH which has been transformed for example?

2. Are community leaders taking any notice of these changes or what can be learnt from this programme? Are there, for example, plans to adopt certain practices or approach local government to develop local programmes to upscale the practice? Any opinion on the sustainability of the approach?

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured interviews

Government officials

(Field site level, as well as national level)

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; also ask for officials' consent to take notes. Reassure them that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Ideally government officials at national level will have been briefed by the lead agency and permission for interviews at local levels will have been granted by the national level.

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Name of officials and status/role in which department (agriculture, women and children, etc?):

1. Can you tell me in your own words what the RWEE programme is trying to achieve?
2. (*If person has been in post from onset*) Can you tell me in what capacity your department was involved in the design of the programme?
3. Has your department been involved in the selection of the implementing partners? Are you aware of which partner is carrying out which activities (this is to test level of knowledge, which we would expect to be less at national level but quite high at local level)?
4. How easy do you find it to work with different agencies on the same programme?
5. In what capacity are your department staff currently involved in the programme? Taking part in dissemination activities? Consulted on various issues on a regular basis? Learning events?
6. What would you say have been the major outcomes of the programme so far for women beneficiaries, for local communities? What would you say has worked well, less well?
7. What would you say has been the major contribution of the programme to your work, the work of your department? Can you see policy lessons? Are there already examples where the government has taken some new initiatives based on programmes outcomes? Are there plans for uptake and scale-up?
8. What is planned for when the programme stops?

CHECKLIST

Semi-structured interviews

Implementing partners

(Field site level, as well as national level)

Most of these questions are designed with field staff in mind as the plan is to run a workshop at national level for all the implementing partners. However, some individual semi-structured interviews may also be conducted with staff at national level (and these questions will also be valid).

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the visit; ask for people's consent to take notes. Reassure them that data will be confidential and anonymized: we are here to learn, not to judge anyone.

Ideally the KI would have a historical and over-view perspective on the programme (whether at national or field site level) make sure to interview a variety of staff members (not just project director or manager, but also an extension worker, community worker, M&E officer).

Date:

Place:

Name of interviewer:

Name of KI and status/role with the organization and the project:

1. Can you tell me in your own words what the RWEE programme is trying to achieve?
2. How did your organization get involved as an implementing partner?
3. Are you aware of which other implementing partners are carrying out activities for RWEE? Do you work together on a regular basis? And if so, can you explain how you collaborate (how often etc.)? If not, why not, and do you think you should?
4. Do you work mostly with one agency (FAO, IFAD, UNW, WFP) or with more than one? How easy do you find it to work with different agencies on the same programme?
5. What is the focus of your activities? Did you contribute to the design of activities?
6. How did you select the beneficiaries? Did you follow some criteria for selection? Are you aware of groups of women who you think should have been involved but were not?
7. What would you say have been the major outcomes of the programme so far for women beneficiaries, for local communities?
8. What would you say has worked well, less well? For beneficiaries and for your own work?
9. Can you see policy lessons? Are there already examples where the government has taken some new initiatives based on programme outcomes? Are you aware of plans for uptake and scale-up?
10. What is planned for when the programme stops?

Annex 12. Online survey

1. This annex outlines the rationale and approach to the online survey for this evaluation, as well as the results. The survey tool is presented in Annex 10.

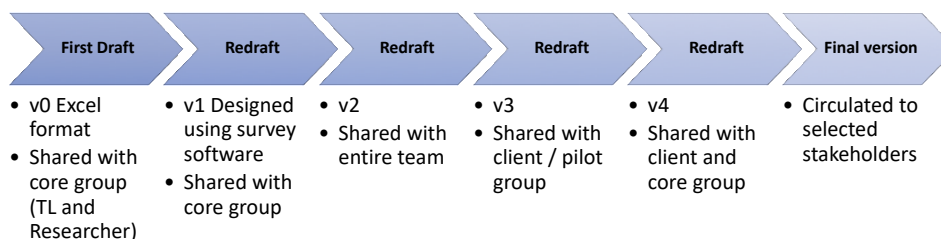
Purpose of the survey

2. The purpose of the online survey is to probe a selection of findings emerging in contexts beyond the country case studies that have come up in the remote studies.
3. The survey complements the other methods of data collection used in the evaluation. In particular, it can do the following:
 - enable the evaluation to reach a larger number of informants and countries than will be interviewed for the country case studies
 - collect information in a consistent manner, which can be aggregated and quantified where appropriate
 - give people an opportunity to contribute to the evaluation in a confidential manner.
4. The focus in the survey is on triangulating the preliminary findings identified by the evaluation team, in order to maximize the utility of the survey while minimizing its length. The aim is to have every core question contribute meaningfully to the team's understanding, and to provide wider evidence on the generalizability of these findings by covering all countries where the United Nations RWEE operates, as well as asking consistent questions across the four organizations collaborating on the programme.

Survey design

5. The survey's focus is on providing further evidence on selected preliminary findings emerging from the remote country studies and interviews across the four organizations. The findings tested through the survey were selected on the basis of their importance, the extent to which it would be useful to widen the geographic scope of the enquiry, and their suitability for investigation using a survey. The types of information that are conducive to being collected by a survey include the following:
 - those that may be aggregated and thus quantified
 - those where consistency of inquiry would be useful, such as when it is desirable to make comparisons between groups
 - those where confidentiality may be relevant
 - those where people have a desire to provide their opinions and their opinions are likely to be relevant.
6. Detailed, in-depth information, and factual (particularly financial) information, or information which only concerns a specialist area is usually better gathered using other methodologies.
7. The questions for the survey were designed and refined through an iterative process. The number of stages may vary. Figure 6 below shows a simplified overview of the process, but in reality the number of iterations was greater.

Figure 6 Iterative survey design process



8. As the diagram above illustrates, the creation of the survey was a collaborative event. The Survey Specialist facilitated this collaboration, and then drew the different inputs together to create the most effective survey for the project. A small core group internal to the team developed the initial draft, which was then tested on the wider team and redrafted. Representatives from the participating agencies then had a chance to review the final survey and suggest amendments to it, which was a helpful part of the process, allowing insights from within the target organizations to inform the design and phrasing of the survey.

9. We aimed to design the survey in such a manner that it invited responses and that questions flowed logically without a feeling of repetition. In general, the early questions were designed to draw respondents into the survey itself and introduce the subject matter, the middle questions to focus in on areas which are at the heart of the quantitative findings, while the final questions were more reflective, giving respondents a chance to contribute their perspective in a confidential way.
10. The survey is targeted at individuals in order to reflect individual perspectives and opinion. This allows respondents to give their answers confidentially, and enables evidence to be collected in a consistent manner, which will complement the other research methods used in the evaluation.
11. In order to encourage a high response rate and increase the quality of responses, the survey was kept short, at 9 questions and a total of 17 answer fields. Of these, the majority (14) were multiple-choice closed questions, all of which were all obligatory, but in addition, respondents had the option of spending more time on the survey and providing in-depth responses to the three open-ended questions. In our experience, this combination of a short survey with the opportunity for people to elaborate has proved successful in achieving a high response rate and in gaining thoughtful responses on a limited number of questions. This enables the survey to provide additional insights over and above the information that is collected through the country studies.

Respondents

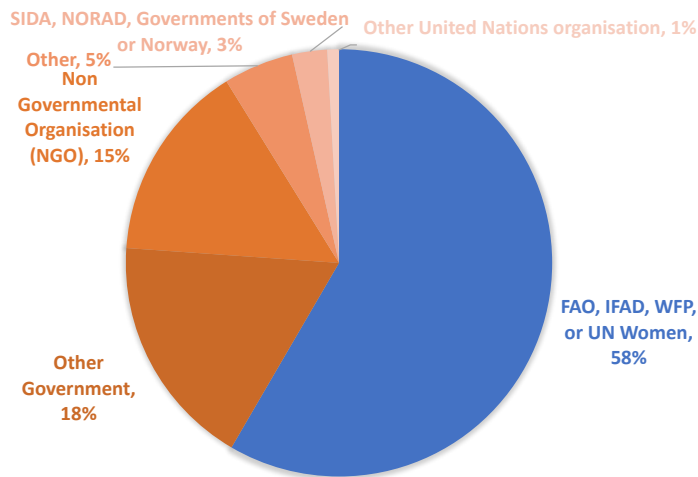
12. The survey was targeted at both internal and external stakeholders, across all seven countries involved, as well as at a number of representatives at the global level. The respondents were selected on the basis of their involvement with JP RWEE and, at country level, in consultation with national consultants, as appropriate.
13. Table 25 below, below, gives a high-level summary of the numbers invited and the responses given. Although 212 contacts were emailed, a number of these invitations could not be delivered, resulting in 200 invitations received. Of these, 113 people completed the survey, although 5 people ruled themselves out in an early question (those that selected “I do not do any work for JP RWEE and have not done so in the past”). This left 108 complete responses, representing a response rate of 54 percent.
14. This high response rate, in excess of 50 percent, is particularly striking considering that this survey targeted NGO workers, government employees and donors, as well as people working for the four United Nations agencies. It is also notable that a response rate of 50 percent or higher was achieved in almost every country – only Ethiopia did not achieve this, but still had a respectable 49 percent; this may be considered indicative of the level of interest respondents felt for the JP RWEE.

Table 25 Summary of invitees and respondents

	Sent	Bounced/Undelivered	Delivered	Completed	Self-selected out	Full responses	Response rate
Global	20	0	20	10		10	50%
Ethiopia	38	3	35	17		17	49%
Guatemala	17	2	15	9	1	8	53%
Kyrgyzstan	29	2	27	14		14	52%
Liberia	30	2	28	18	2	16	57%
Nepal	21	1	20	17	2	15	75%
Niger	34	1	33	17		17	52%
Rwanda	23	1	22	11		11	50%
Total	212	12	200	113	5	108	54%

15. The respondents who worked for the four United Nations agencies constituted a majority, at 58 percent of the total. Government employees formed 18 percent, and NGOs 15 percent, and the remainder consisted of civil society organizations, donors and one respondent from another United Nations organization. Figure 7 below shows what proportion of the survey respondents came from each type of workplace.

Figure 7 Survey respondents by workplace



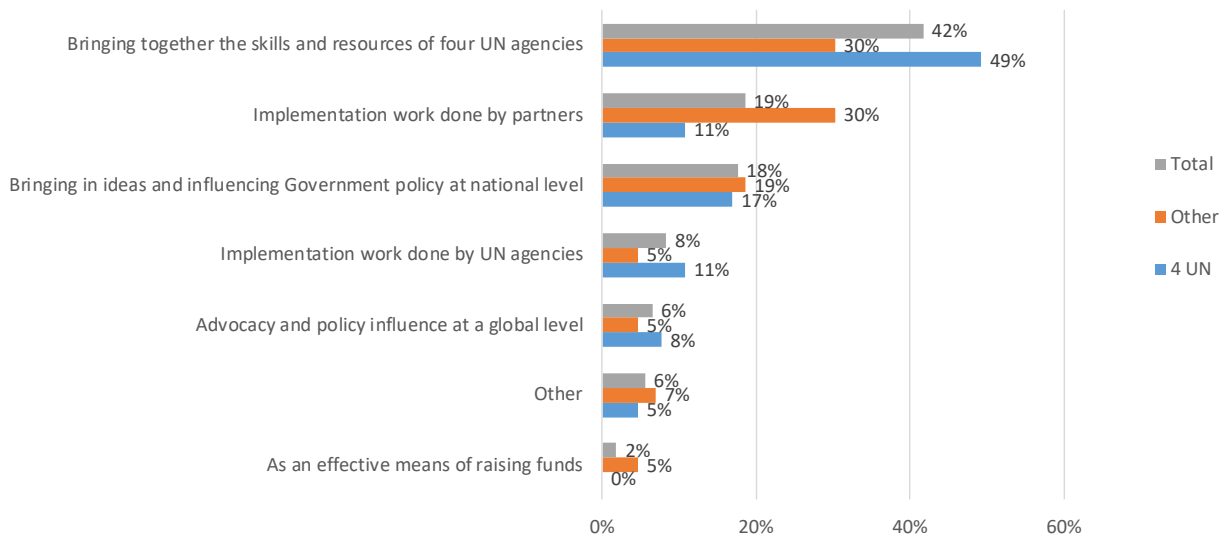
Results and analysis

16. The results are here ordered by EQ, though it should be noted that some of the answers have relevance in more than one EQ.

EQ2: Coherence – To what extent is JP RWEE compatible with, and adding value to, other interventions operating in the sectors of agriculture, nutrition, and women’s social and economic empowerment across countries?

17. EQ2 deals with questions of internal and external coherence. The survey revealed that the sharing of the skills and resources of the four United Nations organizations was seen as the area where JP RWEE adds the most value, certainly in the eyes of those working for those organizations, but also, to a lesser extent, in the eyes of respondents working externally. Figure 10 shows where respondents felt JP RWEE added most value.

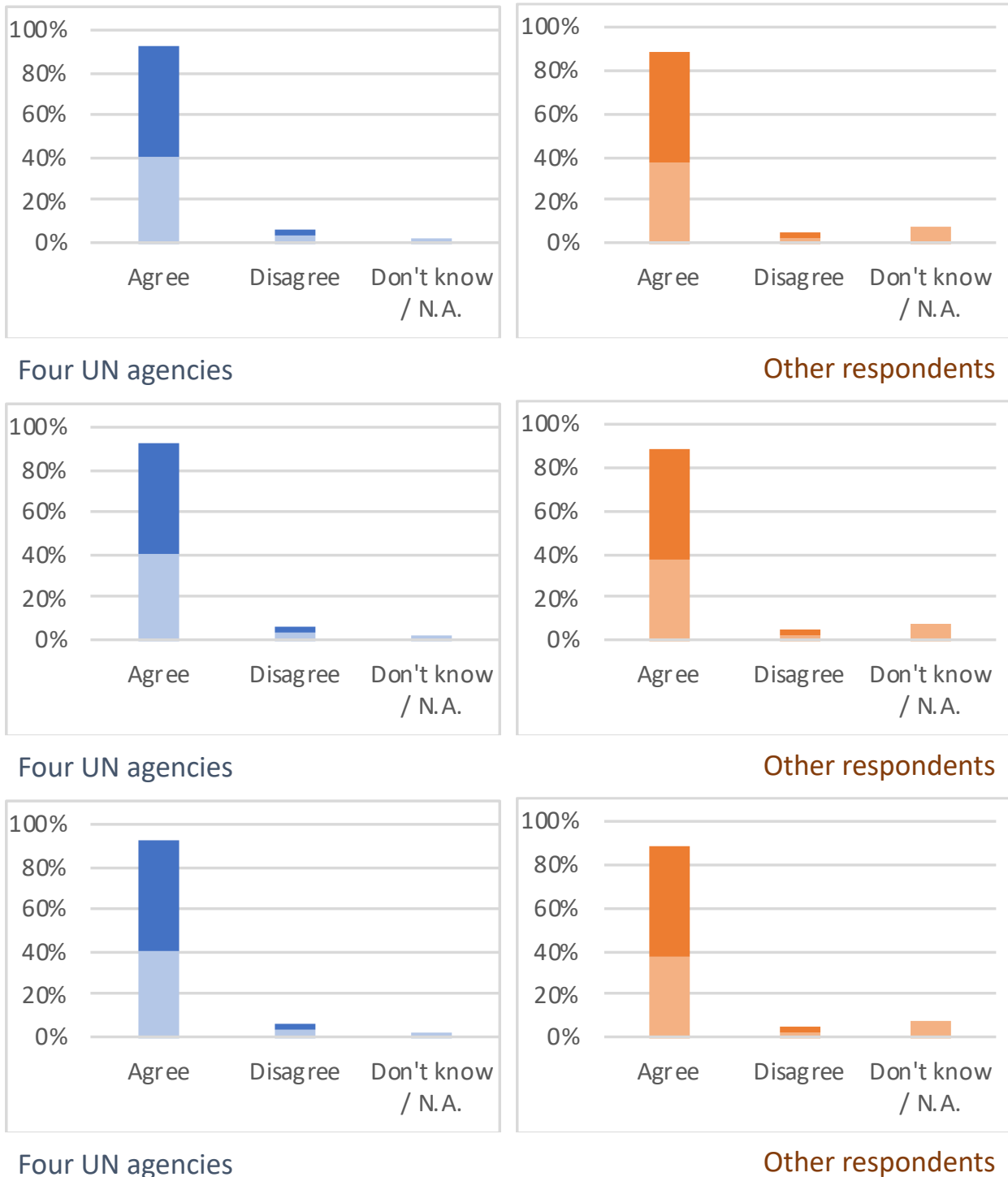
Figure 8 Where JP RWEE adds most value

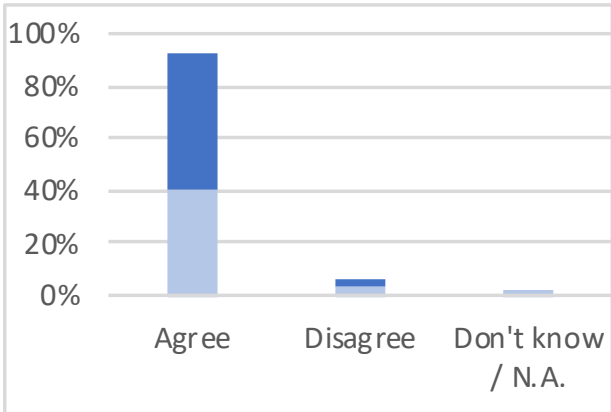


Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “Where do you think the JP RWEE adds most value?”; only one option could be selected.

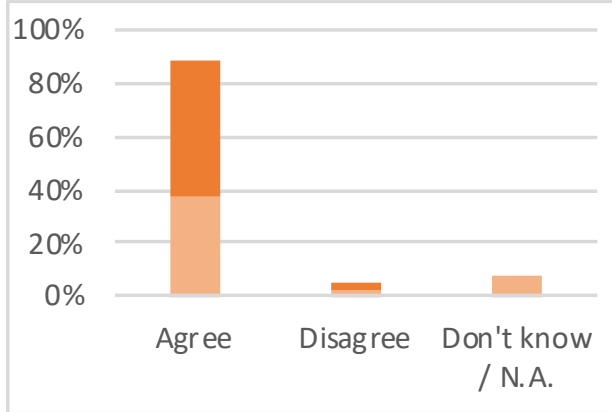
- 18. It is also notable that “As an effective means of raising funds” was the option which received the fewest votes, and received none from United Nations respondents – this finding has relevance also to EQ3 and elsewhere.
- 19. As Figure 9 below shows, the benefits of acting jointly were seen to outweigh the costs, with an overwhelming 91 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that the balance of benefits of a joint programme outweighed the disadvantages.

Figure 9 Benefits of a joint programme outweigh the disadvantages

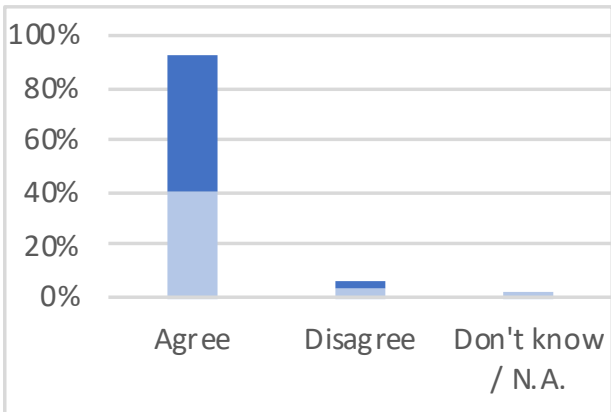




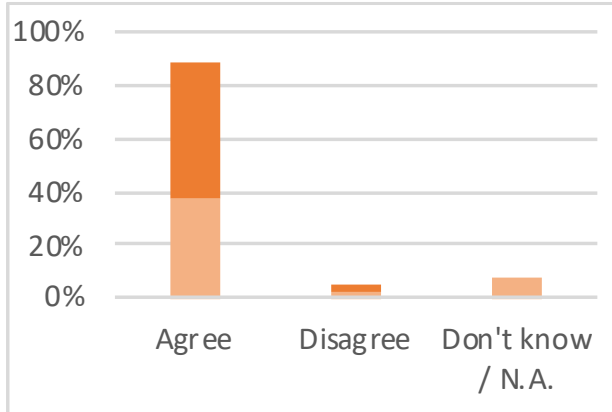
Four UN agencies



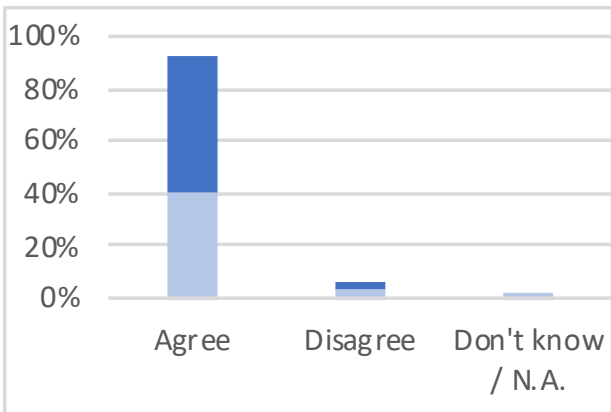
Other respondents



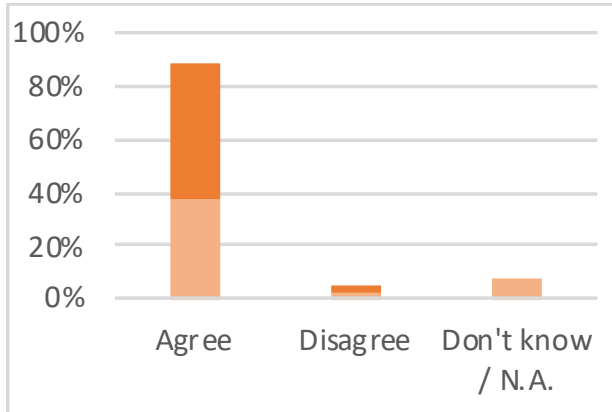
Four UN agencies



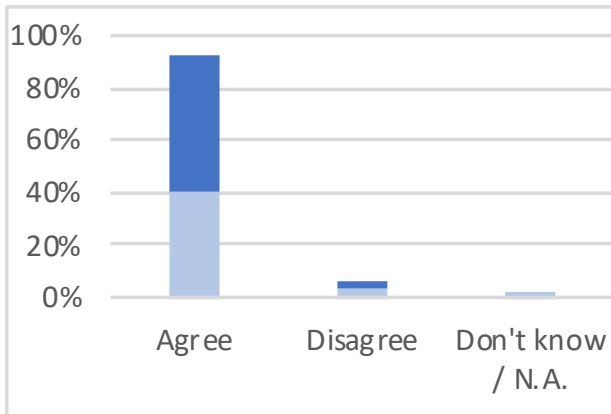
Other respondents



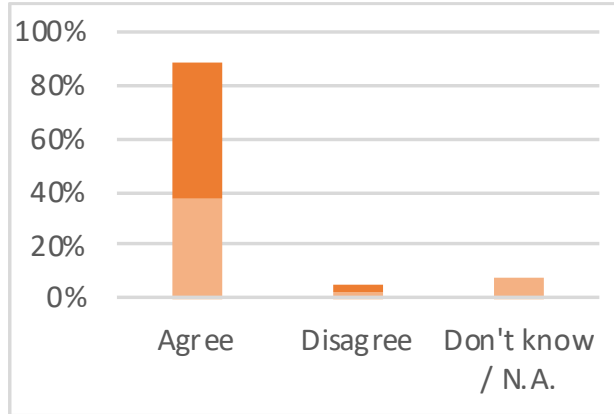
Four UN agencies



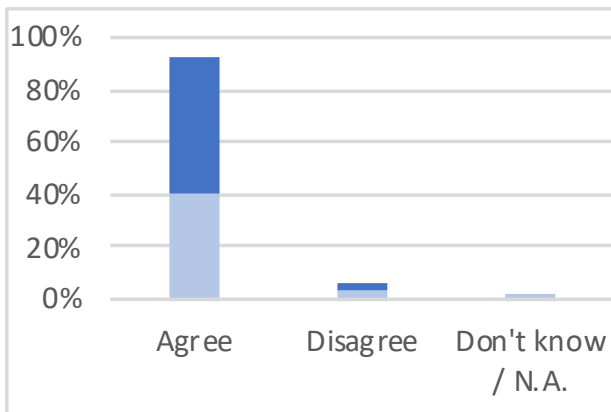
Other respondents



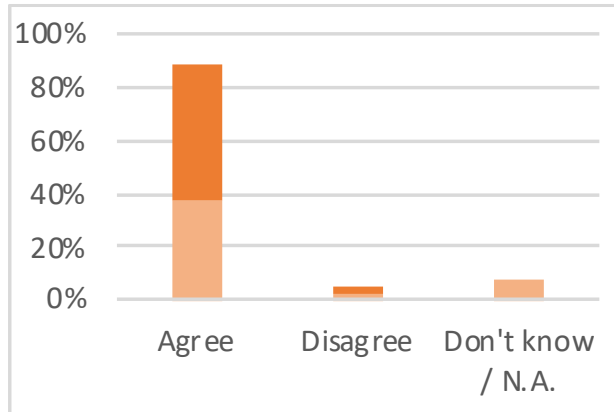
Four UN agencies



Other respondents



Four UN agencies

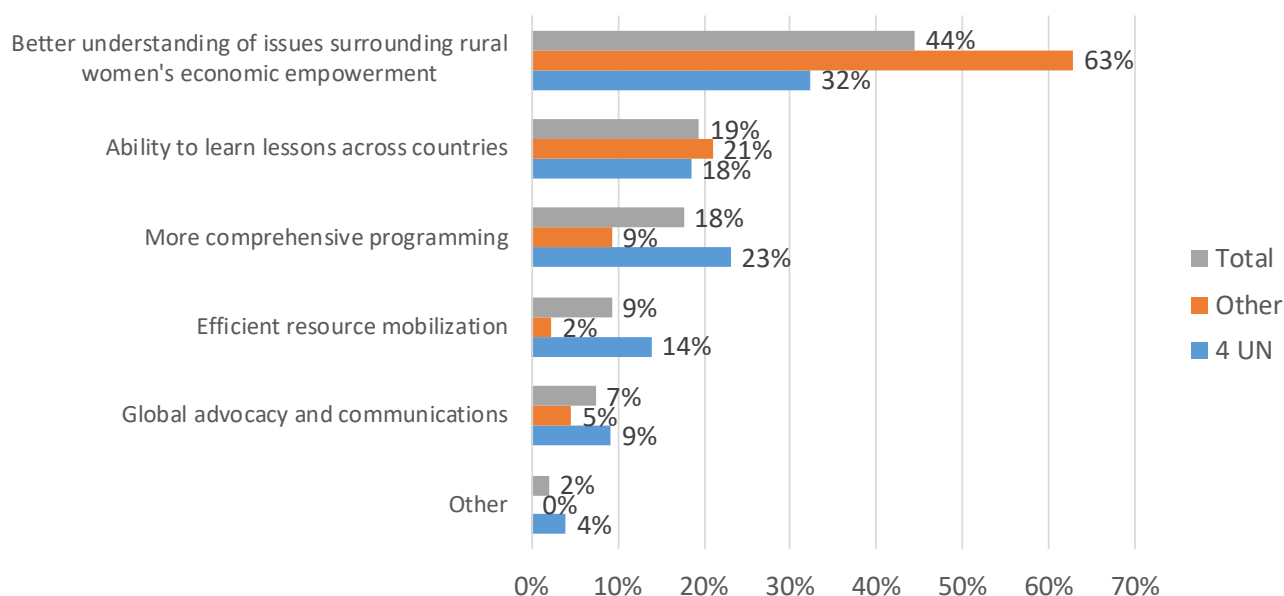


Other respondents

Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “On balance, the benefits of having a **joint programme**, between the four UN agencies, outweigh the disadvantages”; dark colours = strong agreement/disagreement with the statement

- In consideration of the main advantage of being a global programme, the response was varied, particularly from those working in one of the four participating United Nations agencies, as Figure 10 shows. For external respondents, the overwhelming advantage was seen as “Better understanding of issues surrounding rural women's economic empowerment”, with 63 percent selecting this option.

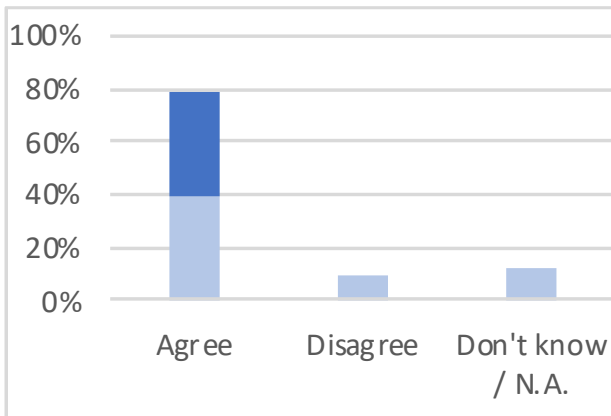
Figure 10 Main advantage of JP RWEE being a global programme



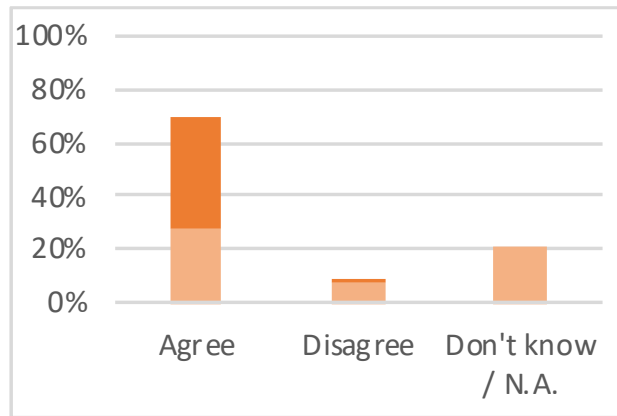
Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “What do you think has been the main advantage of JP RWEE being a global programme with projects in multiple countries and a global governance structure?” Only one option could be selected.

21. For United Nations respondents, this was also the most selected option, with 32 percent choosing it, followed by “More comprehensive programming” (23 percent) and “Ability to learn lessons across countries” (18 percent for United Nations employees, and 21 percent for others). It is notable that only one person selected “technical expertise” as being the main advantage, and no-one selected “cost effectiveness” as the main advantage of a global programme.
22. As Figure 11 shows, support for the global nature of the programme was strong, if slightly less strong than for a joint programme.

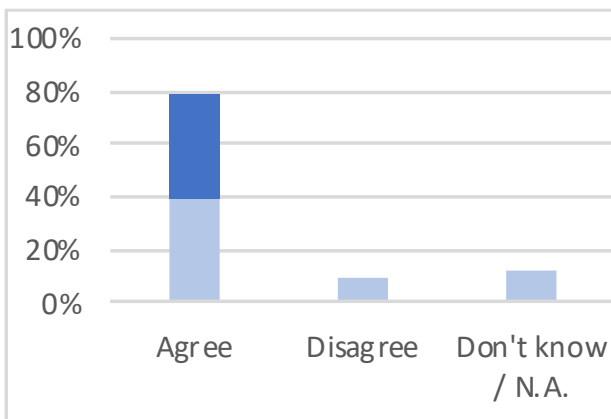
Figure 11 Benefits of JP RWEE being a global programme outweigh the disadvantages



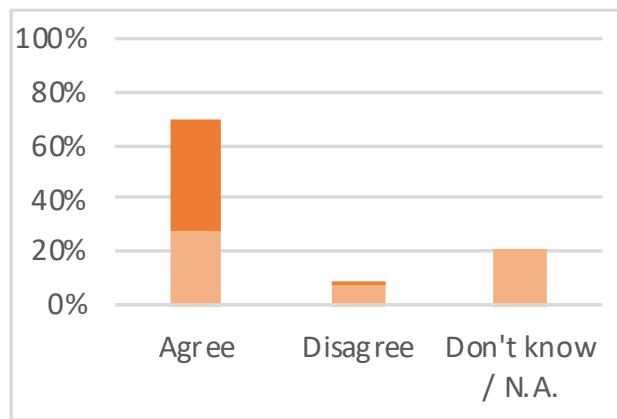
4 UN agencies



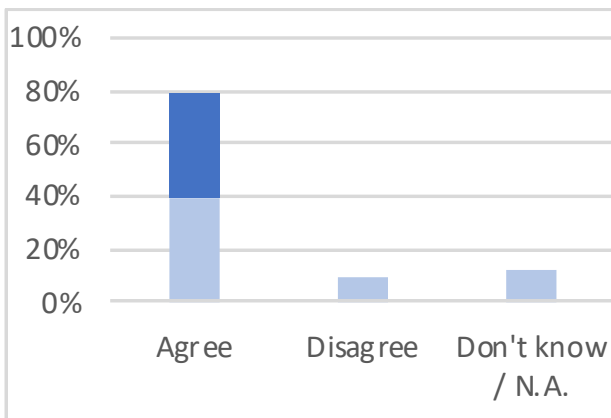
Other respondents



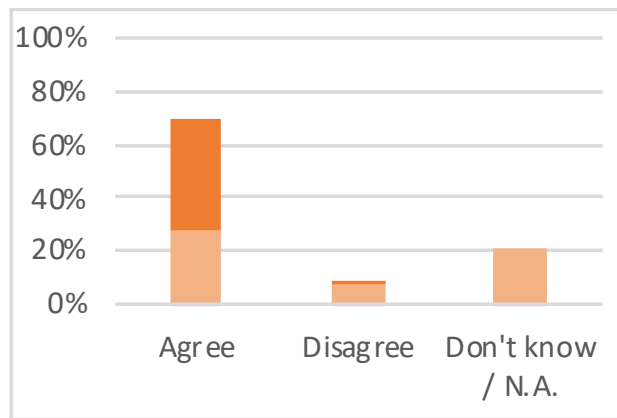
4 UN agencies



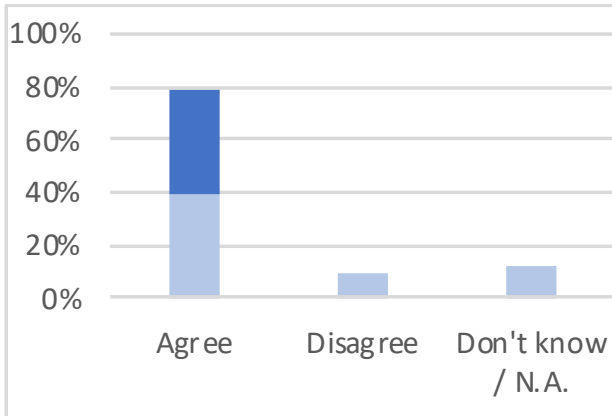
Other respondents



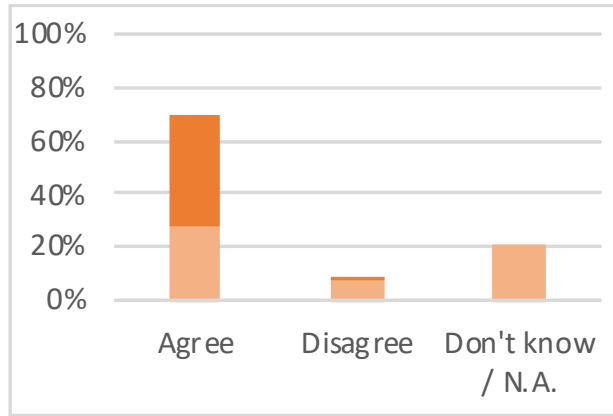
4 UN agencies



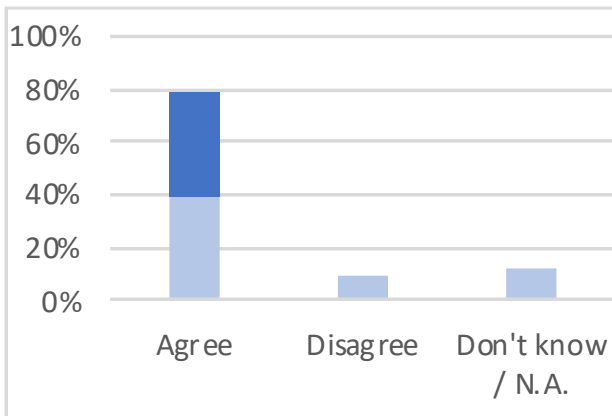
Other respondents



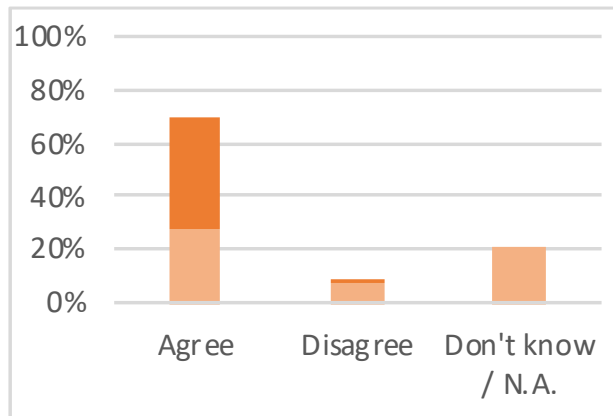
4 UN agencies



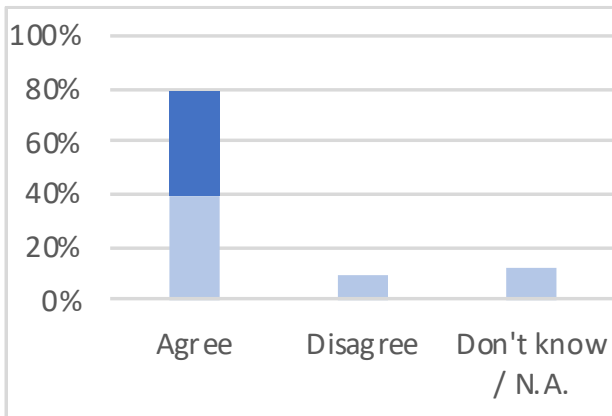
Other respondents



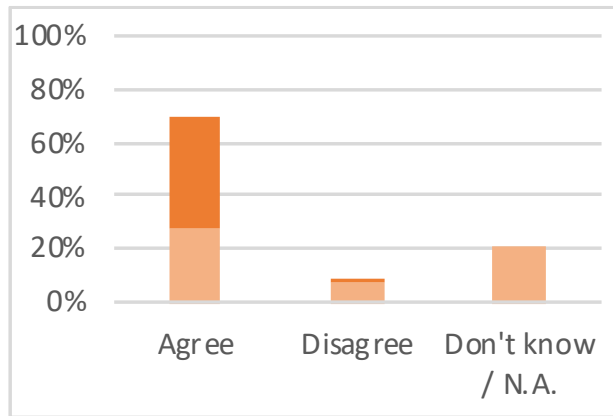
4 UN agencies



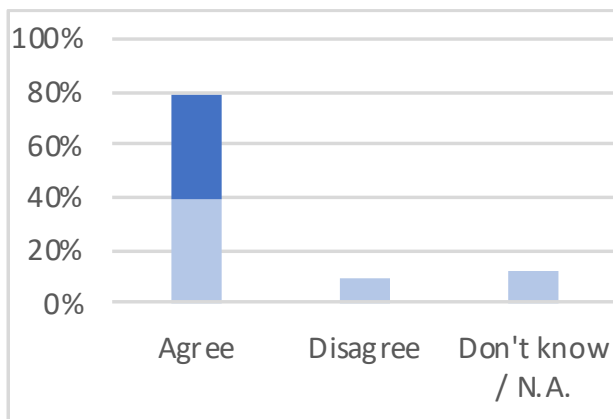
Other respondents



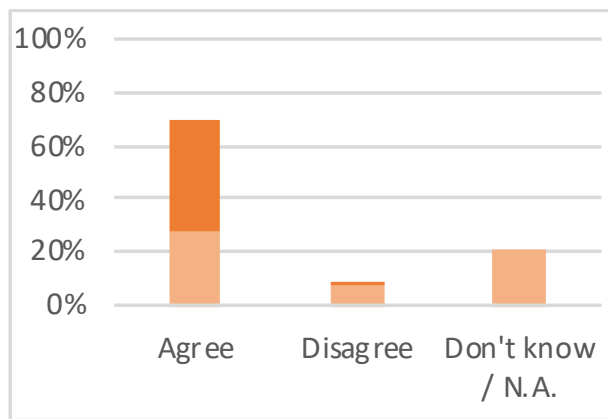
4 UN agencies



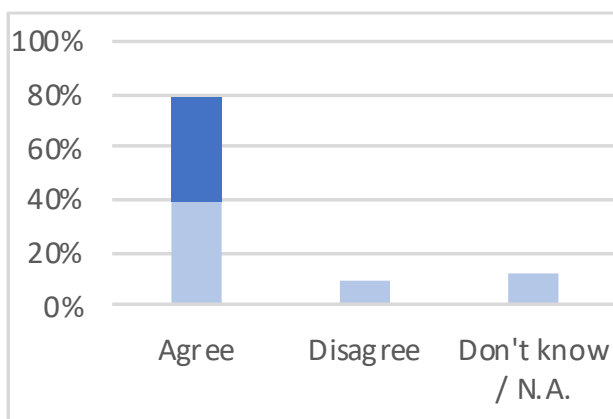
Other respondents



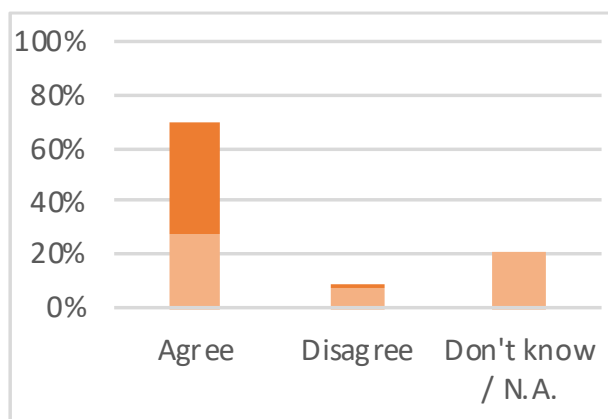
4 UN agencies



Other respondents



4 UN agencies



Other respondents

Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “On balance, the benefits of having a **global programme**, with projects in multiple countries, outweigh the disadvantages”; dark colours = strong agreement/disagreement with the statement

23. These quantitative results were further elaborated on in a later open question on examples of best practice. One respondent said: “This was one of the few positive examples of successful collaboration that I have seen in my UN career – not only between UN agencies, but also with donors. We used JP RWEE to leverage additional attention in-country from other development partners in Nepal” (UN respondent, Nepal).⁷³ “A very good example of the complementarity and the synergies between the UN agencies on one hand and the government on the other” (UN, Niger). Indeed, several respondents attributed its sustainability to “the work done in synergy with other local partners and governments” (UN, Global).
24. However, in answer to what should be changed or improved, several respondents also highlighted difficulties of organizations working together and said they would wish to improve this: “Improve the compatibility of the participating UN agencies” (Government, Rwanda).

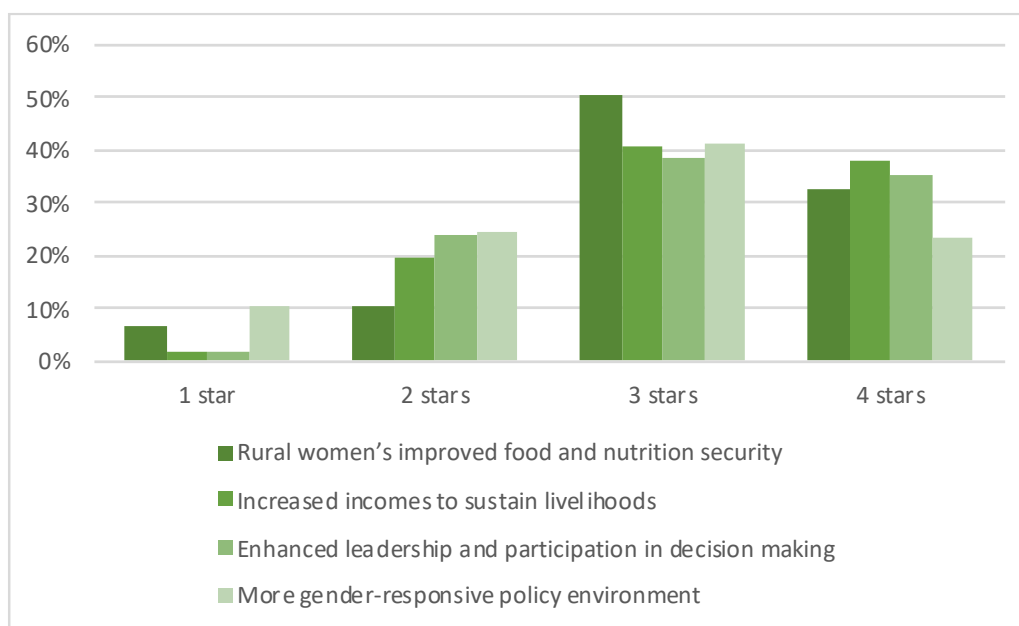
EQ3: Effectiveness – To what extent has JP RWEE achieved its intended objectives/targets, including any differential results across groups, at the country level? What factors contributed to, and/or constrained, the JP RWEE performance and results?

25. The online survey asked a high-level question on perceptions of outcomes achieved, which yielded positive results. Overall, the programme was rated on average 3 stars across all outcomes (where 1 star meant no results were achieved and 4 stars betokened significant results).

⁷³ Note, here and throughout, quotations from the survey are taken verbatim, the only changes are (i) to correct typos, which are common in online survey answers but may otherwise detract from the response or cause confusion, and (ii) translations into English, which have been done within our trilingual team in the case of French and Spanish responses, and via an automatic translator in the case of Russian responses. Respondents are categorized according to their work sector (e.g. government or UN agency worker) and country. These are indicated at the end of quotations in brackets.

26. Figure 12, below, shows the distribution of stars awarded according to outcome area. As can be clearly seen, the vast majority are rated 3 or 4 stars. However, there is some difference between outcome areas, with Outcome 2 (increased incomes), for example, rated more highly than Outcome 4 (more gender-responsive policy environment).

Figure 12 Performance of JP RWEE by outcome area



Rating from 1 to 4 stars where 1 star = No results achieved and 4 stars = Significant results achieved.

Source: Online survey in answer to "From your personal experience, whether at a global or national level, please rate the performance of the JP RWEE on achieving results in the following areas."

27. Looking at the same results broken down by country (in Table 26), the average result remains around 3 stars, ± 0.3 . Notably, some countries had a higher score than others, particularly for Outcome 4, which received an average rating of 2.4 in Guatemala, and 3.2 in Liberia. Overall ratings reflected a strong positive perception of the outcomes achieved by the programme.

Table 26 Performance of JP RWEE, by outcome area and country

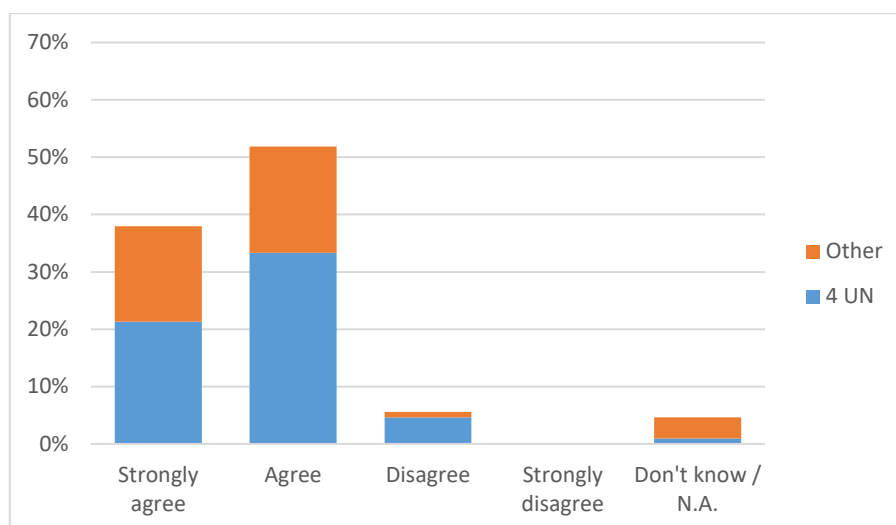
Results achieved by JP RWEE (average stars 1–4)	Global	Ethiopia	Guatemala	Kyrgyzstan	Liberia	Nepal	Niger	Rwanda
1. Rural women's improved food and nutrition security	3.3	2.9	3.0	3.4	2.9	2.7	3.3	3.4
2. Increased incomes to sustain livelihoods	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.2	2.9	3.5	2.9
3. Enhanced leadership and participation in decision making	3.1	2.7	3.0	3.1	3.3	2.9	3.5	3.1
4. More gender-responsive policy environment	2.4	2.8	2.4	2.6	3.2	2.7	3.1	2.5
<i>Average</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>2.9</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>3.1</i>	<i>2.8</i>	<i>3.3</i>	<i>3.0</i>

Rating from 1 to 4 stars where 1 star = No results achieved and 4 stars = Significant results achieved.

Source: Online survey in answer to "From your personal experience, whether at a global or national level, please rate the performance of the JP RWEE on achieving results in the following areas."

28. Further questions probed specific aspects of the programme's results (see Figure 13). For example, 90 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that JP RWEE had raised the profile of WEE in national policies and strategies, with only a small percentage disagreeing with this statement.

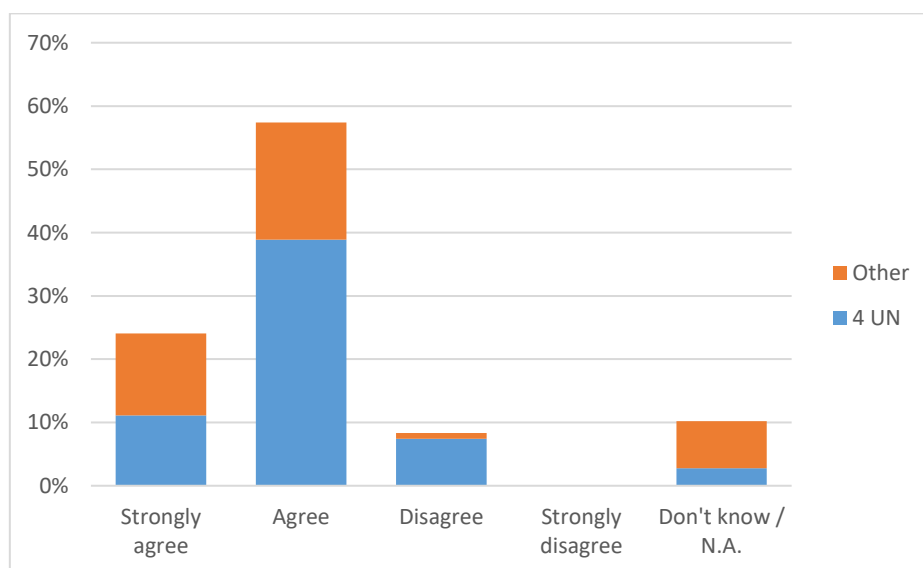
Figure 13 At country level, JP RWEE has raised the profile of WEE in national policies and strategies



Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “At country level, JP RWEE has raised the profile of women’s economic empowerment in national policies and strategies.”

29. Eighty percent of respondents also agreed that global advocacy by JP RWEE gave a higher profile to relevant issues within United Nations agencies, as Figure 14 shows.

Figure 14 JP RWEE’s global advocacy gives JP RWEE a higher profile within United Nations agencies



Source: Online survey, in answer to the question “JP RWEE's global advocacy gives rural women’s economic empowerment a higher profile within UN agencies.”

EQ5: Sustainability – What is the likelihood that the benefits from the programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the upcoming phase-out in 2020? Is there evidence that the initiative is likely to grow – scaling up and out – beyond the programme life?

Table 27 Resilience to shocks

Beneficiaries of the JP RWEE are more resilient to shocks (e.g. natural catastrophes, pandemics, etc.)	Total	4 UN agencies	Other
Strongly agree	24%	20%	30%

Agree	56%	68%	40%
Disagree	12%	5%	23%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%
Don't know / N.A.	7%	8%	7%

Source: Online survey

30. Table 27 shows whether respondents thought the JP RWEE made beneficiaries more resilient to shocks. The vast majority of respondents, over 80 percent, agree or strongly agree that rural women benefiting from JP RWEE are more resilient to shocks; this figure is higher for those respondents who work for one of the four United Nations agencies involved – 88 percent compared with 70 percent.

Table 28 The sustainability of JP RWEE work

The work done by JP RWEE is sustainable	Total	4 UN	Other
Strongly agree	23%	25%	21%
Agree	66%	65%	67%
Disagree	4%	3%	5%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%
Don't know / N.A.	7%	8%	7%

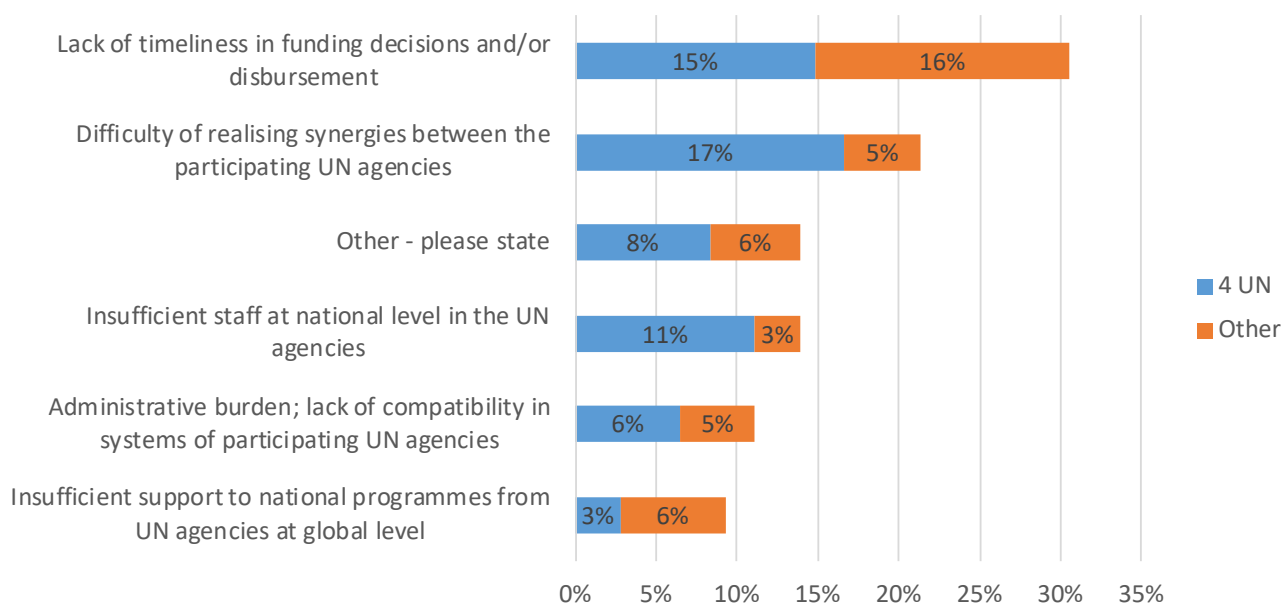
Source: Online survey

31. Almost 90 percent of those surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the work done by JP RWEE was sustainable. In contrast to the question above, there was no significant difference between those respondents working for a United Nations agency, and those who did not: for both, agreement is overwhelming. The few people that disagreed cited unpredictability of funding as being the factor that prevented the work of JP RWEE being sustainable.
32. When respondents were asked what contributed to the sustainability of the programme, the following factors were referred to repeatedly:
- Women's active participation and engagement at every level of the process: "The activities performed are manageable and understandable by the beneficiaries and can continue sustainably by the beneficiaries."
 - Capacity building /skills learnt: "Enhancing the capacity of beneficiaries and local pertinent government offices." "The focus on building local knowledge and skills, and connecting the application of learning to national advocacy initiatives, thereby giving women an avenue for voice."
 - Government ownership: "Government's ownership, interventions implemented with proper sustainability mechanism and linkage of programme with government and community system."
 - Community buy-in & mobilization, and use of local partners "Ensuring local ownership, commitment and buy-in continually. From inception and selecting countries to be included in RWEE, throughout program implementation." "The engagement of families and communities for gender norm change in Nepal was an important factor in ensuring sustainability."

EQ6: Effectiveness, Sustainability – What are the key factors contributing to or inhibiting progress against stated objectives and what are the key lessons that can be learned?

33. On the question of the biggest internal obstacle to the JP RWEE achieving its overall objectives, the factor most selected, by 31 percent of total respondents, and almost equally by United Nations and non-United-Nations respondents, was lack of timeliness in funding decisions and/or disbursement. Figure 15 gives further details of how this question was answered.

Figure 15 What is the biggest internal obstacle to the JP RWEE achieving its overall objectives?



Source: Online survey; one option only could be selected.

34. However, difficulty of realizing synergies between United Nations organizations was the option most selected by United Nations respondents. While it appears that JP RWEE has worked well as a joint programme, there are still difficulties with synergies, elaborated, for example as “Lack of information exchange between four agencies, need in greater coordination and analysis of lessons learnt” (UN, Kyrgyzstan), and particularly with funding mechanisms and disbursal.
35. These issues came up again in an open question on what participants would like to change about JP RWEE. The most popular answer was an affirmation of JP RWEE:
 - Increase geographical scope, within the country, and to other countries
 - “The view of the program as a global role model and innovative leader of how to strengthen rural women’s economic empowerment to be replicated and scaled up to other countries, organizations and regions, as well as a concrete plan and ambition to do so.” (Sida/NORAD)
 - “The only thing I would change is the number of rural areas that the JP RWEE goes to. This programme has lifted the self-esteem of thousands of women and given them courage to move ahead into leadership positions in their communities.” (Government, Liberia)
36. Then, there followed further varied suggestions, which are given here in approximate order of popularity:
 - Provision of multi-year funding
 - “The nature of fund allocation, which should be more predictable and multi-year” (UN, Global)
 - “Funding duration: there’s a need to have long-term funding for sustained engagement with rural women to enhance the ‘do no harm principle.’” (NGO, Liberia)
 - Longer-term, more continuous planning
 - “I would change the planning of programs from short and medium term to long term in order to realize and track more impact” (NGO, Liberia)
 - “The time frame of implementation at field level should be continuous.” (NGO, Nepal)
 - “Time of implementation very short considering the nature of the project (agriculture project needs more time).” (NGO, Rwanda)
 - Reduce delays in funding and bureaucracy
 - “The long procurement process that delays the provision of dairy cows and fattening shoats should be changed to facilitate the procurement process.” (UN, Ethiopia)
 - “The delay in the disbursal of funds by certain UN agencies handicaps the synergies of NGO partners and reduces the impact of activities on the ground.” (NGO, Niger)
 - “The bureaucracy for approval and funding must be reduced so as to more fully utilized time for maximum outcomes.” (Other, Liberia)
 - Sharing of lessons learned and of best practice

- “Focus more on global partnership and exchange of experience among the seven countries, otherwise it did not feel like it was a global program.” (UN, Kyrgyzstan)
 - “It would be great for us in all countries implementing JP RWEE to contribute to the global resource mobilization strategy with evidence /good practices generated.” (UN, Nepal)
 - “It would have been useful to learn more about other the experience of other countries. This was an important pillar of the programme, yet we only had one opportunity to share over an online meeting. I personally got a lot out of that meeting in terms of ideas to scale up the programme.” (UN, Rwanda)
 - Monitoring & evaluation
 - “The monitoring and evaluation part must be improved for a potential new phase.” (Sida/NORAD)
 - But: “Focus on economic empowerment rather than advocacy, administrative cost, data collection and research.” (Government, Ethiopia)
 - Coordination system/synergies
 - “Improve the compatibility of the participating UN agencies.” (Government, Rwanda)
 - “lighter coordination system – too heavy a multilayer system at national and global level.” (UN, Guatemala)
 - Rotation of leadership
 - “Rotate the host agency for the global coordination among the four implementing agencies.” (UN, Global)
 - “Make country leadership among partner agencies on a rotational basis to give a full spectrum of capacity and expertise to project implementation as well as diversify fund-raising strategy for JP RWEE.” (UN, Kyrgyzstan)
 - Dedicated staff /single focal point
 - “Each UN Agency should assign a focal person only for JP RWEE.” (UN, Ethiopia)
 - “I would suggest that the national program coordinator be hired by the lead agency full time and 100 percent of their time devoted to coordinating the program.” (UN, Kyrgyzstan)
 - Follow-up activities
 - “Some follow-up activities should be required for the sustainability of the project even after completion of the programme.” (NGO, Nepal)
37. Finally, on key lessons learned and best practice, participants were largely very positive about the JP RWEE regarding its collaborative approach, and its work with women and local partners, including governments, and gave examples of how it had changed women’s lives.
- Good example of collaboration
 - “A very good example of complementarity and synergy between the UN agencies on the one hand, and the between the UN system and the Government on the other.” (UN, Niger)
 - “This was one of the few positive examples of successful collaboration that I have seen in my UN career – not only between UN agencies, but also with donors.” (UN, Nepal)
 - “One best practice I would strongly encourage to continue is the inter-agency collaboration and networking with government ministries.” (Government, Liberia)
 - “The lesson learnt is the need to plan and implement together.” (UN, Liberia)
 - Planning done with women, with government and with NGOs and communities
 - “The strong collaboration with the local government and their ownership of the outputs is exemplary. RWEE provided opportunities for leadership to women’s groups in the construction of community assets. This may have caused some delays in the construction but the gain in terms of women’s empowerment outweighs those implementations delays.” (UN, Nepal)
 - “[The] programme built its activities through actively listening to the voices of the rural women and their personal engagement in the needs assessment on trainings, which has a positive result ... They do understand that such projects last for certain period, while decision to change their life depends directly on them. JP RWEE programme puts seeds into their mind to shift the paradigm from waiting for opportunities to be able to lead the process, participate in the decision making process though voicing their needs at local community meetings, make decisions and most importantly to create these opportunities themselves.” (UN Kyrgyzstan)
 - “JP RWEE has forced the Liberian government to set up a Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting Unit at the Ministry of Finance. Other ministries have set up gender desks and have incorporated gender mainstreaming into their work. Thank you for this great programme!” (Government, Liberia)

- “I am the focal person for Food and Agriculture for Oromia Agriculture & Natural Resource Bureau, Ethiopia. working system of JP RWEE helps me to gain valuable experience to do other wide government projects/programs.” (Government, Ethiopia)
- Life-changing effect on women involved
 - “The JP RWEE has improved the lives of people and one prominent example is the life of Madam Yassah Mulbah, which has improved towards a sustainable livelihood. She is now paying her children’s school fees and scaling up her vegetable farm to produce more income through the planting of valuable vegetables. Before this intervention, Madam Yassah's children were not in school because the husband is unemployed [and they could] not afford [the fees]. Through the VSLA, she is now sending the children to school and is the sole contributor to the sustenance of her house.” (UN Liberia)
 - “Frankly speaking, JP RWEE transformed rural women in many ways, leadership skills and level of involvement in decision making at different level (household, local government, groups leadership, etc) and rural women improved skills in financial inclusion through VSLAs and entrepreneurship skills as well as increased income among rural women who were used to depending on their men in households and this transformed the wellbeing of the family. Another this is great joint efforts of UN agencies with different expertise and other stakeholders for sustainability.” (UN, Rwanda)
 - “A 58-year-old woman and she is widow living in Kirehe District. She was doing subsistence agriculture by investing in maize, beans and sorghum. She was growing vegetables through Kubinya cooperative without any remarkable benefits. Benefiting from the programme intervention, at the end of 2016, Nyiraruvugo was able to get RWF 10,000 as a return from Kubinya cooperative to which she is affiliated as a member. From RWF 10,000 gained she realized that she can do more than agriculture. Then, she has bought two rabbits for rearing at RWF 1,400. As of now the two rabbits have produced 42 rabbits, of which 20 are being reared in partnership with her 10 neighbours, at the condition of equal benefits sharing. The amount remaining (RWF 8,600) were topped up with RWF 20,400 to buy a goat for rearing at RWF 29,000. Up to June 2018, Sphora has reached ten goats. Now she is economically safe she can easily manage to cater for her family as far as house needs are concerned.” (NGO, Rwanda)
 - “Above all things, JP RWEE has created a mindshift in the women beneficiaries. Most of the women were housewives but now they are engaged in business activities. They have learned that they can do something, their mindset has changed to 'I can'. This is a big and sustainable shift.” (UN, Ethiopia)

Annex 13. Alignment with select international and national frameworks, policies and plans

Table 29 Alignment of JP RWEE with the Sustainable Development Goals

SDG	Selected targets	JP RWEE alignment
Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	<p>1.2. By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions</p> <p>Target 1.4: By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</p> <p>Target 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters</p>	<p>Outcome 2 of JP RWEE aims to increase rural women’s income to secure their livelihoods, focusing on creating, supporting and developing enterprises led by rural women, and enhancing entrepreneurship skills and value chains to access markets.</p> <p>Under Outcome 4, JP RWEE also aims to effect policy reforms for the effective enforcement of rural women’s rights to land and other resources. For example, in Liberia JP RWEE has strengthened national and sub-national capacities to advance rural women’s land rights through the implementation of the land rights policy, and dialogues have increased knowledge of rural women on their land rights</p> <p>In some JP RWEE countries, the promotion of climate-smart agricultural practices contributes to the resilience of women and communities to climate change. For example, in Rwanda, there has been a focus on ensuring equitable access to and control over water resources through training and technology provision to help cope with drought.</p>
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	<p>2.1. By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round</p> <p>2.3. By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment</p> <p>2.4. By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems,</p>	<p>JP RWEE aims to improve the nutrition and food security of rural women under Outcome 1, through increased agricultural production through improved production techniques, including climate-smart agricultural practices, as well as strengthened knowledge of the nutritious use of foods, and enhanced capacity to enhance and control local food security reserves. For example, in Liberia rural women accessed high-quality seeds, tools and machinery for enhancing production, as well as improving their knowledge of agricultural techniques and labour-saving technologies. In Rwanda kitchen gardens were promoted to grow a diverse range of nutrient-rich vegetables and fruit to increase dietary diversity.</p>

SDG	Selected targets	JP RWEE alignment
	that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	<p>4.4. By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship</p> <p>4.6: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy</p>	Under Outcome 3, JP RWEE has focused on access to education and vocational training, as well as on developing rural women's leadership skills, in order to increase and enhance their participation in their communities and in rural institutions. The form this takes has varied between countries. For example, in 2019 adult literacy lessons was conducted in Guatemala and Ethiopia; school meals, supplies and scholarships were provided in Niger and Liberia; political training was carried out in Guatemala; leadership and gender schools were run in Kyrgyzstan; and a five-day training-of-trainers course on life skills, gender equality, social inclusion, women's rights and local-level planning processes was conducted in Nepal.
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	<p>Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation</p> <p>5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate</p> <p>5.5. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>	JP RWEE has an explicit focus on achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. However, specifically, through enhancing leadership and participation in communities, JP RWEE responds to multidimensional issues faced by rural women, including gender-based violence. In addition, in Rwanda, the programme specifically targets survivors of gender-based violence and in Liberia it has built strategic partnerships with other programmes supporting survivors of such violence. The GALS methodology, which is applied in Rwanda, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan and Guatemala, has also encouraged fair distribution of household care and domestic work, as well as financial resources, among household members.
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Target 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	Across all countries there is a focus by the JP RWEE on entrepreneurship and growth of enterprises, as well as access to financial services. For example, in Liberia JP RWEE beneficiaries were trained as mobile money agents to offer financial services to the public in the project areas.
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote	9.3. Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial	Under Outcome 2, JP RWEE has helped rural women to increase their income, including by increasing access to credit

SDG	Selected targets	JP RWEE alignment
inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets	and other business services. In 2019 across all countries, over 650 saving groups/associations, with 15,702 members, were established through VSLAs, SHGs, and Rural Saving and Credit Cooperatives.
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	<p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard</p>	<p>JP RWEE has promoted inclusion, and recruitment of beneficiaries has been based on clear human-rights-based approaches. For example, in Rwanda targets ensured the programme was inclusive of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including households from lower socio-economic status categories, women living with HIV/AIDS, survivors of gender-based violence, and other marginalized groups.</p> <p>Through Outcome 4, activities have focused on pressing for reform in order to ensure equal rights for rural women. For example, in Ethiopia and Liberia a focus has been on the land rights policy frameworks to uphold women's land rights.</p>
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels	Under Outcome 3, activities have promoted rural women's active participation in and leadership of decision making bodies, as well as increasing rural women's voice and influence in policy-related forums. In addition, under Outcome 4, the JP RWEE has engaged with local government institutions and authorities to enhance knowledge and understanding of how more gender-responsive local development plans and strategies can address the needs of rural women.
Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	<p>17.14 Enhance policy coherence for sustainable development</p> <p>17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships</p>	<p>JP RWEE has fostered country-level partnerships with local civil society networks, private sector bodies, national government institutions, and other development partners, which have enhanced sustainable development. For example, in Liberia partnership with Orange Mobile Liberia has provided rural women with training to work as mobile money agents.</p> <p>JP RWEE has also promoted gender mainstreaming and gender-targeted initiatives in government institutions. In Kyrgyzstan the programme has also supported the development of gender-disaggregated indicators for the agricultural sector by the National Statistics Committee, as well</p>

SDG	Selected targets	JP RWEE alignment
	17.18. By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts	as supporting indicators for SDGs relating to the agricultural sector.

Table 30 Alignment of JP RWEE with select international and national frameworks, policies and plans

Key policy/framework	Alignment
Global and regional level	
Sustainable Development Goals	<p>JP RWEE outcomes contribute to the following SDGs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere • Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture • Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all • Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls • Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all • Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation • Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries • Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels • Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with outcomes covered under the CAADP framework focusing on agricultural transformation and sustained inclusive agricultural growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased agricultural production and productivity • Increased intra-African regional trade and functioning of national and regional markets • Expanded local agro-industry and value chain development inclusive of women and youth • Increased resilience of livelihoods and improved management of risks in the agriculture sector • Improved management of natural resources for sustainable agricultural practices.
Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action	<p>JP RWEE aligns to the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, as well as the Accra Agenda for Action, focusing on the following: national ownership; alignment to country systems; inclusive partnership between actors; harmonization to avoid duplication; capacity development.</p>

Key policy/framework	Alignment
Ethiopia	
United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAF) 2016–2020 and UNDAF 2012–2016	<p>JP RWEE in Ethiopia initially fully aligned itself with UNDAF 2012–2016, contributing to pillars on sustainable economic growth and risk reduction, with a strong focus on (i) strengthening agricultural development, promoting financial inclusion, and supporting vulnerable communities; (ii) governance and capacity development; and (iii) women, young people and children. It is also aligned with the subsequent UNDAF 2016–2020, contributing to the following UNDAF 2016–2020 pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar 1: inclusive growth and structural transformation • Pillar 2: resilience and green economy • Pillar 3: investing in human capital and expanded access to equality and equitable basic social services • Pillar 4: good governance, participation and capacity development • Pillar 5: equality and empowerment.
Ethiopia Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I) (2011–2015) and Ethiopia Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) (2016–2020)	<p>JP RWEE in Ethiopia contributed to the GTP I, particularly Pillar 4: Unleashing the potentials of Ethiopia’s women. Subsequently, JP RWEE in Ethiopia has been contributing to the following GTP II pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar 1: Sustainable Economic growth and Risk Reduction • Pillar 4: Maintaining agriculture as major source of economic growth • Pillar 7: Promote gender and youth empowerment and equity
National Social Protection Policy of Ethiopia 2012	<p>JP RWEE in Ethiopia contributes to the following National Social Protection Policy focus areas: access to social safety nets; support to livelihood and employment schemes; and addressing inequalities of access to basic services.</p>
National Women’s Policy of Ethiopia (1993)	<p>JP RWEE outcomes contributes to the National Women’s Policy of Ethiopia, which prioritizes the following: improving the working and institutional conditions of rural women; accelerating equality between men and women; facilitating rural women’s access to basic social services and to ways and means of lightening workload; progressively eliminating prejudices, customs and other practices that constrain women’s participation in decision-making processes at all levels and protection by institutional frameworks.</p>
National Action Plan on Gender Equality (NAP-GE) (2010)	<p>JP RWEE in Ethiopia contributes to the NAP-GE priorities on the following: poverty reduction and economic empowerment of women and girls; education and training of women and girls; empowering women to assume decision-making positions and enhancing their participation in institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.</p>
Agricultural Transformation Agenda	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with and contributes to priorities of the Agricultural Transformation Agenda of Ethiopia, namely the following strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased crop and livestock production and productivity • commercialization of smallholder agriculture and market development • environmentally sustainable and inclusive growth • enhanced implementation capacity.

Key policy/framework	Alignment
Guatemala	
National Policy for the Promotion and Comprehensive Development of Women (PNPDIM) 2008–2023	<p>JP RWEE is fully aligned with priorities outlined in the PNDPIM, including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing hunger issues by ensuring full access, use, availability and enjoyment by women of policies, plans, programmes, and projects for food and nutritional security and sovereignty • Securing the creation, promotion, development and sustainability of economic and productive initiatives for women at local, national and international level • Creating policies and programmes that reduce the impact of macroeconomic policies on the lives of women nationwide, including rural areas; • Ensuring conditions for the autonomous participation of women in the economy: local, national and international; • Guaranteeing women’s access to property ownership, use of natural resources, right of land, and rural development • Encouraging, promoting and implementing economic solidarity programmes for women victims of disasters and natural phenomena.
National Development Plan (NDP) K’atun: Our Guatemala 2032	<p>JP RWEE is fully aligned to the following priority areas of the NDP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty reduction and social protection – implementing national social protection systems and measures for all • Employment and investment – eliminating workers living in extreme poverty • Access to water and management of natural resources – efficient use of natural resources • Education - equal opportunities in access to effective and relevant learning • Economic value of natural resources – integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning • Food and nutrition security – with a focus on rural areas.
UNDAF 2015–2019	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with UNDAF priorities for integrated rural development, sustainable management of natural resources and food and nutrition security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive and sustainable development • Social development • Safe and violence-free society • Justice for all people • Multicultural and diverse society.
Kyrgyzstan	
National Strategy on Gender Equality 2012–2020	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with the National Strategy on Gender Equality in Kyrgyzstan, which builds an institutional basis to ensure equal rights and opportunities for all citizens of the country regardless of sex, age, social status, health, gender identity and other grounds of discrimination, for the full-scale development of human potential in the country.</p>

Key policy/framework	Alignment
National Sustainable Development Strategy 2013–2017 (NSDS)	JP RWEE aligned itself to the government’s National Sustainable Development Strategy 2013–2017, which names agriculture as one of four priority areas for economic development, with these specific objectives: (i) improve the system of management and regulation, (ii) improve availability and quality of services, (iii) improve product quality, (iv) establish a modern market infrastructure, (v) increase production and exports, (vi) reclaim and gain lands for production, (vii) develop the processing industry; and (viii) increase effectiveness and efficiency of land use.
National Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic 2018–2040	The JP RWEE responds to four national priorities outlined in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agricultural development • small and medium enterprise development • gender equality and eliminating the imbalance between the opportunities of women and men • regions development through support and development of income-generating activities run by rural women, communities, self-help groups and women’s led organizations.
Kyrgyz Republic Food Security and Nutrition Programme 2015–2017 (FSNP)	JP RWEE is well aligned with Priority Area 4 of the FSNP, which calls for poor families to be helped to find ways to increase their income. Nutrition training provided by the JP RWEE also helps to build demand for healthy food, which is one of the areas set by the FSNP.
UNDAF 2018–2022	The programme contributes to all four UNDAF 2018–2022 focus areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industrial, rural and agricultural development, food security and nutrition • Good governance, rule of law, human rights and gender equality • Environment, climate change, and disaster risk management • Social Protection, Health and Education with particular attention to vulnerable groups, including women and youth, as well as to disaster-prone communities.
Liberia	
Agenda for Transformation (Aft) 2012–2017	JP RWEE is aligned to the Government of Liberia’s priorities in the Aft, particularly under these pillars: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar I: Economic Transformation (including agriculture and food security) • Pillar III: Human Development (including education, nutrition and social protection) • Pillar IV: Governance and Public Institutions (including capacity development needs and opportunities for enhanced governance) • Pillar V: Cross-cutting Issues (Gender Equality, Youth Empowerment, Human Rights, Labor and Employment, Environment).

Key policy/framework	Alignment
Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) 2019–2023	JP RWEE aligns itself with the Government of Liberia’s PAPD, which includes a critical Pillar One focused on reducing developmental inequality, with gender equality entrenched as a cross-cutting concern, leading to more empowered women and girls. In addition, Pillar Two focuses on the economy and jobs, including aiming to increase agricultural production and productivity and to improve forest utilization through competitive value chains and market linkages for food and income security, economic growth, and job creation, building resilience against shocks and disasters.
UNDAF 2013–2017	<p>JP RWEE contributes to the Liberia UNDAF 2013–2017 particularly Pillars II and III, which address issues of natural resource and food security and equal access to sustainable livelihood opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pillar II: Sustainable Economic Transformation (Outcome 2.1: Natural Resource and Food Security: Improved sustainable natural resource utilization and food security) • Pillar II: Human Development Outcome (Outcome 3.1, Health and Nutrition: The population has increased access to and utilization of equitable, affordable, and quality health and nutrition services; Outcome 3.2, Education: School-aged girls and boys and youth have increased access to quality inclusive ECD, Basic, Post-Basic and Alternative basic Education, especially in counties with education indicators below the national average; Outcome 3.3, Social Welfare: Social welfare systems and services are improved and utilized, especially by the most vulnerable groups and individuals.
UNSDCF (United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks) 2020–2024	<p>JP RWEE outcomes and outputs are fully aligned with the current UNSDCF 2020–2024, with particular reference to these outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome II: By 2024, Liberia has sustained, diversified and inclusive economic growth driven by investments in agriculture, food security and job creation and is resilient to climate change and natural disasters • Outcome IV: By 2024, people in Liberia especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged, benefit from strengthened institutions that are more effective, accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender responsive in the delivery of essential services at the national and sub-national levels.
Nepal	
National Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) 2015–2035	JP RWEE is aligned to the ADS in Nepal and acts as a joint pilot contributing to the implementation of the ADS. The ADS is committed to the inclusion of women, disadvantaged groups and geographically disadvantaged populations throughout the planning, implementation and monitoring of the strategy. The vision of the ADS is a self-reliant, sustainable, competitive and inclusive agricultural sector that drives economic growth and contributes to improved livelihood and nutrition security, which is in alignment with JP RWEE outcomes.
UNDAF 2013–2017	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with the UNDAF 2013-2017, particularly regarding the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 1: Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups get improved access to basic essential social services and programmes in an equitable manner • Outcome 2: Vulnerable groups have improved access to economic opportunities and adequate social protection • Outcome 3: Vulnerable groups experience greater self-confidence, respect and dignity.

Key policy/framework	Alignment
	JP RWEE cuts across many of the vulnerable groups identified in the UNDAF, including women of reproductive age; women subject to sexual abuse and exploitation; dalits: undernourished children; rural landless and land-poor; migrant workers and their families; the illiterate; conflict-affected women; people from the lowest-performing districts; people from areas especially vulnerable to climate change; and other disadvantaged women and girls.
UNDAF 2018–2022	<p>JP RWEE aligns with UNDAF 2018–2022, particularly these two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 1 on Sustainable and inclusive growth, which includes a focus on transformation in the agriculture sector and gender equity and inclusion of improved technologies • Outcome 2 on Social development, which focuses on sustainable improvement on human development through social development and social security/protection.
Niger	
Plan de Développement Economique et Social 2017–2021 (PDES)	<p>JP RWEE contributes to the implementation of the Niger PDES 2017–2021, particularly Programme 6, which focuses on food security and sustainable development and includes seven sub-programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of irrigated and rainfed production • restoration of the livestock system • processing of agro pastoral and fishery products • development of rural infrastructure and services • empowerment of rural women • strengthening of the resilience to food insecurity of the most vulnerable • governance and coordination of the rural sector.
National 3N Policy (“Les nigériens nourrissent les nigériens”)	JP RWEE is in line with the 3N Initiative (“Les nigériens nourrissent les nigériens”), which aims to increase the country’s resilience to food crises and reduce poverty through agricultural reform. Within this framework, the approach of the “communes de convergence” has been developed, which is based on the principle of programmatic, thematic and geographical synergy among United Nations agencies, under the leadership of the Office of the High Commissioner, to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities.
National Gender Policy	JP RWEE is aligned with the National Gender Policy, which has the vision of “building, together with all stakeholders, a society without discrimination, where men and women, girls and boys have the same opportunities of participating in its development and enjoying the benefits of its growth”. Under the ten-year plan 2009–2018 for the policy, JP RWEE is aligned to sub-programmes 2 and 3.
UNDAF 2014–2018	<p>JP RWEE is aligned with the development objectives of the UNDAF 2014–2018, including its three cross-cutting themes of attaining human rights, promotion of equality and equity between men and women, and promotion of environmental sustainability. It is also aligned with the following thematic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic area 1: Resilience • Thematic area 2: Social Development and Human Capital

Key policy/framework	Alignment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic area 3: Governance, peace and security.
UNDAF 2019–2022	<p>JP RWEE aligns with UNDAF 2019–2021, particularly the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: By 2021, targeted rural populations have access to innovative value chains that create decent jobs, participate in mechanisms for the prevention and management of food and nutrition crises and disasters and in sustainable management of natural and energy resources adapted to the effects of climate change Outcome 3. By 2021, women and youth/adolescents in the targeted areas benefit from viable economic opportunities, acquire the skills and competencies necessary for their empowerment and participate in decision-making processes and in the promotion of practices aimed at eliminating gender-based inequalities and violence, including child marriage Outcome 5. By 2021, the populations in the target areas, particularly women, children and adolescents, make equitable use of quality health, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and nutrition services, as well as water, hygiene and sanitation services.
National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women in Niger (SNAEF) 2018–2022	<p>JP RWEE contributes to the five-year SNAEF including through the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: Women enjoy a socio-cultural, economic, political and legal environment conducive to economic empowerment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme 1: Strengthening a sociocultural, economic, political and legal environment conducive to women's economic empowerment Programme 2: Strengthening the knowledge and skills of women and their organizations Outcome 2: Women enjoy their rights guaranteeing access to and control over the means of production and their participation in markets and employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme 1: Strengthening women's access to and control over the means of production, processing and conservation and access to markets.
Rwanda	
Fourth Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA4)	<p>JP RWEE contributes directly to the national strategy, through these four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation and Extension Productivity and Resilience Inclusive Markets and Value Addition Enabling Environment and Responsive Institutions. <p>JP-RWEE and PSTA4 strategies are interconnected and share activities and indicators, including increasing the use of improved seeds, terracing and irrigation methods by small-scale farmers, implementing nutrition-sensitive agriculture and monitoring food and nutrition security, and facilitating private sector investment in fruit and vegetable production through the demonstration of better technologies, like greenhouses and small-scale irrigation.</p>
United Nations Development Assistance Plan I 2013–2018 (UNDAP)	<p>JP RWEE aligns to UNDAP I through these outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 2: A diversified economic base allows Rwandans to tap into & benefit from expanded international, regional and local markets, and improved agriculture value-chains

Key policy/framework	Alignment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 1.2.1: strengthened agricultural innovation and value chains, through trainings on entrepreneurship, access to trainings and equipment for agro-processing and provision of greenhouses for increasing production of high-value crops.
UNDAP II 2018–2023	<p>JP RWEE activities and outcomes are aligned with all six UNDAP II Outcome areas including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- sustainable economic growth that generates decent work • 2- equitable, sustainable and productive management of natural resources • 3- increased and equitable access to education, health, nutrition and water • 4- resilience to natural and man-made shocks • 5- enhanced gender equality • 6- increased participation of citizens in democratic and development processes.

Annex 14. Select outcome and output data

1. The following annex presents sample of outcome and output data extracted from the JP RWEE annual reports,

Select outcome indicators: JP RWEE

Table 31 Increase in the agricultural production of participating rural women since JP RWEE implementation started (Outcome 1)

	Target	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ethiopia	20% (2016)	Not available	100% wheat 125% maize	100% wheat 125% maize	100% wheat; 125% maize
Guatemala	Not available	Not available	10% maize 17% beans	10% maize 17% beans	49.5% maize 33.3% beans
Kyrgyzstan	Not available	"Up to" 70% increase	32.2%	Not available	Not available
Liberia	50% (2016)	15%	47.8%	1.5%	15% cassava 10% rice
Nepal	200% (2018) 145% (2017) 10% (2016)	129%	174%	13%	329%
Niger	Not defined due to impact of climate	80%	124.47% ground nut 64.25% cowpea 20% sesame	30%	54%
Rwanda	75% (2018) 50% (2016)	Not available	36% vegetable	Not available	Not available
Aggregated, global	Not defined	60% (approx.)	69.5%	34.1% (increase from previous year not since implementation)	127%

Red – target not met; green – target met

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2016-19

Table 32 Income generated from sales, by country (Outcome 2)

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ethiopia		USD 36,000 generated from sales of IGAs	USD 11,018 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 10,927 income generated from the sales by rural women organized in three cooperatives
Guatemala		USD 24,907 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 65,207 net income generated from sales by rural women USD 46,841 generated by community savings and credit groups	USD 128,921 income generated from sales by rural women USD 106,062 generated by community savings and credit groups

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Kyrgyzstan		USD 291,650 generated from sales by rural women cooperatives USD 144,443 generated from sales by rural women's individual businesses	USD 291,650 generated from sales by rural women cooperatives USD 144,443 generated from sales by rural women's individual businesses	USD 77,138 income generated from sales by rural women USD 17,325 generated by community savings groups
Liberia		USD 146,250 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 107,509.54 income generated from sales by rural women	
Nepal	USD 50,468 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 147,466 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 68,364.45 income generated from sales by rural women	USD 241,617 income generated from sales by rural women USD 54,618 generated by community savings groups
Niger		USD 12,779.34 in income generated by rural women's cooperatives	USD 97,000 generated by rural women's cooperatives from sales to WFP	USD 116,422 income generated by rural women's cooperatives from sales to WFP USD 32,520 generated by community savings groups.
Rwanda			USD 29,200 generated by community and savings groups	USD 168,000 income generated through the sales by rural women USD 15,842 generated by community and savings groups
Aggregated, global		USD 803,500 income generated from sales	USD 785,192 generated from sales at the individual and group levels	USD 743,025 from sales to both WFP and commercial markets

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2017-19

Table 33 Number of rural women who have generated income through sales, by country (outcome 2)

	Target	2016	2017	2018	2019
Guatemala	20 producer organizations (POs)/rural women's orgs	Not collected	Unknown number in 18 POs	Unknown number in 27 POs	2,107 people in 69 POs
Nepal	1,320	2,068	2,792	2,076	1,751
Rwanda	50%	Not collected	1,027 women and 233 men (49%)	Not collected	Not collected

Red – target not met; green – target met

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2016-19

Table 34 Proportion of rural women who are members of land committees (Outcome 3)

	Target	2017	2018	2019
Liberia	3,000	3,197	3,197	3,564
Niger	Not clear.	28 (15%)	32 (80%)	32 (80%)

Red – target not met; green – target met

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2017-19

Table 35 Proportion of POs led by women (Outcome 3)

	Target	2017	2018	2019
Guatemala	25 orgs (2017) 20% (2018) 100% (2019)	27	(100%)	69 (100%)
Nepal	5% increase from baseline	Not collected	Not collected	552 (23.7%)
Niger	80%	(77.84%)	130 (77.4%)	130 (77.4%)
Rwanda	(85%)	(67.5%)	Not collected	(83%)

Red – target not met; green – target met

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2017-19

Table 36 Evidence of rural women's empowerment in intra- household decision making (Outcome 3)

	target	2017	2018	2019
Ethiopia	60%	53%	53%	57%

Red – target not met; green – target met

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Ethiopia Annual Reports 2017-19

Select output indicators: JP RWEE

Table 37 Strengthened self-confidence and leadership skills (Outcome 3)

	Target	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ethiopia	1,300 (2017); 1,500 (2019)	60 women in 10 RUSACCOs assumed leadership positions in the 10 different committees of their cooperatives	112 rural women working in their RUSACCOs and other community institutions have improved leadership, assertiveness and management skills	112 rural women working in RUSACCOs and other community institutions strengthened their leadership, assertiveness and management skills	249 rural women strengthened their leadership, assertiveness and management skills
Guatemala	500	329 women received training on mechanisms for participation and decision making	215 people have increased knowledge on leadership, rights, project management, accountability and organizational strengthening	1,200 rural women had their capacities on human rights strengthened	
Kyrgyzstan	Unknown	93 women and men candidates to local council elections trained on leadership, participation in the elections, public speaking skills 549 people participated in round table discussions on women's leadership			
Liberia	Unknown	40 women leaders received capacity building on leadership and participation in their communities, including on constitutional review and decentralization processes	80 young rural women leaders have increased voice and agency following two strategic dialogues on leadership and participation	1,039 rural women reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence at the community level 387 rural women used awareness-raising exercises to share their knowledge of the revised sexual and gender-based violence referral pathway	500 rural women participated in sessions on adult literacy, vocational skills training, and awareness-raising of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Menstrual Hygiene Management
Nepal	1,500 (2019); Unknown 2016	3,600 participants had their organizational capacities			1,294 rural women strengthened

	Target	2016	2017	2018	2019
		strengthened through the development of leadership skills			their leadership skills
Niger	160		160 women leaders have better skills on gender, participatory communication, good governance and leadership		
Rwanda	unknown				1,043 rural farmers enhanced their self-confidence and leadership skills 79 rural farmers strengthened their cooperative management skills

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2016-19

Table 38 Participation in local governance (Outcome 3)

	Target	2017	2018	2019
Ethiopia		375 (15%) rural women participated in decision making at rural institutions and communities	375 (15%) rural women participated in decision making at rural institutions and communities	
Guatemala	25% (2019) 1,200 (2018)		1,577 rural women participated in decision making at community, district and national organizational level	240 (30%) rural women took part in decision making at the organizational level.
Kyrgyzstan	multi	21 (18%) of rural women participated in Association of Water Users Associations and Pasture Committees 60 rural women leaders participated in the process of local planning and budgeting 12 joint local government-communities' initiatives (benefiting 12,549 people, including 6,726	33 rural women leaders participated in the process of local planning and budgeting 13 joint local government-community initiatives benefited 12,549 community members (6,726 women and 5,823 men).	80 rural women leaders participated in the process of local planning and budgeting

	Target	2017	2018	2019
		women) organized, addressing specific needs of rural women		
Rwanda	unknown		129 rural women in targeted areas took leadership positions in village committees	

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports and Country Annual Reports 2017-19

Table 39 Examples of evidence generated at country-level (Outcome 4)

Year	Activities
2016	<p>Desk review on Drudgery Reduction for Women in the Agriculture Sector conducted in Nepal</p> <p>Gap Assessment on the Capacities of Farmers/Pastoralist Training Centers conducted In Ethiopia</p> <p>Desk review on Workload distribution between men and women in the agriculture sector conducted in Nepal</p> <p>Assessment on Women Friendly Agricultural Products, Technologies and Income Generating Activities and Market Opportunities conducted In Ethiopia</p> <p>Women's role in Decision-making in farm operations analytical knowledge product produced In Nepal</p> <p>Women's empowerment in agriculture index (WEAI) survey conducted in Niger and Ethiopia</p>
2017	<p>Research conducted in Ethiopia on "Costing the Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in Ethiopia" and "Budget Tracking of the Agriculture Sector from a Gender Perspective" to highlight the gaps in resource allocation for gender equality</p> <p>In Liberia two studies conducted on the Status of Women in Cross-border Trade and on the Status of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLAs). These were summarized as policy briefs</p>
2018	None
2019	<p>Three evidence-based studies were finalized in Ethiopia (Cost of gender gap in agricultural productivity, Policy brief on agricultural mechanization and Gender Profile)</p> <p>Midline data collection of WEIA Index took place in Ethiopia</p> <p>Two evidence-based studies were finalized in Ethiopia (Gender analysis of the financial and bean value chains).</p>

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports

Table 40 Global and regional processes promoting rural women's priorities (Outcome 4)

Year	Activity
2015	<p>A collaboration established with Empowerwomen.org to create a dedicated space for JP RWEE</p> <p>FAO Knowledge Share Fair "Rural Women's Economic Empowerment", organized in Rome, which promoted South-South exchange and learning (December 2015)</p>
2016	<p>Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence held at WFP</p> <p>Side event organized during the 60th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (March 2016)</p>

	High-Level Event on Rural Women in FAO
2017	<p>Side event organized during the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (March 2017) presenting the unique strengths of the JP RWEE in closing the gender gaps that make rural women work in vulnerable, low-paid, or undervalued jobs</p> <p>Participation of the Global Coordinator in the Expert Group Meeting on “Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All”, organized in New York by UNDESA (May 2017)</p> <p>Participation in a seminar attended by the Italian Press held in Rome in the framework of an event on Rome-based agency collaboration, showcasing RWEE as an example of best practice (May 2017)</p>
2018	<p>Two side events organized as part of the awareness-raising work around rural women’s issues and priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 62nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in New York City in March 2018 • 45th session of the Committee on World Food Security, held in Rome in October 2018
2019	<p>One side event organized at the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (March 2019) as part of the awareness-raising work around rural women’s issues and priorities</p>

Source: Global Consolidated Annual Reports

Annex 15. Summary of lessons learned by country

Table 41 Selected lessons learned, by country

DAC Criteria	Lessons learned
Ethiopia	
Coherence	<p>Consultative meetings with ALL government partners, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups in the initial design of the programme, and through annual planning, is vital in ensuring a shared vision and synergy in programme implementation.</p> <p>Joint Programming between UN agencies and partners creates an integrated and holistic approach to addressing rural women's economic empowerment, combining the comparative advantages and expertise of participating agencies, and adding value to national development interventions.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>High-level ministerial support is important for gaining momentum and support for the programme from the outset.</p> <p>Strengthening and organizing women into legally recognized cooperatives, providing access to revolving funds, seeds, and other inputs and technical support is key for accelerating rural women's economic empowerment in Ethiopia.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Despite taking time, investing in the partnership with regional governments, including setting up governance structures for coordination and joint delivery at regional level, has been key to sustainability of the programme in Ethiopia.</p>
Guatemala	
Relevance	<p>Design needs to include strong implication and consultation at the country level and address how complementarity will work in practice.</p> <p>Expertise in gender mainstreaming is essential for technical follow-up and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).</p> <p>Monitoring needs to be planned during design. Making visible the processes and results at all levels is essential to buy-in by partners.</p>
Coherence	<p>A degree of "like-mindedness" on gender equality and women's empowerment is essential for a partnership of this kind to work.</p> <p>Attention at the design phase to comparative advantages is essential and needs to be linked to the ToC.</p> <p>Multi-annual funding is key to coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.</p> <p>Corporate level attention and strong leadership are essential to avoiding competition between agencies.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>It is critical to have monitoring indicators to measure how the involvement in the programme affects the workload of women.</p> <p>It is extremely important to work on the construction of the identity of the programme. This identity must be a commitment of the institutions that are part of joint actions.</p> <p>The programme has had a significant role in making empowerment understood. However, an opportunity was missed to meaningfully integrate men, which only started to be done more recently. The "New Masculinities" methodology shows promise in this regard and can be an important part of future programme/phases.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Monitoring jointness to avoid overburdening women and improve use of resources is essential.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Stronger involvement of local partners and government at the district level has been key to fostering sustainability.</p>

DAC Criteria	Lessons learned
	<p>Organizational strengthening for the women's groups is key to sustainability.</p> <p>Women's vulnerability affects the sustainability of results. What happens once the programme ends needs to be taken into account in the planning of activities.</p> <p>It is key to link training to concrete actions in which newfound capacity can be put to use.</p> <p>It is important to link community production initiatives to the private sector.</p> <p>Multi-annual funding is critical for sustainability.</p>
Kyrgyzstan	
Coherence	<p>A joint strategy for selection criteria is necessary from the start of implementation to ensure input from all agencies is aligned.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>There are significant benefits of the four agencies bringing together their respective mandates, resources, and networks to bring about results for rural women.</p> <p>Synergy between agencies must translate into synergy on the ground, with mechanisms for coordination between implementing partners in order to ensure benefits of joint programming.</p> <p>The Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology leads to important changes in building personal skills and self-confidence, as well as transformation of gender dynamics.</p> <p>Self Help Groups (SHGs) are important for creating a support network for women, and supporting the development of communication skills, confidence and leadership skills.</p> <p>Turnover of key staff involved in the JP RWEE risks impeding close coordination, long-term vision, and sustained engagement with government for policy-level work.</p> <p>A practical approach for training on agro-technologies is successful and allows for experience sharing between rural women.</p>
Efficiency	<p>Joint programming produces efficiency gains through shared coordination and by reducing duplication.</p> <p>Annual funding cycles and planning prevent programme staff from concentrating on the longer-term vision of the programme.</p> <p>Annual funding cycles, as opposed to multi-year funding, provide limited security for programme staff and therefore are more likely to result in a high staff turnover.</p>
Sustainability	<p>To ensure sustainability of SHGs, social mobilization needs to be done through participatory processes that focus on commitment to the programme and potential in activities, including business.</p>
Liberia	
Coherence	<p>For a successful joint programme, it is important to develop a coherent approach from the outset. All agencies should be involved in joint planning and targeting to ensure integrated activities and a shared vision for the programme. It is difficult to do this subsequently.</p> <p>Building synergies with other joint programmes and development programmes can increase the success of the programme.</p> <p>It is important to ensure synergy on the ground, with mechanisms for coordination between implementing partners to ensure benefits of joint programming.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Programmes focusing on agricultural productivity must be carefully planned to align with seasonality.</p> <p>The inclusion of men in the initial planning and mobilization, as well as in processes throughout the programme, is important in the success of a programme targeting rural women.</p> <p>It is essential to invest in knowledge management with more critical analysis of results to draw technical lessons.</p>

DAC Criteria	Lessons learned
Efficiency	<p>By having the focal points of all agencies working closely together within one building, efficiencies are realized.</p> <p>Joint programming reduces operational costs due to management efficiencies and cost-effective use of resources.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are community-owned and community-driven and are important for ensuring the sustainability of JP RWEE beyond the programme lifespan.</p> <p>Investing in Government of Liberia ownership at the sub-national level in implementation of activities will contribute to sustainability.</p>
Nepal	
Relevance	<p>JP RWEE in Nepal is closely aligned to national agricultural policy, and this has proven key to winning government ownership of the programme as a whole.</p> <p>Responding to the needs of women ensures that activities remain relevant in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
Coherence	<p>It is important to invest in team building between UN agency and actors in field at the onset of the programme and to establish clear lines of communication.</p> <p>Involving ministries, decentralized services, and municipalities is important in ensuring external coherence of programme activities.</p> <p>All UN agencies working together accelerates and amplifies the results of the programme.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Addressing the needs of rural women is key to the success and effectiveness of the programme.</p> <p>There is a need to be flexible and to adapt activities as needs change, for example in response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Contrary to the findings in other country programmes, working only with women can deliver results in some activities as has been demonstrated in Nepal. However, engaging with men and boys is necessary and important.</p> <p>Support for small farmers can be enhanced by being linked to the market. For example, in Nepal having a site location close to the market helped to develop access to these markets.</p> <p>There is a need to better understand social diversity: not all women have the same needs and programme activities should be tailored to those specific needs.</p>
Efficiency	<p>It is essential to secure an adequate budget before the start of the programme to ensure programme activities are achievable within the budget available.</p> <p>Activities should be designed first and used to define budget needs. Scope and reach of activities may need to be adapted but the defined budget should not be used to design activities.</p> <p>Clear management roles (such as who is leading coordination, or external liaison, or who is responsible for M&E) should be defined at the start.</p> <p>It needs to be better understood what works and at what cost so learning can be applied to future phases or other contexts.</p> <p>It is necessary to develop a more context relevant reporting template (including for example, caste/ethnicity) otherwise key learning data will not be captured.</p> <p>It is important to invest in knowledge management with further critical analysis of results to draw out technical lessons.</p>
Sustainability	<p>It is necessary to build relationships between delivery partners.</p>

DAC Criteria	Lessons learned
	<p>Linkages between local actors should be increased/strengthened, for example local municipalities, line agencies, cooperatives or community-based organizations to better promote sustainability of activities.</p> <p>An increase the quality of products (transformation, packaging, marketing, hygiene) has a large effect on economic empowerment in the longer-term.</p> <p>Links to the market and private sector would strengthen sustainability.</p>
Niger	
Relevance	<p>The participatory approach promoted through the Dimitra Clubs has allowed rural women to identify and express their needs, thus helping agencies to develop relevant interventions.</p> <p>Alignment with government priorities and the needs of rural women ensures high relevance of the programme activities.</p>
Coherence	<p>The importance of good coordination between all players (UN agencies, service delivery partners, local authorities, line agencies) is key to the delivery of high quality and impactful activities.</p> <p>Promoting listening and talking through the clubs and also between all actors ensures participants are able to influence the direction of the programme.</p> <p>The importance of involving ministries, decentralized services, and municipalities ensure external coherence of activities.</p> <p>All agencies working together accelerates and amplifies economic empowerment results.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>It is important to ensure good coordination between agencies and implementing partners to deliver inputs in a sequential and logical way.</p> <p>Women have the solutions to their problems; it suffices to empower them by developing dialogue and fostering reflection such as has been done through the Dimitra Clubs.</p> <p>It is necessary to engage more actively from the outset of the programme in developing advocacy material to enable lobbying at policy level.</p>
Efficiency	Multi-year funding needs to be secured to ensure continuity of activities.
Sustainability	<p>The participation of key players at national level (local government, line agencies, community-based organisations) is important for future adoption of activities and/or scaling up to reach more women or into new areas.</p> <p>There needs to be a period of reflection and learning on which tools/approaches deliver the best results and that will help consolidate programme outputs.</p>
Rwanda	
Relevance	A strong focus on stakeholder involvement in design is essential.
Coherence	<p>Technical coordination at national level has worked well but monitoring of progress on “jointness” is essential.</p> <p>The role of coordinator is a critical and should be full-time.</p> <p>Multi-annual funding is key to coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Activities should be concentrated in a small area to ensure effective layering of support. It is also important to ensure that coverage is wide enough to be convincing.</p> <p>Methodologies that focus on behaviour change at community level are key.</p> <p>M&E needs to be flexible, and to have sufficient funding and technical support.</p> <p>It is critical to have monitoring indicators to measure how involvement in the programme affects the workload of women.</p>

DAC Criteria	Lessons learned
Efficiency	<p>Stronger coordination and bottom-up planning could produce efficiency gains by reducing duplication.</p> <p>The effectiveness of coordination and jointness (and provision of guidance to IP) should be monitored to avoid overburdening rights holders and to improve the use of resources.</p> <p>Allocation of resources should be based on the activities on plans.</p>
Sustainability	<p>Women's vulnerability affects the sustainability of results, as women face more individual barriers to training attendance, knowledge transfer and subsequent integration.</p> <p>Involvement of local NGOs and the Government at district level are key to sustainability.</p> <p>A clear vision of sustainability needs to guide the efforts of the programme from the start and in a second phase.</p>

Annex 16. Thematic case-study: Niger



Please note that this case-study for Niger has been produced as a standalone dissemination product, with graphics/images. This annex includes the text for the product only.

About the programme

The Rural Women Economic Empowerment programme (known officially as the ‘Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women; JP RWEE) is a global initiative that aims to secure livelihoods and rights for rural women. The programme is jointly implemented the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Women (UNW), and the World Food Programme (WFP) and is currently being implemented in seven countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda.

In Niger, the RWEE has been working in four villages in two of the most vulnerable areas of the country: Dosso and Maradi. The programme in Niger has been hugely successful, thanks in no small part to the ability of the four agencies to work in line with Niger’s national priorities, and work alongside the local communities. Furthermore, the ability of the four implementing agencies to leverage their individual strengths and comparative advantages have strengthened the impact of the project activities and helped ensure the success of the RWEE in Niger.

Working alongside Niger’s National Policy Framework

Right from the start, the RWEE contributed to and aligned with Niger’s National policy framework – in particular, with the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Ministry of Agriculture. The RWEE activities were written in sync with the country’s national development strategy priorities for nutrition, women’s economic empowerment, and the National 3N Policy (les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens; ‘Nigeriens feed Nigeriens’). Government services supported the selection of the regions where the activities are taking place which has further helped ensure that the programme is aligned with the Nigerien government priorities.

The collaboration between the UN agencies and the Nigerien national priorities helped ensure a commitment to the project at the regional level and establish a working relationship between regional services and the implementing agencies. This has helped raise the profile and reputation of the four agencies within the local community and alongside local partners.

Agency collaboration

The RWEE programme is successful because of the ability of each agency to leverage their strengths, bring their own expertise, and work together towards a common goal. Each agency in the RWEE contributes according to their expertise and their mandate: FAO provided seeds, IFAD supplied animal husbandry kits (for example, the expertise and training needed to breed the goats provided from the goat or ruminant kits), UNW contributed multifunction platforms (a diesel engine with various associated tools that can be used to complete household tasks like grinding grains, pumping water, or charging electric goods, among others) and built up the support and strength of local farmer organizations, while WFP established demand for the agricultural outputs through the school feeding programmes. The shared expertise supported the intervention, but also allowed each organization to learn from one another – and, by extension, to use that knowledge elsewhere. For example, UNW gained valuable experience and knowledge in rural agriculture, while IFAD, FAO, and WFP benefitted from the strengthening of key gender concepts and policy making.

From the ground up

At the time that efforts were being made to ensure that the activities aligned with Nigerien government priorities and complemented the work of the participating UN bodies, the agencies consulted with people living in the very communities that the RWEE programme sought to serve. Dimitra clubs – group meetings developed by the FAO to promote reflection and dialogue – created a safe space where women, men, and young people could speak about the challenges they saw in their community. Gradually, the community members identified their most pressing needs, which were then brought to and discussed first with community groups, and then again with the local authorities.

Using the Dimitra clubs ensured that all levels of the community were involved in the planning and gave equal weight to all voices. Women-only Dimitra groups build a sense of community among the attendees, while general Dimitra groups increase awareness about the increasing social empowering of women in the RWEE programme. This contributed to the success of this programme in Niger.

“The Clubs have opened our eyes to ourselves and we have abandoned early marriage and the marriage of girls during schooling,” says one attendee. “Today, in the classes of our village, there are more girls than boys.”

Source: JP RWEE joint monitoring informant, Dosso, 2020

Coordination at the national level

A programme of this scale required high-level coordination between the UN agencies, the Nigerien government, and the communities involved in the programme. This coordination was run by the National Coordinator, an independent position employed by the lead agency in Niger, but who worked exclusively for the RWEE programme. As a representative for the entire programme, the National Coordinator could ensure that they didn't have competing priorities for their time from the different implementing agencies.

The National Coordinator was responsible for coordinating the programme implementation through the National Steering Committee (NSC; a group that included government ministries), and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC; made up of members from the four agencies and the service providers). These two committees were vital to ensuring the technical quality of the programme and its coherence with the different strategies. In addition to project management, report writing, and budget management responsibilities, the National Coordinator was tasked with ensuring that the NSC and the TAC were clearly and consistently communicating with each other. This helped ensure that the strategies continued to strengthen one another.

Coordination brings real results

Since its start in 2012, the Niger RWEE programme directly sought to feed into the Government of Niger's efforts to improve women's empowerment, and food and nutrition security. It managed to achieve just this, directly reaching 25,609 people, and indirectly serving 16,000 others – the majority of whom were women.

This programme was successful because of the coordinated efforts on behalf of all parties to collaborate, leverage existing strengths, and work in the best interests of the communities being served. By aligning directly within the Nigerien priorities and completing work that directly complemented the efforts of the participating agencies, the four implementing bodies were able to establish programmes that supported both these initiatives and rural communities. This in turn helped ensure buy-in from regional actors, while coordination with the communities on the ground ensured that the actions were appropriate, realistic, and based on need. Finally, coordination between the FAO, IFAD, UNW, and WFP enabled resource and knowledge sharing that benefitted the entire programme.

By combining technical training, education, government training, the building up of procurement and market systems, and supporting local authorities with gender-responsive planning and budgeting, this programme did just that. The most striking results are seen at the institutional and organizational level, but this has also led to tangible results on the ground.

For example, ruminant kits (also referred to as goat kits, in which women are provided with goat, livestock feed, and training on how to milk, breed, and sell the goats) enabled women participating in the programme to

reinvest the earnings they garnered directly back into their family's wellbeing.⁷⁴ Women were able to purchase more diverse food items (42%), pay for health services (15%), and provide schooling for their children, including for uniforms and supplies (8%).⁷⁵ They have also helped rural women improve their skills in goat rearing, milling, welding, and small mechanical repairs.

The multifunction platforms, meanwhile, helped lighten household tasks: 97% of women interviewed reported a lightening of their workload, while 69% declared having increased income, and 54% reported that they were more aware of the health status of their children, having more information and awareness of sound hygiene practices.

The multifunction platforms also helped produce products such as oils or flour, which adds value to products, diversifies diets, and helps bring in more family income. This has had an effect on nutrition and food security – something that is vitally important in a country where around 20% of the population are food insecure.⁷⁶

At the same time, the process for the production of oils and flour created opportunities for women to become millers, something that was previously unheard. Youth also get opportunities for new skills, which can help reduce migration.

At a community level, the revolving goat scheme – in which goats from the ruminant kits are shared in the community in order to allow other women to breed from them – increases incomes and opens up opportunities for decentralized agriculture and veterinary services, both of which will increase as livestock husbandry grows. These services are now more utilized and active than before, and more motivated to work with farmer groups. For their part, the structure of the farming groups has increased confidence, developed more savings, and provides access to cheaper credit and collective bargaining power for the purchase of essential items like seeds and farming equipment.

The school feeding programmes, meanwhile, have increased nutritional outcomes for children.

What the communities have to say

"Before the project I was always between my home and my parents' home because we always had arguments with my husband, but since then I learned to transform products and generate resources, no more hassle. We are in perfect harmony."

Source: A female participant in the JP RWEE programme in Niger.

"I was a regular and even permanent migrant, but when I learned modern cultivation techniques with the farmer field school, I stopped the migration and stayed because I earn more than when I work elsewhere. In the same field, I am harvesting more than ten times the equivalent of my pre-project crops. Also, with the restoration of degraded land, I manage to cultivate land that my parents and grandparents were not able to develop for me."

Source: A male participant in the JP RWEE programme in Niger

The power of empowerment

The economic empowerment of women in rural Niger has had a huge impact on women's status within the community and individual households. The women supported through this programme are less dependent on their husbands, able to contribute to the household economy (both financially and in decision-making) and are reporting less tension in the home.

Significantly, data has also shown that communities involved in the RWEE showed a greater resilience to the impact of COVID restrictions. Through their participation in programme activities and the coordinated layering of the various intervention strategies between the four participating agencies, the resources acquired made it possible to meet the household food needs, even if there was little surplus to sell. Dimitra clubs established social networks and solidarity. Income generated with the various collective activities provided access to

⁷⁴ JP RWEE, 2018e

⁷⁵ JP RWEE, 2020i

⁷⁶ WFP, 2021

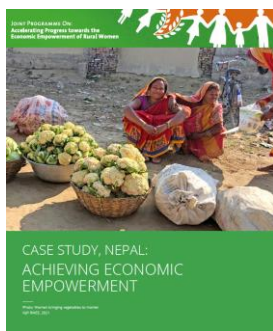
savings and credit, and cash was available without having to sell animals whose price had fallen. Additionally, an increase in cereals helped reduce the impact of the pandemic on household food supplies.

The amount of income earned has not yet brought households out of poverty; however, there is an undeniable momentum that will carry these continued activities forward – and indeed, has already spread to other communities. Nearby villages have requested the goat kits, new participants have been inducted into the revolving goat schemes, and more women are involved in innovating and approaching their municipality for support. Most importantly, they are proud to be independent and want to be even more active – which, in turn, motivates field teams from delivery partners who can see the advantage of working together.

Sustainability

The stakeholders were confident that the programme's behavioral changes will continue after cessation of support. There is evidence of transformation on the ground, clear social empowerment, and signs of economic empowerment. This includes the skills acquired to operate and maintain multifunctional platforms, knowledge, and resource sharing in relation to the goat kits. There is also a sense of collective assertion.

Annex 17. Thematic case-study: Nepal



Please note that this case-study for Nepal has been produced as a standalone dissemination product, with graphics/images. This annex includes the text for the product only.

About the programme

The Rural Women Economic Empowerment programme (known officially as the 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women; JP RWEE) is a global initiative that aims to secure livelihoods and rights for rural women. The programme is jointly implemented the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Women (UNW), and the World Food Programme (WFP) and is currently being implemented in seven countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal Niger, and Rwanda.

In Nepal, the JP RWEE has been supporting rural women farmers' groups in two districts: Rautahat and Sarlahi. The JP RWEE programme in Nepal collaborated closely with local government institutions and set out to achieve three objectives:

- Improve food and nutrition security;
- Increase income to secure the livelihoods of rural women; and,
- Enhance women's leadership and participation in public life and decision making.

To meet these objectives, the JP RWEE made sure that the programme activities complemented each other and built momentum throughout the intervention. It achieved this by providing agricultural training, developing leadership and entrepreneurship skills, creating demand for agricultural outputs, and ensuring that the women knew their rights. Working together, all of these actions supported the economic empowerment of rural women in Nepal.

'I have realized that you cannot always be dependent on your husband, but you are able to do anything and should do it, even through your household.'

Source: Female participant from Sarlahi

Farmer groups and social engagement

The programme began with the establishment of farmers groups (a technique developed by the FAO) that were socially, culturally, and religiously diverse, made up of women from the Janjati (25%), Dalit (10%), Muslim (4.8%), Madhesi (50%), and Brahim and Chhetry (9.3%). Farmer groups act as an entry point for training programmes and innovation. The ultimate aim is for these groups to evolve into cooperatives, which would allow community members to request support from the municipality on the behalf of the cooperative members.

Complementary actions

The four implementing agencies worked together to establish and run the JP RWEE in a way that compounded the success of all areas of programming.

FAO set up the farmers groups and provided each group with improved seeds and polytunnels (plastic hooped tunnels that operate on the same principle as a greenhouse) that could be used to grow vegetables

outside of the traditional growing season. IFAD introduced the Gender Action and Learning System (GALs) methodology for mobilizing and empowering women. UNW conducted leadership skills development training and provided awareness raising campaigns to help ensure participants knew their rights. At the same time, WFP organized the construction of storage centres, created employment opportunities for the most vulnerable women, and developed nutrition improvement plans for schools.

Successes in one area were fed into and were amplified into the success of other programming areas, creating forward momentum for the programming as it continued. Once farmer groups were established, five additional actions help establish momentum for the success of the JP RWEE.

Adopting innovative farming techniques to increase vegetable production

Introducing innovative farming techniques to the farmer groups helped increase vegetable production, which could in turn be sold for profit. For example, in 2018 the FAO introduced polytunnels to communities participating in the farming group programme. These polytunnels were then adopted by non-programme farmers living in the same district, thereby increasing vegetable production and leading to higher incomes across entire communities.

Creating market demand for vegetables

As innovative farming techniques were being introduced, the JP RWEE has provided training in quality testing, collective production, and marketing of produce within local communities. This has helped create demand for the vegetables grown by the participants on the farming programme – which, in turn, has led to increased profits for the individual farmers, with additional positive impacts for their families.

Impact Story 1: Maiya

Maiya, 34, is a keen farmer and the chairperson of a women's farming group supported by JP RWEE. She and her husband live in Sarlahi district with their three children: one daughter, and two sons.

Maiya has been an active member in her local farmer's group since its inception, helping form the group, establish a plant nursery, and transplanting seedlings, and harvesting the crops. She has also taken an active role in more administrative tasks, such as chairing group meetings, coordinating activities, and marketing. Through her participation in the farming groups, Maiya learned more efficient methods for growing fresh, commercial vegetables on her land, including chili, tomato, cucumber, aubergines, gourds, cauliflower, and cabbage.

Together with her farming group, Maiya created a marketing campaign for their groups produce in the local market. In 2019, Maiya earned an impressive 400,000 Nepali Rupees (approx. USD 3,450) selling her vegetables. Her income enabled her family to purchase a motorbike so she could take her produce to the market. When schools closed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, she was able to purchase a phone for her son so he could keep up with his online classes. The additional income has benefitted Maiya's entire family and helped ensure that her son's education was only minimally impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Women in Maiya's farming group understand that commercial production of vegetables means increased earnings, which increase empowerment. Through her involvement in JP RWEE, Maiya has developed leadership skills and has the confidence to make decisions that impact her family and her community for the first time in her life.

Increased contributions, increased confidence

Increased production of vegetables has led to new and higher sources of income. Women contribute more to household economy, which in turn increases the status of the women in the family and builds confidence. This increase in confidence, development of leadership skills, and contribution to the household economy shows the community that women are able and capable to work and lead. In turn, the municipalities have a clear reason to invest in women.

Addressing the totality of needs is key

At the same time that farmer training activities were being carried out, the GALs programme – which focused on engaging members of the farmers group – carried out training on self-awareness, helping women identify the barriers in their lives that were holding them back from achieving their goals, and seek out those who could support their journey. This has helped participants develop the skills and confidence needed to support

their livelihood activities. One important issue – women’s mobility – has even made it to local politics: ‘We knew that we had to be involved in the planning process at ward level,’ said one participant in Sarlahi. ‘We had to approve it from ward assembly and then it goes to municipality for budget allocation.’

By addressing the totality of needs – not just providing training on how to grow more vegetables, but ensuring the confidence and knowledge was in place to ensure those vegetables could reach customers in the local markets – has helped ensure that women are aware of their rights and have an equal opportunity to earn a living and provide for their families.

Impact Story 2: Beli

Beli, 30, lives with her husband and his family. She joined a JP RWEE supported farmers group and began attending training meetings, learning how to use polytunnels, store produce, and market vegetables in her local community to ensure there would be a demand for their outputs.

As Beli began selling vegetables, her income and her confidence grew. She began to seek leadership opportunities, taking on the secretary position with her local farming group and teaching her in-laws how to grow vegetables. With the encouragement of her brother-in-law, Beli decided to go one step further. With local elections coming up, she decided to run for a leadership role in her municipality.

Using the skills and confidence she gained from being a part of the JP RWEE women’s group, Beli campaigned for her seat. She won the trust of her community – and was elected to the ward! She is now a serving member in her local government, helping to form decisions that will impact her entire community.

Working together with the Government of Nepal

The policy context in Nepal has been an added advantage to the success of the JP RWEE. Economic empowerment is a key priority of the Government of Nepal, which has added a sense of ownership over the JP RWEE programme, with local government supporting the initiatives taken by the farmer groups.

For example, public hearings have taken place between rural women farmers and the local government. In one case, the local government provided the farmer group with land so they could create more farmer groups and include more women in the programme. Local governments have also provided additional technical and agricultural inputs to the farmer groups, thereby helping to ensure that women’s access to markets and more sustainable livelihoods are assured.

Achievements worth celebrating

The complementary nature of the intervention means that the effects of the activities are amplified across the JP RWEE programme.

The women taking part in the farming groups have gained confidence and status both within the community and within their own families, and there is a significant increase in women’s social and interpersonal skills. For example, women feel they are more comfortable with speaking, sharing, and educating themselves on farming and food consumption practices. The increase in vegetables has also led to better nutrition for entire families, which has decreased both ill health, and expenditure of household income on health-related services.

‘We eat more vegetables than before, children are not falling ill frequently, we spend less money for treatment due to adopting good hygiene and the balanced diet.’

Source: Farmer group participant in Rautahat

At the same time, the women’s empowerment programme has allowed the women to acquire new social skills, and – significantly – to read and write their own names. This means that women who were previously uneducated can, at a minimum, spell their names, understand how to sell and handle cash transactions, and sign paper documents.

Having learned new farming techniques, the participants in the farming groups are able to sell surplus produce for a profit of between 500 – 1,000 Nepali Rupees (NRs) a day (around USD 4.30 – 8.60). Depending on the season, the women themselves report that they can sometimes make as much as NRs 10,000 (roughly USD 86). With women earning more income, they have taken on a leadership role the family. Importantly, they

have stopped discriminating between boy and girl children, and their access to education, health care, food, and nutrition.

Impact Story 3: Chameli

Chameli earned NRs 10,000.00 (USD 87.67) at the beginning of the programme. Now, she is earning NRs. 150,000.00 (USD 1,316) per season from selling of fresh vegetables. Her family is also benefitting from extra income of NRs 40,000.00 (USD 350.70) through cereal production, like rice and wheat, which they learnt from Chameli under the JP RWEE. Earlier, her husband used to work in India as a seasonal labour worker, and now he is working hard in their farm at home. The efforts of this woman, after her enrollment in the training provided under the JP RWEE is bringing home a reliable source of income. This enables her to engage more in the family level decision-making process which was almost unheard of before.

During focus group sessions, the husbands of the women participating in the farming groups reported that they felt that their wives' involvement in the programme had had a positive impact on their home. Inside the home, they reported taking on increased roles in household chores, seeking opportunities to work in agriculture, and said they had stopped looking for migrant work opportunities. They also reported that their wives were less apprehensive about taking on new tasks in the community, seeking education opportunities for farming businesses, and earning money for their own livelihoods. This has led to growing support community for the improvement of women's status in the village.

A clear transformation is happening.

Annex 18. Global case-study. Institutionally strengthening community-based groups



Please note that this global case-study has been produced as a standalone dissemination product, with graphics/images. This annex includes the text for the product only.

The Rural Women Economic Empowerment programme (known officially as the ‘Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women; JP RWEE) is a global initiative that aims to secure livelihoods and rights for rural women. The programme is jointly implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Women (UNW), and the World Food Programme (WFP). The JP RWEE is currently being implemented in seven countries: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger, and Rwanda.

Generating momentum: The importance of engaging with community groups

The goal of the JP RWEE is to secure rural women’s livelihoods and rights in the context of sustainable development goals, and to tackle inequality in the economic sphere. To achieve these goals, the JP RWEE has taken an active approach to investing in community groups in all seven countries where the programme is being implemented. This has been a key strategy in providing support to women living in remote communities.

In Guatemala, strengthening community groups created positive forward momentum for the support of indigenous rural women’s economic development. Indigenous women in the programme area suffer from high levels of violence, poverty and malnutrition and are marginalized from services. By supporting community groups in rural settings – such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), farmer groups, self-help groups, and artisanal cooperatives – the JP RWEE was able to engage directly with group members to offer interagency support such as trainings to improve productivity and increase knowledge and skills (including on nutrition), provision of timesaving technologies, and the establishment of community savings and credit.

Activities carried out at the group level led to important results in Guatemala, including higher crop yields, more marketable products, and the increased availability of loans. Evidence from JP RWEE annual reports in Guatemala show that the total income from groups’ entrepreneurial activities grew from USD 48,220 in 2016 to USD 128,921 in 2019. Focus group participants also reported that higher incomes gave them the opportunity to think beyond immediate food security and subsistence needs and focus on longer-term goals, such as educating their children or improving their family’s quality of life. Community groups offered moral, financial, strategic, and business support to put these plans into motion. Alongside these successes, the strengthened groups were motivated to become formalized entities, enabling participants to build linkages to new markets and access existing services offered by Government or NGOs. The JP RWEE supports groups throughout these processes of legalization and formalization.

‘There are many benefits we have had of participating in the partnership and savings group. We have learned how to manage our money better and to plan what to do with our income. For example: we want our daughters to study so they have a profession, not like us; we didn’t have any education. We strive so our family has better health and nutrition. We have learned to care about ourselves, thanks to the training we receive we know more about our sexuality, our rights, and the nutrition we must have.’

Source: Community group participant from field notes in Guatemala (translated)

Mobilizing community credit and savings groups

A key tool that the JP RWEE has used to promote women's economic empowerment, notably in Rwanda, Liberia, and Guatemala, is the establishment and strengthening of community savings and credit through VSLAs. This informal microfinance scheme – in which group members pool funds to lend to one another or invest in their communities – enable those with limited access to formal financial services to establish an economic activity on a scale that would not otherwise be possible. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) baseline (2015) highlighted a lack of access to credit as one of the chief constraints on rural women, highlighting the importance of community savings and loans schemes.. Within the JP RWEE, this tool has helped women in programme-supported groups to finance small enterprises and access emergency funds when needed.

In Guatemala, IFAD's Sustainable Rural Development Programme for the Northern Region (PRODENORTE) supported more than 150 savings and credit groups during its implementation between 2008 – 2020, and provided a framework for the formation and scale-up of these groups by the other implementing organizations. Such was the success of the scheme that from 2016, in collaboration with PRODENORTE, activities to strengthen indigenous women's savings groups were integrated directly into the JP RWEE.

The support of the VSLAs has produced tangible results. Data reported in JP RWEE Guatemala Annual Reports shows that total savings grew from USD 12,043 across 26 groups in 2017, to 106,062 across 46 groups in 2019. In several JP RWEE country programmes, participants reported enhanced self-esteem, and identified links between capacity building activities in community groups, and enhanced leadership and participation in decision-making.

'That is why the economic empowerment is so important, because women have recently begun to make decisions, small or large. The important thing is that they are always subject to making decisions about the things that affect their life.'

Source: Local government stakeholder, Guatemala (translated)

- In **Guatemala**, members of community groups noted that they felt more able to participate and voice their concerns in community development councils as a result of their activities within the group. Women also reported that men are more understanding and engaged in decision making.
- Participants in **Rwanda** reported feeling more confident when consulting with husbands and male relatives, particularly on household spending. Women also said they have more confidence in taking out loans, acquiring formal land rights, and developing businesses.
- The 2018 evaluation of the programme in **Ethiopia** found that 108 rural women had assumed positions in the administration, audit, control and loan committees of their cooperatives, whereas at baseline no woman was found to be holding such a position.

Getting Voices Heard: Adopting the Participatory Approach

Engaging with community groups also offered JP RWEE to adopt different participatory approaches to engage with all members of a community. This ensured that each group was given an opportunity to speak out about issues that affected them.

Dimitra clubs have been widely used in Niger to promote reflection and dialogue among members of a community. First developed by the FAO, Dimitra clubs are made up of 20-25 members supported by a local facilitator. The clubs – organized into men, women, and youth – meet regularly to discuss the challenges they face, and identify possible solutions. The results of these discussions from each individual group are then brought to a community level, where group leaders collectively share the outcomes and possible solutions with local authorities or project partners. Dimitra clubs are also used as a port-of-call for interventions: for example, agricultural training is provided to all members, and groups can select participants to receive additional support (for example, the women's groups may choose specific members to attend leadership training). The Dimitra approach is key to providing a safe space for men, women, and young people to speak about the challenges they see in their community.

Community Conversations, first developed by the WFP, are integral to engagement in Ethiopia. Exercise-based conversations examine the distribution of household work between men and women. For example, men are asked to list the household and farm activities of men and women, then attach a monetary value to each. This helps create an appreciation for the contributions that women make to the household economy. These activities have led to shifts at community level in attitudes about men and women's work, with increasing support given to the women's engagement in leadership roles.

The **Global Action and Learning System (GALS)** is a community-led empowerment approach based on the principles of social justice, gender justice, inclusion, and mutual respect. Using visual tools and participatory processes, GALS teaches participants to negotiate their needs and interests and identify innovative and gender equitable solutions to household and livelihood planning. The approach uses visual material and tools to enable people to start thinking about their current situation and visual changes needed for their future. The JP RWEE has used GALS in Rwanda, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Guatemala, and Nepal.

GALS successes from around the world

- IFAD introduced GALS in **Kyrgyzstan**, where it is now rolled out by a local JP RWEE partner through a Training of Trainers model. Local community champions are trained to strengthen existing self-help groups and provide training on agricultural production and small business development. The champions are provided with ongoing refresher training and mentoring, which have proved essential to ensuring the GALS implementation is as strong and effective as possible.
- The GALS approach was introduced in **Rwanda** in 2016, with 16 staff from 10 implementing partners being trained. An additional 119 GALS champions were trained in 2017; around 40 percent of them were men. GALS created a space for women to engage more with household decision-making processes.

'The Joint Programme is important to us because it has meant a way to change our lives. Because we feel safer to start undertaking and we also have the recognition of our husbands and families to do so. We did not know about sexuality or rights, nor of a way to make money and also contribute to our family, not just the men. Giving us this opportunity, so that we can express ourselves and decide also in our lives the changes we need, is something that has been very important, and the joint programme has given it to us. We have received a lot of training that has taught us to work better, to organize us better, to contribute financially to our families. We did not have that before.'

Source: Community group participant from field notes in Guatemala (translated)

Commercializing and Formalizing Community Groups

Commercialization offers incentives to community groups to strengthen and formalize their organizations with the goal of capitalizing on strategic opportunities, such as building links to wider and more lucrative markets for their products. Formalizing groups also ensures that groups can access Government and NGO services that will help improve production and business opportunities, thereby ensuring that the impacts of the JP RWEE extend beyond the lifetime of the programme itself. These opportunities are critical to lifting women out of poverty.

In Guatemala in particular, there was optimism that these services would be willing to continue supporting and engaging with women's groups beyond the end of JP RWEE. One stakeholder indicated that groups that reach a certain level of organizational development have more voice and space to bring their concerns to the local government. There is, therefore, a correlation between the formalization of women's groups, the continuation of activities, and the perceived sustainability of results.

There have been formalization successes in Guatemala:

- **Shampoo** produced by the Campur community group is now for sale in local pharmacies, after six savings cycles to help launch the product into these stores. Campur aspires to widen their market further and sell in other parts of the country.
- **Fabric** produced by a group of artisanal fabric producers called Cucanha is now being sold by Casa de los Gigantes, an international retailer based in Antigua Guatemala, a popular tourist destination.

Cucanha received trainings in new techniques and designed from the JP RWEE, who also helped facilitate the connection between Cucanha and Casa de los Gigantes.

- **Surplus agricultural outputs** produced by the Canlun community group are sold to the Ministry of Education for use in local school means programmes. Local ministry of Agriculture representatives help navigate the legal requirements of supplying products such as eggs to the schools, and the group seeks more formalized legal status to fully benefit from this market.
- A **Centro Certificado (production centre)** established in collaboration with the JP RWEE and an artisanal community group in Polochic will enable the group to sell their products in supermarkets and pharmacies. The group is now working with the Ministry of Finance to add the centre to the national environmental and health registers, clearing the way for sale in these markets.

'When the program stops, we are going to continue. We have organized our next saving cycles and we improve the sale of shampoo. We are looking at how to have new products and we want to stay in personal care and home products.'

Source: Community group participant from field notes in Guatemala (translated)

Formalization – Successes from other JP RWEE Countries

- In **Nepal**, the local authorities of a rural municipality decided to donate land so a newly formed cooperative could construct a storage centre for agricultural goods.
- Between 2014 and 2019, the **Rwanda** Cooperative Agency formalized 22 groups in Rwanda into legal cooperatives. Manuals developed by UNW and WFP were used to support training on cooperative management, conflict resolution, and gender policies during the registration process to obtain legal cooperative status.
- In **Kyrgyzstan**, there have been moves to integrate self-help groups into formalized regional cooperatives to ensure they are able to access state resources and provide community support in future.

Resilience

Evidence from the countries where the JP RWEE is implemented indicates that group membership helped women withstand different types of shocks, including natural disasters (for example, the hurricanes that hit Guatemala in late 2020), the failure of a business venture, or the global economic turndown that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. As members of an organized structure that offered mutual support, several women's group participants in Guatemala reported being able to better confront adverse circumstances compared to non-member peers – something that inspired other community members to join the groups. The group activities improved access to emergency savings (critical in moments of stress and crises), as well as diversified business activities.

In Guatemala, community savings and loans arrangements were often cited by stakeholders as central to enabling women to meet their needs and take steps towards entrepreneurial objectives. The VSLAs in particular were perhaps one of the most visible and recognizable to those outside the JP RWEE. Field- and national-level data collection conducted under this evaluation revealed that VSLAs were particularly impactful because of their integrated approach – a key strategy adopted by the JP RWEE. With support from the implementing partners, the groups offered women access to credit, trainings on an array of topics, spaces for participation and decision-making, diversification of business activities, improved production, and linkages to markets. The groups also acted as the social mechanism through which this support was delivered, ensuring in turn that it reached the entire programme's target audience: rural women living in hard-to-reach locations.

'We know that if we are organized, we can continue with our projects. Our community was born from community projects, we have paid the land on which we live because we were organized. This has helped us to cope during the first months of COVID-19.'

Source: Community group participant from field notes in Guatemala (translated)

The JP RWEE emphasis on organizational strengthening sought to develop the cooperative structures through which women's groups could take advantage of new opportunities, increase resilience to crises, and

look towards operating sustainable following the intervention. The evidence suggests that the groups methodology can be a powerful tool to advance rural women's economic empowerment. As one informant put it: 'Everything begins with organization.'

Annex 19. Mapping of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Recommendation	Related Conclusions	Related Findings
Recommendation 1. At the start of the second phase, the JP RWEE should consolidate support to the same women and continue to strengthen outcomes. The second phase should also allow for the expansion of the approaches and strategies to a larger group of beneficiaries. This will create a critical mass of resilient and sufficiently empowered women who can become catalysts for change in their communities and will extend the benefits to other women and communities.	Effectiveness (paragraph 179)	Finding 5 (paragraph 83-93)
Recommendation 2. JP RWEE should identify and share best practices on building strong partnerships between UN agencies and within countries, to ensure stronger linkages and synergy between all actors.	Coherence (paragraph 178)	Finding 3 (paragraph 64-74); Finding 4 (paragraph 75-82); Finding 6 (101-103)
Recommendation 3. JP RWEE country teams should focus on generating learned lessons and evidence and share between countries to have a targeted approach to influence policy.	Effectiveness (paragraph 179)	Finding 2 (paragraph 61); Finding 8 (paragraph 116-119)
Recommendation 4. JP RWEE should mainstream and prioritize climate change across all activities, with a focus on capitalizing on the role that women play in leadership and advocacy on climate change to strengthen preparedness and recovery to climate related disasters.	Sustainability (paragraph 181)	Finding 1 (paragraph 55); Finding 16 (paragraphs 148-150)
Recommendation 5. During the design of future phases of the JP RWEE, longer-term strategic planning should be a priority that includes a stronger prioritization of value addition, market linkages to ensure the gains from the programme can be sustained and to enhance the transformative potential of the JP RWEE in the second phase.	Sustainability (paragraph 181)	Finding 14 (141-143)
Recommendation 6. JP RWEE success should be secured by multi-annual funding to ensure that transformative results can be achieved and sustained. Senior management of agencies should advocate for the JP RWEE at headquarter level to prioritize JP RWEE fundraising, as well as at the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRC) in each country.	Efficiency (paragraph 180)	Finding 8 (paragraph 110-112); Finding 17 (paragraphs 163-164)

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