

### **Tool 16.**

#### **Management response template**

Management responses should be prepared for each and every UN Women evaluation, including joint evaluations in which UN Women participated. In the case of joint and country-led evaluations, management responses may either follow the UN Women format or the one suggested by partners. UN Women is accountable for developing a management response for recommendations directed to UN Women, as well as for facilitating and supporting partners in developing their own response. For recommendations directed to the UN country team—i.e., in UNDAF evaluations—UN Women should facilitate, in cooperation with UN country team members, a joint management response.

This template can be used for both UN Women and joint evaluations as a tool for sharing with stakeholders in order to reach agreement prior to entering into the GATE system. The management response must be approved in the GATE system within six weeks of finalization of the evaluation report.

**Management Response to the Joint Programme Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women, 01.11.2018****OVERALL COMMENTS**

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess in more detail the programmatic progress and performance of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (JPRWEE) from the perspectives of relevance, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency and sustainability. It provided all partner UN agencies with a useful assessment of project achievements and produced actionable findings, recommendations and documented lessons learnt. Specifically, the evaluation certified that the programme has reached targets for most of its key performance indicators via creating intended positive changes leading to increased income, better livelihoods, food security and leadership role of participating rural women. Factors that facilitated these results include the promotion of solidarity economic models such as self-help groups and group economic initiatives, as well as providing access to training and interest-free commodity and cash loans. Community members who were not directly involved in the programme benefitted from the transfer of skills and knowledge from program participants and development activities implemented by local authorities upon request from the program participants. One of JP RWEE's important results is that its direct beneficiaries and community members broadened their perspectives and adopted more advanced practices. Moreover, adding GALS into the implementation model considerably increased the JP RWEE's positive impact on women empowerment and even to some extent offset the disempowering effect of the reduction in leisure time available for women because of greater engagement in income generating activities due to more equal distribution of domestic tasks. However, the evaluation also underlined that despite significant contributions of the JP RWEE towards better livelihoods, increased income, food security and leadership role of participating rural women, its impact on the situation of poor rural women and rural women in Kyrgyzstan is still small.

The JPRWEE has been designed as a 5-year initiative with a total budget of 5 million USD for 2012-2017. It is a joint programme coordinated by four UN agencies in Kyrgyzstan, namely UN women as a leading agency, FAO, IFAD and WFP. The joint programme is part of a global joint initiative implemented in seven countries globally including Guatemala, Niger, Ethiopia, Liberia, Rwanda, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan. The first allocation was received in 2014 from Norway followed by a funding from Sweden in 2015 through end 2017. With the confirmed funding of 800,000 USD for the current phase (2018-2019), the programme intends to replicate the best practices gained over the period of three years and strengthen the capacity of previous cohorts. Under the limited funding and time resources, the programme will partly attend the recommendations of the evaluation although all of the recommendations have been accepted by the partner agencies (see clarifications below). The partners are ultimately responsible for their agreed part of implementation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS 1**

For the next stage of the JP RWEE implementation the partner UN agencies shall use the operational model that enhances all aspects of rural women economic empowerment as defined by the Women Empowerment in Agriculture Index.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

[The management response specifies the reaction to the recommendation and highlights key issues raised and steps UN Women will take.]

The recommendation is accepted.

JP RWEE’s design was informed by the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index since its inception in 2014. Indeed, the WEAI, realized by IFPRI in the same implementation areas as the JP RWEE, served as a baseline, and provided information across five empowerment dimensions: production, resources, income, leadership, and time. The results showed how group membership and access to credit were two key disempowering factors in target areas. Accordingly, the JP RWEE activities in the previous phase have focused on providing access to affordable starting capital in their communities through establishment of revolving funds, strengthening women’s activism at the community level, building skills for running income-generating activities and provision of high-quality inputs for increased agricultural productivity. In the current phase, JPRWEE will continue addressing the above five domains through the following programme components:

- 1) increasing women’s access to and control over resources, assets and services, and capacitating them to enhance and control local food security reserve and their production.
- 2) enhancing women’s entrepreneurial skills and value chains to access markets for their products.
- 3) enhancing rural women’s confidence and leadership skills to participate in local governance, improving their organizational capacities to form, sustain and participate into producer organizations, cooperatives and unions, increasing their capacity to engage in and influence relevant policy forums at national and regional levels, and enhancing their awareness on their rights in a more supportive environment.
- 4) providing GALS trainings to old and new cohorts of beneficiaries.

**SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW**

The recommendation is accepted.

<b>KEY ACTION</b> [Indicates the concrete measures or actions to be taken including the key partners to be involved in carrying out the actions.]	<b>TIME FRAME</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION</b> [Where the implementation of a key action depends upon other factors such as policy changes or further donor funding, this should be made clear in the comments section.]	<b>STATUS</b> [Initiated, not initiated, completed, no longer applicable (requires justification in comments section); to be updated on quarterly basis]	<b>COMMENTS</b> [A justification must be provided if “no longer applicable” was selected; any other pertinent information regarding the plan for implementation or budget should be noted here]
1. Conduct trainings and awareness raising campaigns to strengthen leadership skills of rural women and their understanding of local policy formulation and decision-making processes, leading up to improved gender responsiveness of local development plans based on needs assessment in pilot local governments.	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available
2. Support initiatives at community level for identifying and solving issues of local concern from gender perspectives through data collection, dialogues with local governments, lobbying etc.	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available

3. Capacitate rural women to formulate recommendations to relevant policies/laws related to enhancing economic empowerment and support to rural women activists in identifying and lobbying for legislative and policy changes affecting lives of rural women at the local and national levels.	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available for the new cohort and partially for the old cohorts.
4. Raise awareness of on rural women's rights through informal women councils, forums and platforms.	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available for the new cohort and partially for the old cohorts.
5. Training in Business Planning and Financial literacy to help the self-help groups to efficiently plan their family budget for income generation activities	2018	WFP	Planned	Funding available
6. Needs based skills training in various income generating areas such as baking, sewing, quail farming, value chain development in silk production, biscuit production, etc.	2019	WFP	Planned	Funding available
7. Guidance and mentoring in small business identification and development to help the project beneficiaries apply the	2019	WFP	Planned	Funding available

knowledge gained to start relevant businesses and make incomes.				
8. Provision of fortified wheat flour and vegetable oil will serve as an incentive for beneficiaries to release money from their family budget for income generation activities and participate in the project activities without worrying for their time that they could have spent on earning for bread.	2019	WFP	Planned	Funding available
Equip rural women with knowledge and skills and provide advisory support on production technologies, processing, business and farm management	2018-2019	FAO	Initiated	Funding available for the third cohort
Provision with agricultural commodities, tools and equipment to increase productivity and efficiency of women's economic activities	2018-2019	FAO	Initiated	Funding available for the third cohort
Provide GALS trainings to first and third cohorts of beneficiaries, and apply GALS instruments during refresher trainings for the second cohort	2018-2019	IFAD UN Women	Initiated	Funding available for these cohorts

Enhancing women’s entrepreneurial skills and value chains to access markets for their products	2018-2019	IFAD	Initiated	New livelihoods and business development GALS tools will be rolled out with first and third cohorts. GALS author Linda Mayoux has been recruited to train GALS service provider on these new tools for them to roll out.
--	-----------	------	-----------	--

**RECOMMENDATIONS 2**

In the second phase of the JP RWEE GALS shall be applied in the second cohort of villages to mitigate the negative JP RWEE impact on women leisure time. Limited funding did not allow the JP RWEE to roll out GALS in the second cohort of villages. Given that the programme continues, it has an opportunity to correct the unintended disempowering effects on women in the second cohort of villages.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

[The management response specifies the reaction to the recommendation and highlights key issues raised and steps UN Women will take.]

The recommendation is accepted.  
 With insufficient time and budget available in the current phase, RWEE will not apply the full GALS catalyst process in the second cohort of beneficiaries. However, to mitigate time poverty following enhanced engagement of women in economic activities, JPRWEE will continue working with this cohort by providing it with capacitation tools informed by GALS.

**SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW**

The recommendation is accepted.

KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
1. Strengthen the capacity of the selected self-help groups from among the second cohort of beneficiaries who sustain and run their revolving funds by offering them a series of trainings using	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available to application of selected GALS tools only.

selected GALs tools.				
----------------------	--	--	--	--

**RECOMMENDATIONS 3**  
 Under the second phase, the JP RWEE shall continue supporting four women’s organizations until they are fully self-sustainable.  
 One of the expected results of the Global JP RWEE is that “Rural women have greater organizational capacities to form, **sustain** and participate into POs, cooperatives and unions” (Output 3.2). This output was not explicitly included in the results framework for the Kyrgyzstan JP RWEE, but it in fact started to work towards this output when four women’s organizations were established. At the time of evaluation rural women from cohort 1 still did not have enough capacity to sustain these organizations, and continuation of the JP RWEE provides an opportunity to fully achieve this output.  
 Sustainability of these organizations will ensure sustainability of self-help groups, village associations and group economic initiatives in the first cohort of villages. It is necessary to find mechanisms that would allow for increasing the amount of the revolving funds and generating enough revenue to have professional management and cover administrative costs as well as ensure that the women’s organizations are owned by members rather than professional managers.

<p><b>MANAGEMENT RESPONSE</b>  <b>[The management response specifies the reaction to the recommendation and highlights key issues raised and steps UN Women will take.]</b>                  The recommendation is accepted with the caveat that the sustainability focus will be on the four women’s producer organizations and enabling members of self-help groups to fully participate in the activities and decision-making processes of these organizations. Specifically, JP RWEE will assist in strengthening institutional sustainability of these organizations with the aim of increasing their management capacities in relation to performance beyond the programme duration by undertaking a series of activities including a financial and institutional sustainability assessment of the organizations, and based on its results, developing and implementing an action plan.</p>	<p><b>SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW</b>                  The recommendation is accepted.</p>
---	--



KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
1. Conduct a financial and institutional assessment of producer organizations;	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Available funds will be channeled to strengthen the sustainability of those entities that prove their potential viability.
2. Identify growth and sustainability gaps and develop mechanisms that would allow for increasing the revolving funds, generating sufficient revenue and ensuring an enhanced ownership by members;	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Funding available
3. Based on the results of the assessment, develop and implement an action plan.	2018-2019	UN Women FAO WFP IFAD	Initiated	UN Women implements this action in close coordination with FAO, WFP and IFAD
4. Assist the self-help groups, created under the second cohort and third cohorts, to join these women's organizations.	2018-2019	UN Women FAO WFP IFAD	Initiated	All agencies under their own activities will pursue inclusion of beneficiaries to the women's organizations active in their regions by informing them about the existing opportunities and advantages of participating in such producer cooperatives and associations and actively linking them with each other.
5. GALS will be implemented through four women's organizations, using new livelihoods, financial and business	2018-2019	IFAD	Initiated	Funding available

tools to strengthening their ability to engage in income-generating activities and benefit from financial services				
--	--	--	--	--

**RECOMMENDATIONS 4**  
 Partner UN agencies shall consider developing and testing the strategy for replication of women economic empowerment model in the villages and ayl aimaks where the programme has already worked.  
 The JP RWEE already has a proven strategy for entering a village by recruiting 30-40 “early adopters”. But there is no strategy for replication of the JP RWEE model in these villages. Evaluation findings suggest that people who saw the benefits the JP RWEE model creates for the participants may be willing to share costs with the programme. Potentially village associations of self-help groups may be interested in taking the leadership role in replication of the model because by adding new members they can increase the inflow of membership fees and accumulate funds that eventually could be used as revolving funds to support group economic activities of their members. This replication strategy will be an important step towards the JP RWEE exit strategy.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**[The management response specifies the reaction to the recommendation and highlights key issues raised and steps UN Women will take.]  
 The recommendation is partially accepted.  
 The model of women’s economic empowerment built on the foundation of the first cohort proved to be JPRWEE’s best practice recommended for further replication. Strengthening of the institutions built and their membership ensures the model’s overall sustainability. JP RWEE’s replication and exit strategy is therefore grounded in further strengthening of the institutional sustainability of the four women’s organizations (two cooperatives and two producer associations) by their further technical capacitation, integration of specific mechanisms to ensure their viability and growth and encouraging beneficiaries of the second and third cohort to join them. We will also apply the GALS household methodology to stimulate the community level replication by using self-help groups as delivery entry

**SELECT ONE OF THE BELOW**  
 The recommendation is partially accepted

points.				
KEY ACTION	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBLE PARTY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
1. Reach out to new villages which would be located in the same local municipalities, so the new participants would be within easy reach by Programme activists and champions for social mobilization, mentorship, and GALS.		UN Women IFAD	Initiated	Funding available
2. Conduct a financial and institutional assessment of women's organizations to identify growth and sustainability gaps and develop mechanisms that would allow for increasing the revolving funds, generating sufficient revenue and ensuring an enhanced ownership by members;	2018-2019	UN Women	Initiated	Available funds will be channeled to strengthen the sustainability of those entities that prove their potential viability.
3. Based on the results of the assessment, develop and implement an action plan.	2018-2019	UN Women FAO WFP IFAD	Initiated	UN Women implements this action in close coordination with FAO, WFP and IFAD

<p>4. Assist beneficiaries of the old and new cohorts in joining the women's organizations.</p>	<p>2018-2019</p>	<p>UN Women FAO WFP IFAD</p>	<p>Initiated</p>	<p>All agencies under their own activities will encourage the beneficiaries to join the women's organizations active in their regions by informing them about the existing opportunities and advantages of participating in such producer cooperatives and associations and linking them with each other.</p>
<p>5. Link the women's organizations with other producer associations, agricultural input providers, different value chain players, providers of financial goods and business associations to strengthen their institutional networking.</p>	<p>2018-2019</p>	<p>UN Women WFP FAO</p>	<p>Initiated</p>	<p>Funding available</p>
<p>6. Continue rolling out GALS with the first and third cohorts and use community consolidation tools informed by GALS with the second cohort.</p>	<p>2018-2019</p>	<p>IFAD UN Women</p>	<p>Initiated</p>	<p>Funding available</p>