

JOINT PROGRAMME ON GENDER

“Leveraging the Full Potential of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to Achieve Rwanda's Transformation” (January 2019 – June 2024)

FINAL EVALUATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rwanda has embraced gender equality, equity, and women's empowerment as key enabling conditions for the national social and economic transformation. From the policy perspective, the country's commitment to promoting gender equality is well supported by the current national policy and strategic framework including the Vision 2050, the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), and the National policy on gender (2021). Concerted efforts have so far resulted in transformative changes in terms of gender equality, equity, and women's empowerment. Some sector specific progress are worthy of mention such as access to land and financial inclusion for women's economic empowerment, access to education and health services for capacity development of both men and women as well as boys and girls, and women's representation in leadership positions especially in the executive, legislature, and judiciary.

The Joint Programme on Gender (JP) was developed by the One UN together with the Government of Rwanda to advance gender equality and women's empowerment under the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and through The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSCDF). The JP on gender was developed for a period of four years (2019-2022) and envisages to leverage on the full potential of gender equality and women's empowerment to achieve Rwanda's transformation. More specifically, the programme aimed to enhance women's leadership and participation in and benefits from accountable governance, unlocking economic opportunities for women within the expanding of public and private sector markets, and contribute to the prevention of violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes by also enhancing access to quality services to survivors.

It is against the above backdrop that a final evaluation was commissioned by UN women in collaboration with other implementing agencies of the UN. The overall purpose of this study is to assess and evaluate the overall performance made by the joint programme on gender on the above three frontiers. More specifically, this present evaluation aimed at assessing the programme's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and/or sustainability. The intention here is to examine the progress and achievements on programme outputs in order to propose recommendations for future programming and development of new programmes. Further, findings from this evaluation will help service providers, especially the National Gender Machinery and other stakeholders to effectively position Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the new National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), the UNSDCF by the UN Country Team, and the new Joint Programmes. As to the rights holders (beneficiaries), specifically women organizations at different levels, they will use the evaluation to enhance their application of evidence-based strategies and

advocacy to promote gender equality and accountability towards women's empowerment and fight against GBV.

Furthermore, the study has used a two-stage systematic process to collect data needed for the overall performance evaluation of the JP. The first stage consists of the use of existing secondary data from JP documents and other relevant reports and publications. During the second stage, the evaluation process involved the collection of primary data to document and measure the performance made by the programme on its outcome and output indicators as reflected in the logical framework.

In respect to the findings, overall, the JP on gender has been able to achieve some of its key milestones with impacts both at individual level or at organizational level of its beneficiaries as summarised in paragraphs below:

In the area of women's leadership and participation in and benefits from accountable governance, the JP on gender has capacitated women and girls to compete for leadership positions and this has had positive impacts especially for fresh women graduates who benefited from the mentorship and coaching programme by the JP on gender, women in journalism and women in political parties. Part of success stories in this particular area is the increased participation of women in the 2021 elections and the local governance as result of the training and coaching received. In addition, from the policy and strategic level, the role of women in leadership has been well considered in the drafting of the new National Gender policy on gender (2021), and the development of National Men Engage and gender Transformative Strategy for Gender Equality. Further effects are also observed in the support availed in strengthening the accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions through gender accountability dialogues carried out in different parts of the country. These dialogues involved leaders and other service providers including the National Police, youth leaders, and teen mothers all were involved in GAD to improve the accountability and the oversight mechanisms on GEWE especially in public institutions at all levels.

On women's economic empowerment, the JP on gender has enabled women and girls to enhance their entrepreneurial skills, increased access to finance and market leveraging on existing and potential business opportunities especially for women in cross-border trade. In addition, the JP on gender has promoted creation of more off-farm jobs through provision of business start-up grants and seed grants, vocational training, and grouping beneficiaries Village and Loan Associations, financial inclusion activities, among other initiatives. The training and seed grants have capacitated beneficiaries to create their own saving groups/ associations that allows them to save access to less costly loans (up to 5%/ month) of up to 2 million (case of REWU) followed by increase in their capital and

business expansion, among other benefits. As result, people's livelihoods have improved including those of women in refugee and non-refugee settings.

With regard to the prevention of violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes by also enhancing access to quality services to survivors. The JP on gender has implemented several interventions in this respect. Most of these were on the side of capacity building and awareness raising among the community and key actors from government and non-government actors, provision of legal aid services. As part of impacts, there are TIP cases that have already been reported as result of the campaigns and increased GBV prevention capacities among the communities as well as security organs.

Going forward, cognizant of the positive effects of the JP, more efforts will be needed in defining more "specific joint activities" and more resources mobilization to address the remaining gaps in the areas of gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Furthermore, partnerships already created and the engagement of the stakeholders and implementing partners are a milestone to maintain for future collaboration. The focus would be more on institutional capacity strengthening than individuals within collaborating and implementing partners. The gains already achieved will continue to form a solid foundation in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in Rwanda. Specific recommendations are formulated under the following thematic areas: in the following areas:

1st Thematic area: Women's participation in Leadership

- 1) Capacity building: Continue capacity building interventions targeting women and girls, including mentorship, young graduate internship with focus on university students.
- 2) Gender accountability: More programs are needed on intergenerational aspect of gender (young vs adult, former vs current). In this context we also need institutional capacity building in intergenerational programme (planning, budgeting, M&E... in order to ensure good service to the beneficiaries).
- 3) Women's improved participation: There is a need to be innovative and find alternative ways of promoting women's participation that goes beyond the numbers and percentages, looking at the performance, norms and policies. This entails leveraging on what other people are doing, using AWLN.
- 4) Mind-set on gender equality: It is proposed to have options to engage people in gender equality right from the early age of childhood and a special way of engaging me.

2nd Thematic area: Women's economic empowerment

- 1) Access to finance and promotion of entrepreneurship: It is proposed to scale up the access to finance model used to support refugees and members of the surrounding communities. This helps to focus on three main areas: participation in decision making, economic empowerment, and preventing and addressing SGBV. This entails further to continue and scale up training and provision of seed funding across the country, reaching more people. Further, there is need to look for mega projects to support so that more multiplier effects are achieved.
- 2) Increase financial literacy: This is because donors avail financial support through the banks, so women should be able to write proposal, business plan, and use the bank services in order to have access to that support. At this point there is also need to carefully select the beneficiaries of the programme according to their capacities, for example knowing whether it is an old women or young woman who will be supported in bank services use or use of technology in business because what is pursued is a transformative change.
- 3) Increase the participation of women in decent and male dominated sectors: More programmatic actions are needed to increase the participation of women in decent sectors or those that are more dominated by men. This involves: Think of sectors such as agriculture where many women participate, cross-border trade, access regional integration opportunities, participation in public procurement, target more prominent business women so that they can be able to coach others especially street vendors and others in small scale interventions.

3rd Thematic area: Fight against SGBV

- 1) Campaigns on GBV awareness and prevention: expand the activities related to awareness campaigns and prevention against all forms of GBV. More activities are also needed for responsive interventions such as reintegration of the GBV victims.
- 2) Improve other supportive measures against GBV: These include more support to men engage approach, reinforce interventions on cyber security and abuse programme, reduce women's dependence on men and perpetrators and also identify and document cases of men victims of the SGBV.

Coordination

- 1) Improve efficiency in coordination of Gender related interventions: More priority should be given to the coordination of partnerships and interventions especially for joint programme.
- 2) Advocate for institutionalisation of collection of sex disaggregated data: The process of defining the gender related priorities and targets will need to continue

to be inclusive and build the capacity of agencies meant to contribute to the implementation process. More resources should also be dedicated for the generation of evidence needed to support the M&E system both at National level and cross-cutting sectors.

- 3)** Invest more efforts in gender related research so as to make evidence-based policy change advocacy to address systemic and structural barriers to achieving GEWE in Rwanda.

Strengthened partnerships

- 1)** UN Women will continue to sustain and establish new strategic partnerships aimed at promoting gender equality and women's empowerment at different levels in Rwanda
- 2)** Partner with GMO to advocate for institutionalisation of gender accountability in different accountability mechanisms in the Country like performance contracts (MINECOFIN), Institutional Audits (Auditor General's Office) and Procurement practices (RPPA).

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ARFEM	Association of Rwandese Female Journalists
AWLN	African Women Leaders Network
BPFA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
CBEs	Community-Based Entities
CLADHO	Umbrella of Human Rights Organizations in Rwanda
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCIs	District Chief Investigators
DDSs	District Development Strategies
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FBOs	Faith – Based Organisations
FFRP	Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum
GAD	Gender Accountability Days
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEPMI	Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiatives
GEWE	Gender equality and women empowerment
GMIS	Gender Management Information System
GMO	Gender Monitoring Office
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
ILPD	Institute of Legal Practice and Development
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IOSC	Isange One Stop Center
IZU	Inshuti Z’Umuryango
JP	Joint Programme
KIIs	Key informants’ interviews
MAJ	Access to Justice Bureau
MDIT	Multidisciplinary Investigative Team
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINECOFI	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
N	
MINEMA	Ministry in charge of Emergency Management
MINIJUST	Ministry of Justice
NBR	National Bank of Rwanda
NCDA	National Child Development Agency
NEC	National Election Commission
NFPO	National Forum of Political Parties Organizations
NGFC	National Gender and Family Cluster

NGM	National Gender Machinery
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NISR	National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda
NPPA	National Public Prosecution Authority
NST1	National Strategy for Transformation
NST2	new National Strategy for Transformation
NWC	National Women's Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PCIs	Province Chief Investigators
PSF	Private Sector Federation
RALGA	Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities
RCS	Rwanda Correctional Services
RDB	Rwanda Development Board
REWU	Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union
RGB	Rwanda Governance Board
RIB	Rwanda Investigation Bureau
RNP	Rwanda National Police
RSB	Rwanda Standards Board
RWLN	Rwanda Women Leaders Network
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSPs	Sector Strategic Plans
ToC	Theory of Change
ToT	Training of trainers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UWI	Umugoroba w'Imiryango
VAC	Violence Against Children
WCBT	Women in Cross-Border Trade
WEF	World Economic Forum

1. CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

1.1. Introduction

The present document is a report of the final evaluation of the Joint Programme on gender “*Leveraging the Full Potential of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to Achieve Rwanda's Transformation*” (January 2019 – June 2022). Gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE) appear among the major concerns of the global agenda as provided in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 5 - 2015-2030). They entail addressing issues of discrimination and violence against women and girls, harmful practices, unpaid care and domestic work, participation and opportunities for leadership and decision-making positions, sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to and control of resources, technology and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), as well as laws and policies (United Nations, 2015). Therefore, this section highlights the context of Rwanda in which the Joint programme on gender was conceived, implemented, and evaluated, specifying the policy, legal, and institutional frameworks, women’s representation and participation in leadership and governance, women’s labour force participation, and fighting against gender-based violence.

1.1.1. *Policy, Legal, and Institutional framework*

GEWE has been considered with special attention in Rwanda. This is reflected by the mainstreaming of gender in policy and legal frameworks, and institutional reforms and arrangement such as the establishment of gender machinery to define national gender policies, monitor their implementation, mobilise women, advocate for them and lobby for gender and women inclusion when establishing laws (NISR, 2023).

From the policy perspective, efforts have been made to consider gender in the policy and strategic planning. These include the development of a specific national gender policy in 2010 revised in 2021. The aim is to accelerate the effectiveness of Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability as part of the transformation. With regard to legal framework and reforms, the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda of 2003 revised in 2015 and 2023 remains the supreme law of the country and reaffirms the country’s commitment to advance gender equality and ensure that all Rwandans are equally treated in all sectors. The constitution affirms a minimum quota of 30% of women occupying positions in leadership and decision-making organs (Republic of Rwanda, 2023). Other laws include: Law No. 59/2008 on the Prevention and Punishment of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevents and punishes Gender Based Violence Crimes in all of its forms; law No27/2021 of 10/06/2021 governing land in Rwanda, guarantees equal rights for men and women on land access, ownership and utilization; law N°27/2016 of 08/07/2016 governing matrimonial regimes, donations and successions, provides for women’s equal inheritance

rights with men); and law No.66/2018 of 30/08/2018 regulating labour in Rwanda, provides for equal opportunities and pay for women and men; rights to full salary to a female employee who gives birth during 3 months of maternity leave and the breastfeeding period; working conditions for a pregnant or breastfeeding woman and prohibits sexual harassment in the workplace.

The above government led initiatives (among others) in collaboration with development partners to promote gender equality make Rwanda regionally and globally renowned. Rwanda is currently among the top five best performers in sub-Saharan Africa. It was the second in 2023, and the first in 2022 (WEF, 2022, 2023, and 2024) This drop in the ranking is partially explained by slight declines in the scores of the sub-indexes of economic participation and opportunity (changed from 0.747 in 2022 to 0.699 in 2023) and political empowerment (changed from 0.563 in 2022 to 0.541 in 2023).

1.1.2. Women's representation and participation in governance

In Rwanda, females constitute 51.5% of the whole population, and these proportions are almost evenly distributed in all provinces: 49.1% in City of Kigali, 51.8% in Southern Province, 52.2% in Western Province, 52.3% in Northern Province, and 51.3% in Eastern Province (NISR, 2023). Rwanda has recorded high performance in gender equality in the area of governance and leadership. For the period 2013 – 2018, 64% of seats in the parliament were occupied by women, and for the current period (2018-2024), women's seats are 61% (GMO, 2019). In the cabinet, women's representation consistently increased from 36.8% in 2014, to 40% in 2016, 50% in 2018, and 55% in 2021 (NISR, 2022). Women were 33.3% among Permanent secretaries in Ministries, 30.3% among the heads of public institutions, 24.3% among the Directors of units, and 16.5% among the Director generals in ministries (NISR, 2023). Other achievements in terms of women's representation can be observed in Justice Sector where in 2021 they were 54% in the position of Judge in lower/primary court, 52% as Prosecutors at primary level, 65% as Assistant to Prosecutor, 51% as prosecutor support staff, 56% as Principal Registrar, and 58% among all registrars (NISR,2022). Women's representation in decentralized positions such as District's mayors and vice mayors as well as Sector level administration remains with gaps where some positions are still perceived to be led by men (such as Vice Mayor in charge of economic affairs) and others by women (such as Vice mayor in charge of social affairs). Such a belief reflects a notion of some persistent stereotypes yet to be addressed. This will be explored further during the evaluation.

1.1.3. Women's labour force participation

In Rwanda, the labour force participation rate is higher for men compared to women with an 18.2% gender gap in participation as of August 2023. Trends call for an action, emphasizing ongoing challenges in achieving gender parity in employment and the necessity for targeted strategies to address and mitigate gender-based disparities in labor market participation (NISR, 2023). Subsequently, this is one of the areas to ensure economic empowerment of women and their active participation in the economic transformation.

Unemployment is prevalent for both genders but more pronounced among females with working age. The current estimate by NISR's Labour Force Survey (2023-Q4) shows 20.1% of females compared to 13.9% of males are employed (NISR, 2024). Men are more inclined toward own-account employment, whereas women are often engaged in informal jobs often characterised by inadequate earnings, low productivity and difficult conditions of work. Addressing this gendered occupational disparity is crucial for creating equitable employment opportunities and promoting inclusive economic growth that considers the diverse nature of work undertaken by women and men. This further brings the notion of unpaid care work that hinders the majority of women to be active and to participate and benefit from decent job opportunities.

1.1.4. Fight against gender-based violence

The government of Rwanda acknowledges the imperative for a multi-sectoral approach to eradicate Gender Based Violence (GBV). The government has undertaken decisive measures and committed to ongoing efforts, prioritising residents' safety, freedom to speak out against perpetrators, and timely justice. The government's unwavering commitment signifies a determination to combat and eliminate GBV within the Rwandan society. The government's initiatives against GBV involve significant investments from key institutions such as the Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB), establishment of a comprehensive response mechanism through Isange One Stop Centre¹ and the legal reforms. The media, through TV and radio campaigns, has played a crucial role in raising awareness and fostering discussions about GBV, contributing to changing societal norms and attitudes. Collaborating with religious leaders and non-governmental institutions further underscores a comprehensive approach, recognizing diverse partnerships as integral in the collective effort to combat and eradicate gender-based violence in the country (MIGEPROF, 2021). Consequently, the overall trend of GBV has declined from

¹ This is a holistic hub for survivors of gender-based violence where all services are provided under one roof and free of charge. Run by the Rwandan Ministries of Gender and Family Promotion, of Health, and of Justice and the National Police, the centre opened in 2009 as a pilot.

2018 to 2023, where the number of female GBV victims with symptoms of sexual violence has reduced from 7,509 cases in 2018 to 5,630 cases while those with physical violence have reduced from 4665 to 3,508 cases. Male victims of GBV abuses with symptoms of sexual violence reduced as well from 300 to 153, and GBV victims with symptoms of physical violence from 1,715 to 845 during the same period (Table 1).

Table 1: Gender based violence victims (% and numbers)

Indicators	Year 2018		Year 2023	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
GBV victims (women and men) with symptoms of sexual violence	300	7,509	153	5,630
GBV victims (women and men) with symptoms of physical violence	1,715	4,665	845	3,508
Distribution of women and men aged 15-49 years old who have ever experienced sexual violence	5.0	22.0	5.6	22.5

Source: Demographic and Health Survey (NISR, 2016 & 2021)

Further, the trends on teenage pregnancy have also reduced comparing the periods 2019 and 2023. The percentage of women aged 15-19 who had a live birth has reduced from 5.5% to 3.8% (GMO, 2024).

1.2. Joint programme on gender

1.2.1. *Design of the Joint programme*

The Joint Programme (JP) on gender entitled “Leveraging the Full Potential of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment to Achieve Rwanda's Transformation” (2019-2024) was developed by the One UN together with the Government of Rwanda, to advance Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (GEWE) under the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) pillars of Economic Transformation, Social Transformation and Transformational Governance. The overall goal of this JP is to ensure that “Women and girls, especially the most vulnerable, participate in, contribute to and benefit from the political, economic and social transformation in Rwanda” through leveraging the comparative advantages of the participating UN Agencies and implementing partners, namely Government Institutions, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and the Private Sector.

The design of JP embraces the principles of inclusion, namely, “leaving no one behind”, as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (World’s Agenda 2030) and reflects the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee for Rwanda, which include: strengthening efforts to increase participation of women in decision making positions, implementing comprehensive measures to change the attitudes and practices of women’s subordination and related stereotypes, making gender equality a clear component of development plans at national and local levels, ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market, intensifying efforts to prevent and address all forms of violence against women, and ensuring equal access of girls and young women to all levels of education.

The overarching Theory of Change (ToC) is that “if (1) women and girls participate and lead in decision-making processes; if women’s empowerment and gender equality commitments are translated into practice by accountable national and local governance institutions; if women, including the most vulnerable ones, have equal access to and control over economic resources; if favourable social norms, attitudes and behaviours towards GEWE are promoted at institutional and community level; and if women and girls who experience violence can use available, accessible and quality essential services; then (2) women and girls will be able to fully benefit from and contribute to political and economic opportunities and violence against women and girls will be substantially reduced; because (3) women and girls will have decision making powers, gender specific needs will have been accounted for in all spheres of governance, responses to violence

against women and girls will be available and barriers will have been removed for women to attain economic autonomy.²

The interventions of JP are structured around three main thematic areas. The JP implementation framework highlights four outcomes corresponding with these thematic areas and UNDAP (currently UNSDCF) outcomes. The thematic area 1 is: (i) women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance systems. Two corresponding outcomes are: Outcome 1: By 2023, people in Rwanda benefit from enhanced gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security (UNDAP Outcome 5), with three outputs; and Outcome 2: By 2023, people in Rwanda participate more actively in democratic and development processes and benefit from transparent and accountable public and private sector institutions that develop evidence-based policies and deliver quality services. (UNDAP Outcome 6), with one output. These outcomes were detailed into four outputs, and their seven indicators (See annex 1: Evaluation of the Joint Programme (JP) on Gender).

The second thematic area is (ii) women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy. It corresponds with one outcome: Outcome 3: By 2023 people in Rwanda benefit from more inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth that generates decent work and promotes quality livelihoods for all (UNDAP Outcome 1). It has three outputs and four indicators. The third outcome is (iii) all women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence. It corresponds with Outcome 4: By 2023 people in Rwanda, particularly the most vulnerable, will have increased resilience to both natural and man-made shocks and enjoy a life free from all forms of violence and discrimination (UNDAP Outcome 4). It has two outputs with their two indicators (See annex 1).

The JP was implemented in the entire country with much focus on the Implementing Partners' intervention area. The interventions related to women's participation in decision making reached out to the people from all the four Provinces in Rwanda and the City of Kigali. The targets in this regard were women in political parties, women elected in local governance, potential women who can compete during the election, as well as young graduate women, and women working in the media. The interventions related to women's economic empowerment targeted women entrepreneurs and women in special conditions such as in refugee camps, women with disabilities, women in cross-border trade, young women both in rural and urban areas. The interventions related to women's violence regarded the women in special conditions as stated above, as well as women in the community. The beneficiaries received skills through training and awareness campaigns,

² Republic of Rwanda and One UN (2018). Joint programme leveraging the full potential of gender equality and full empowerment to achieve Rwanda's transformation programme document. Kigali; ONE UN (2018a). United nations Development Assistance plan (UNDAP). July 2018 to June 2023 for Rwanda. (Full document). Kigali: United Nations, p13.

others have received start-up support in business, vocational training, while others were assisted or mentored in small business. The estimated initial budget for the whole programme was US dollars 19,096,661 but was resized in 2021 as described in the section 1.2.3. below.

1.2.2. Key stakeholders

As glimpsed above, JP is a Joint Programme between the Government of Rwanda represented by National Gender Machinery (NGM) on one side and the United Nations represented by UN agencies. They work with implementing partners from government, civil society organizations, and the private sector. The NGM is composed of four institutions, namely the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) as the lead institution, Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), National Women's Council (NWC) and Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum (FFRP). Involved UN agencies are the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) as Lead, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as participating UN Agencies. The comprehensive list of implementing partners is provided in the Annex 2. These are grouped under three main categories: the first category considers the UN agencies that implemented the joint programme, the second category is made by government institutions collaborating with the UN agencies such as the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion and Gender Monitoring Office. The third category is constituted by the beneficiary organisations that implemented the joint programme at the forefront of community support.

1.2.3. Revision of the programme

The initial planned duration of the programme was four years and half (4.5) years (January 2019 - June 2023) and this was extended to five and half (5.5) years with the budget of US dollars 19,096,661. This budget was downsized in 2021 to US dollars 13,463,495 after two years of implementation following the analysis of the prospects of the resource mobilization and the intention to allow the programme to align with rapidly evolving trends and priorities, especially after experiencing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the endline of the programme was fixed in June 2024.

1.3. Purpose and Scope of the evaluation

1.3.1. Purpose

The present evaluation is part of the entire Joint Programme right from its design. Two evaluations were planned: a mid-term review in the mid-term in the mid-time of the implementation and the final evaluation at the end of the implementation. This evaluation was planned to ensure accountability, learning, and information in decision-making. Thus, the present final evaluation aimed at assessing the programme's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and/or sustainability. The intention here is to examine the progress and achievements on programme outputs in order to propose recommendations for future programming and development of new programme. Further, findings from this evaluation will help service providers, especially the National Gender Machinery and other stakeholders to effectively position Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the new National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), the UNSDCF by the UN Country Team, and the new Joint Programmes. As to the rights holders (beneficiaries), specifically women organizations at different levels, they will use the evaluation to enhance their application of evidence-based strategies and advocacy to promote gender equality and accountability towards women's empowerment and fight against GBV.

Overall, the evaluation will serve the government institutions, the United Nations' family, the private sector and individuals' evidence-based reference and good practices. It will document the country's progress on gender equality and women empowerment in the areas of governance, economic, and social transformation. It will inform future strategic planning and programming of interventions aimed at addressing gender related gaps in various sectors in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment towards equitable and inclusive socio-economic transformation in Rwanda.

1.3.2. Expected Users and Intended Use of this Evaluation Report

Findings of this evaluation are expected to be used by different users including the programme partners and implementers of the various projects or interventions under the programme. These partners include those from UN agencies (e.g., Office of the UN resident, UN Women, UNDP, IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF, and OHCHR) and those from the government institutions (MIGEPROF, NWC, GMO, FFRP, MINEMA, MINECOFIN, RIB, RNP, NCDA, NEC, RGB, and Districts). The evaluation report serves as a reference in documenting the country's progress on gender equality and women empowerment in the areas of governance, economic, and social transformation. In addition, results and findings from this evaluation are meant to inform future strategic planning and programming of interventions aimed at addressing gender related gaps in

various sectors in promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment towards equitable and inclusive socio-economic transformation in Rwanda.

1.3.3. Objectives of the evaluation

The overall goal of this evaluation is to take stock of the results achieved during the programme’s implementation period whilst borrowing lessons from the same experience to inform future program undertakings. Specific objectives are provided along the five evaluation criteria that were used in this study: relevance and coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	ALIGNED SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE
RELEVANCE and COHERENCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess the relevance and coherence of the Programme with regard to the concept and design, theory of change, extent to which the expected results of the programme address the rights and needs of the targeted beneficiaries vis-à-vis the specific country policy and strategic thinking, to consistency, ownership and congruency, technical adequacy, and complementarity of programme with other initiatives.
EFFECTIVENESS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To determine the effectiveness of the programme in terms of the performance and results achieved under the three thematic areas: governance, economic, and social transformation 2. To identify the drivers and constraints of the programme’s performance with a special focus on the normative framework and how the global normative and intergovernmental frameworks have shaped the national policy and legal framework with the support of the Joint Programme; 3. To assess benefits of the professional internship programme on the beneficiaries at local level (young women and girls’ fresh graduate); 4. To assess the “Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and the Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiatives (GEPMI) training impact on the planning process at local level.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	ALIGNED SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE
IMPACT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess the impact of the programme on women’s equal leadership, participation and benefit from governance systems. 2. To assess the impact of the programme on economic empowerment of women and girls; 3. To assess the impact of the programme on GBV prevention and response including comprehensive response services to GBV victims.
EFFICIENCY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess the extent to which JP outputs and outcomes were achieved with the appropriate number of resources (funds, expertise, time and administrative costs etc).
SUSTAINABILITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess the sustainability of the programme including the participation of partners in planning and implementation of interventions, as well as assessing the probability of long-term benefits from the project based on measures taken to ensure that results initiated by the programme will be sustained on cessation of donor support.
OVERALL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide forward-looking recommendations that may be used in future programming and to document lessons learned, success stories and challenges in order to capitalize on the experiences gained.

1.3.4. Evaluation Scope

The present evaluation has covered the whole period of implementation of JP, from January 2019 up to June 2024. All the outcomes and outputs as specified in the programme’s implementation framework are included in the analysis. Achievements of involved stakeholders were explored and analysed. These comprise the UN agencies and National Gender Machinery (NGM), as well as the implementing partners and beneficiaries. The selection of the participants has followed a snowball system, where the first participant contributes to the identification of the next one. Thus, starting with the coordination of the programme, MIGEPROF as the Chair, and UN Women as co-Chair, all the NGM institutions and UN agencies were included. Then the implementing partners were identified from there, and informed about the right holders (beneficiaries) as well. Following this process, all the provinces were covered and all the categories of beneficiaries reached. With the cross-cutting themes which ensured the respect of the principle of leaving none behind, categories of people like refugees, people in rural and

urban areas, young and adult, and people with disabilities were taken into consideration during the evaluation.

1.4. Structure of the report

Section one above focuses on the context and objectives of the evaluation. Section two provides the methodological process opted to generate data needed to address the objectives of this evaluation. In section three, results from the evaluation are presented and discussed. The findings are presented under each thematic area, outcome and respective outputs. Section four contains some concluding remarks, lessons learned, and recommendations for actions to be taken by the programme partners and stakeholders.

2. METHODOLOGICAL PROCESS

2.1. Evaluation design

The present evaluation was organized in order to appraise JP achievements resulting from the interventions, and to assess the possible impact among the rights holders. It was conducted after 5.5 years of programme implementation, and has involved various stakeholders who contributed to the life of the programme at various levels. The evaluation was designed in such a way that shed lights on the programme concept itself as well as its implementation. The collected data were mostly qualitative and were provided by all the categories of stakeholders in order to respect the principle of triangulation as a way to ensure their credibility and dependability of the information.

2.2. Gender- responsiveness

The evaluation process has respected the principle of gender responsiveness. According to UN Women (2022), Gender-responsive evaluation remains a priority area and serves three key purposes: to demonstrate accountability to stakeholders; to provide credible and reliable evidence for decision-making; and to contribute important lessons learned about normative, operational and coordination work. Right since the design of JP, the planning of the evaluation has involved people from the community up to the national coordination through community organization, public institutions, and civil society organizations (see the initial document of JP). Thus, the evaluation modalities and conditions were determined by all the stakeholders, sometimes with the consultation of the finding of the studies conducted in the community. Both men and women were consulted and were part of the decision makers during the programme design and the programme evaluation. During the evaluation, they took part in stakeholders' analysis and engagement, development of terms of references, selection of evaluation team, and ensuring the quality of the evaluation design and implementation. They coordinated the evaluation team through direct supervision, report reading and validation workshops.

They appreciated the inception report, the evaluation methods, the findings and validation reports. Thus, none and no voice was neglected in the process of evaluation.

2.3. Evaluation approach

The approach used in this evaluation is a two-stage systematic process. The first stage consists of the use of existing secondary data from JP documents and other relevant reports and publications. This stage allowed us to make reference to the theory of change as presented above, as well as the result framework that has guided the implementation of the joint programme. In this regard, the theory of change was appraised on the basis of its soundness within the whole framework, showing the causal pathway linking the interventions with the outputs, outcomes, and impacts. In addition, the same soundness of the causal relationship was used to appreciate the indicators and the targets ascribed to each output.

Furthermore, the evaluation process involved the collection of primary data to document and measure the performance made by the programme on its outcome and output indicators as reflected in the logical framework. This has allowed us to assess the achievements and impacts and to make a reflection on their sustainability in the context of socioeconomic development of Rwanda. As already indicated, the analysis in this report made reference to the evaluation criteria developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/ Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (UNDP, 2021).

2.4. Data collection

2.4.1. Identification of respondents and sample

A purposive and snowball process has been used to identify the various categories of respondents during the key informants' interviews (KIIs). The literature review prior to consultations has helped to identify and map the UN agencies and Government entities involved in the development and implementation of the JP. The first set of respondents included informants from the UN agencies and Gender machinery implementing partners. In the second phase, respondents were beneficiary organizations that worked with the former to implement the programme. In the third stage, consultations were made with direct beneficiaries including individuals at the community level and community-based entities. At community level, consultations were held among individuals and representatives of community-based organizations/entities to gain their insights on the achievements, benefits, and impacts of the support received from the implementing agencies. To comply with the principle of inclusivity, participants to the evaluation were of both sexes (female and male) and involved people with disabilities.

With this process, thirty-six (36) institutions / organizations have been consulted in providing data and information on this JP. These institutions comprised six (6) UN agencies, four (4) NGM institutions, sixteen (16) implementing partners, and ten (10) community-based entities (CBEs).

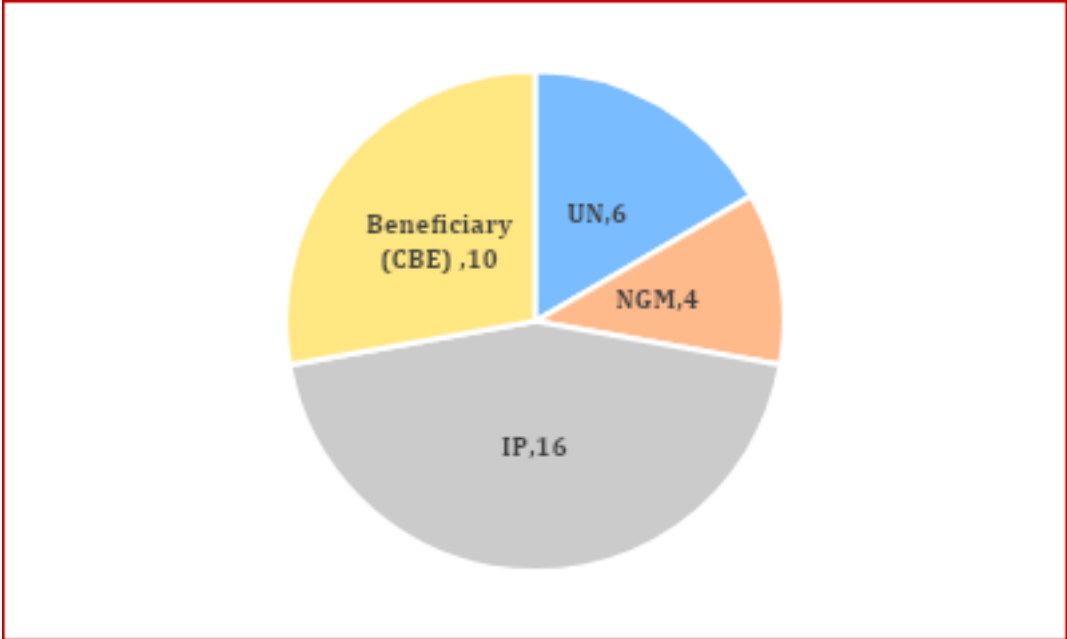


Figure 1: Categories of consulted institutions

The number of participants from sampled institutions was forty-nine (49) composed of thirty-four (34) women and fifteen (15) men. Among these participants, ten (10) were from UN agencies, five (5) from National Gender Machinery, sixteen (16) from implementing partners, and eighteen (18) from beneficiaries.

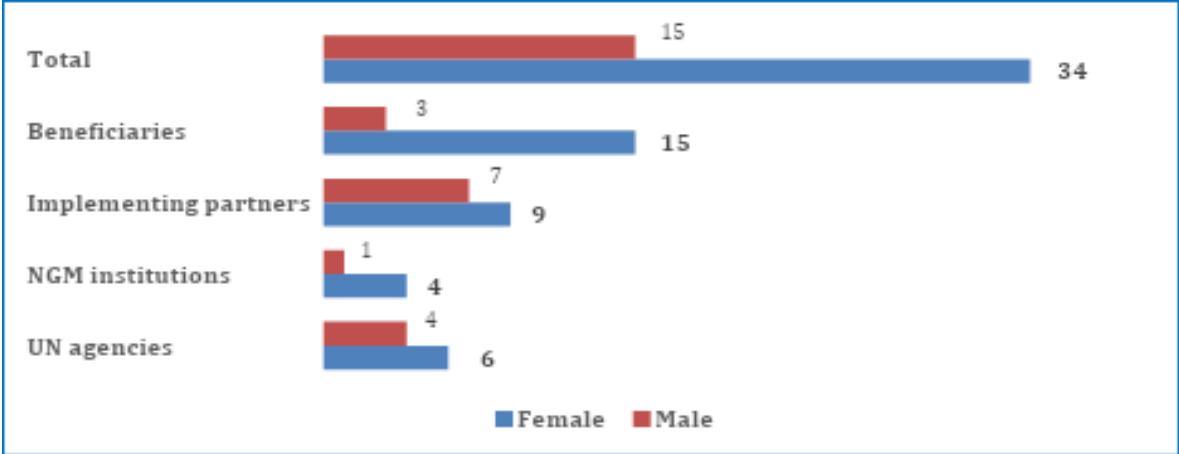


Figure 2: Women and men participants per category of institution

Considering the three pillars of JP, sixteen (16) participants spoke about women in decision making, twenty-five (25) on women’s economic empowerment, and fifteen (15) on sexual and gender-based violence³.

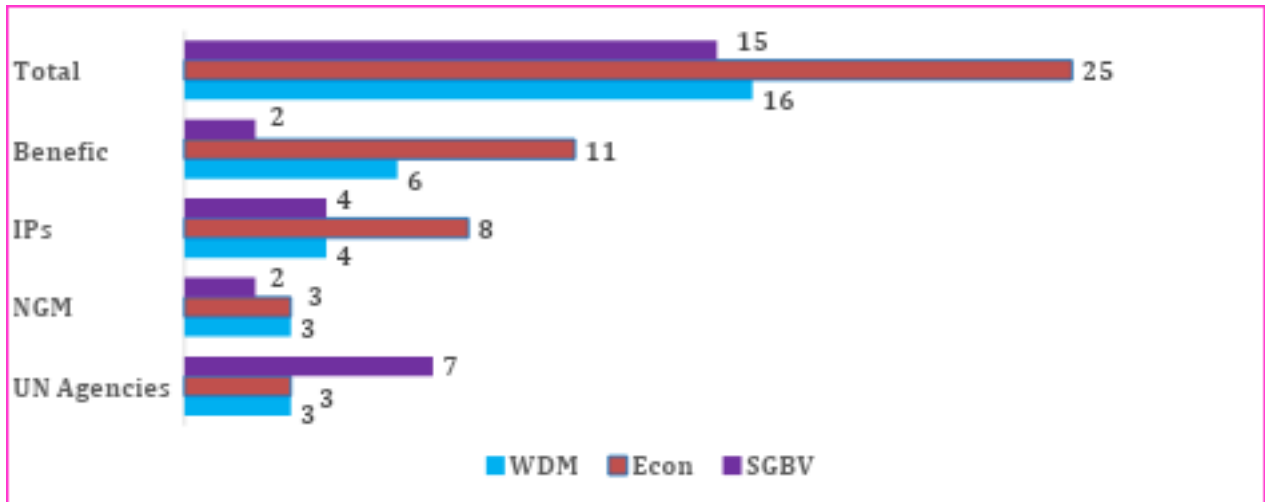


Figure 3: Number of participants per category of institution and pillar

Regarding geographical coverage, seventeen (17) institutions provided the information relevant to the whole national territory, while the others provided the information related to a particular province. Ascribing those national institutions to all the provinces, it is observed that twenty – three (23) institutions covered the City of Kigali, twenty – six (26) Western Province, nineteen (19) Eastern Province, eighteen (18) Southern Province, and twenty (20) Northern Province (see annex 3).

³ In some UN institutions, National Gender Machinery, and Implementing Partners, one person could contribute to two or all the three pillars following their areas of intervention. For this reason, the total number of participants following the three pillars seems to be more than the actual number of participants.

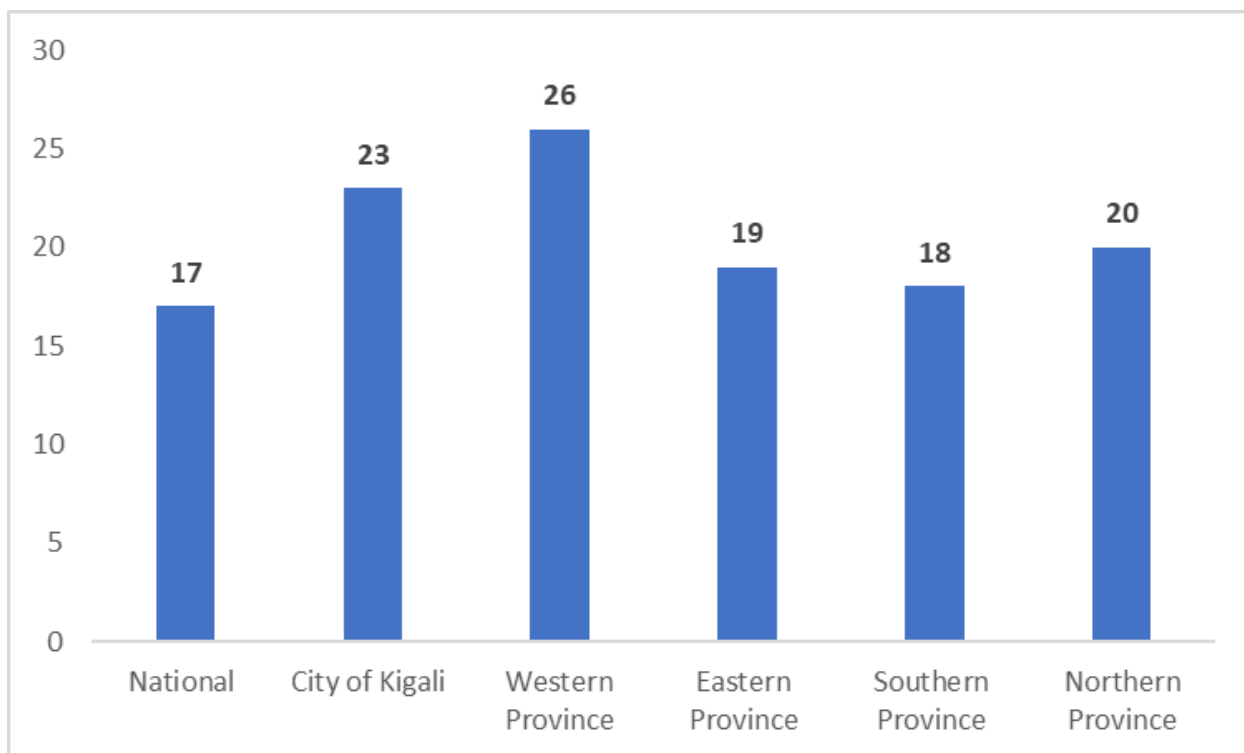


Figure 4: Geographical coverage (number of institutions)

2.4.2. Data collection Techniques

The initial technique used in collecting these data is a review of the available documents on the programme, plus preliminary consultations with the programme partners. At stage two, primary data were collected through consultations in the form of semi-structured Interviews. Therefore, information collected from individuals through interviews and FGDs was used to complement secondary data and provide key drivers of the observed performance level. As mentioned above, informants were identified from the programme partners, namely, UN Agencies, Government entities, implementing agencies and direct beneficiaries. Men, women and youth in different communities and groups (cooperatives, and saving groups), supported by Civil Society Organizations were involved. At each level of data collection, the interview revolved around four points: (1) intervention areas (women’s participation in decision making, economic empowerment, violence and security), and involved partners; (2) achievements, including available figures (statistics), descriptive appreciation, possible impact, sustainability, and lessons learned, cases of success stories; (3) any internal and/or external challenges that may have surfaced or was likely to negatively affect the achievements and how they have dealt with them; and (4) the suggestions for the next Joint programme. Probing questions were always used during the interviews (See annexes 4,5,6).

2.5. Data analysis approach and reporting

The analytical approach opted in this study is mainly descriptive analysis of the data by using the available data to measure the achievements and the trend of the performance indicators. Further, triangulation methodologies were used (by considering variables such as geographical areas, categories of institutions, sex, role of participants in their respective institutions) to reinforce the credibility and validity of the findings and conclusions.

Furthermore, data collected were organized, summarized and transcribed and integrated into the evaluation matrix for proper analysis. Furthermore, the contents analysis techniques were used during the present evaluation for qualitative data analysis (Kumar, 2011, p277-288). The qualitative data were narratively triangulated in order to provide a comprehensive final evaluation report. As explained above, data analysis has used the evaluation criteria from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/ Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (UNDP, 2021). These criteria comprise the relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability. Furthermore, the evaluation process was based on the theory of change as well as the result framework that have guided the JP implementation in Rwanda.

The present evaluation report highlights key findings, and is presented following the instructions and guidelines from the evaluation coordination so that the audience can easily understand the findings. The draft report was shared with the stakeholders and their inputs and comments were integrated as part of the finalization process of the report.

2.6. Ethical approach

During this final evaluation, ethics related to research was highly respected. Human rights were integrated at a higher level. No informant was forced to participate. The evaluators approached them, explained the reason for looking for them, and specified the process that was to be used in data collection as well as the way the information was to be used. Then they went forth asking evaluation questions only after having the evidence of the consent of the potential informant. In order to minimize the mistrust among the informants, the evaluators were introduced to institutions by the evaluation manager, the UN Women, then the institutions introduced them to the rightful persons for the data collection activity. Participants were asked permission to record and fortunately none refused, otherwise their freedom was to be respected either for the participation and/or for the recording.

The benefit of this evaluation to different categories of people, including the informants, was explained to every person who availed her/himself for participation. The team of evaluators was also ready to send the participant to the recognised person for the service

that can help them if any inconvenience happens. The privacy and discretion were assured to the participants during the management of the information and the reporting. The files containing the data were protected with a password only known to consultants in this evaluation, and the information from this evaluation will be used for the purpose of this evaluation only.

2.7. Limitations and mitigation strategies

There were two limitations in this evaluation but they did not affect the quality of the report. The first limitation concerns the geographical representation of the informants. The snowball technique used in the selection of participants allowed the evaluation team to reach out to the implementing partners and their beneficiaries. But since the IPs and beneficiaries were not evenly represented in geographical areas, some regions were more exposed than the others in terms of being contacted. In order to avoid any regional misrepresentation, the evaluation team was purposely including IPs and individuals from underrepresented regions and categories such as people within refugee camps and rural areas.

The second limitation relates to time management. This evaluation started during the end-year season, when most people were not available. While the work was initially supposed to be carried out within two months, it took almost the whole first month before starting having appointments. In addition, the snowball technique used to select the participants in phases from the top to the grassroots took longer than expected because a report was always produced and used after each category of informants (desk review, UN and NGM, IPs, and beneficiaries). The evaluation managers were cooperative and have accepted to provide no-cost extensions. So, because of these mitigation strategies, there was no negative effect or what seemed potentially able to disturb.

3. FINDINGS FROM THE EVALUATION

The findings of this evaluation report are presented along the standard criteria of evaluation: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, sustainability, and coordination and management. The logic followed is to present key achievements and observations made during the assessment of the programme against each of the above criteria. Both outcome and output indicators are assessed by comparing the performance against the baseline conditions also supported with key evidence or facts. The evaluators sought to compare the achievements and the targets but this was not possible because the initial programme was resized in 2021, touching only the budget and the activities and leaving aside the indicators, as well as annual and overall targets (UN Women, 2022).

3.1. Relevance of the Joint Programme

This subsection assesses the relevance of the Joint Programme in terms of soundness between the concept, design, theory of change, and implementation framework, alignment of interventions with relevant normative (national and international) frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment, alignment of interventions with the national needs and priorities in promoting gender equality, and the integration of needs and priorities of intended beneficiaries during the design and implementation.

3.1.1. *Soundness between the concept, design, theory of change, and implementation framework*

Finding 1:

The JP's theory of change and the entire result framework respond to the standards of programme concept, with the required causal and effect relationships between the outcomes, outputs, interventions, and indicators. However, two concerns were observed in the mismatch between the output 2.1 and its indicators as well as in the partial retouch of the initial JP document, which made it impossible to compare the achievements with the targets.

The programme's theory of change postulates conditional statements that reflect the need for improved participation of women and girls in leadership and decision-making, women's empowerment and gender equality commitments. These are translated respectively into accountable and local governance institutions, increased access and control over economic resources, promotion of favourable social norms and attitudes towards GEWE, and use of available and accessible essential services by women and girls who experience gender-based violence. Furthermore, the same theory of change

provides some key expected outcomes once the above conditions are met or improved: women and girls will be able to fully benefit from and contribute to political and economic opportunities; violence against women and girls will be substantially reduced; more decision-making power for women and girls will be secured, consideration of gender specific needs in all spheres of governance, removal of barriers of women to attain economic autonomy, and improved response to violence against women.

If- statements:

- ▷ Women and girls participate and lead in decision-making processes;
- ▷ Women’s empowerment and gender equality commitments are translated into practice by accountable national and local governance institutions
- ▷ Women, including the most vulnerable ones, have equal access and control over economic resources;
- ▷ Favourable social norms, attitudes, and behaviour towards GEWE are promoted at institutional and community level;
- ▷ Women and girls who experience violence can use available, accessible, and quality essential services

Then- statements:

- ▷ Women and girls will be able to fully benefit from and contribute to political and economic opportunities and violence against women and girls will be substantially reduced;
- ▷ Women and girls will have decision-making powers,
- ▷ Gender specific needs will have been accounted for in all spheres of governance,
- ▷ Response to violence against women and girls will be available and barriers would have been removed for women to attain economic autonomy.

The programme implemented its activities around three thematic areas: (1) Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from the governance system, (2) Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy, (3) All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence. The interventions in these thematic areas aimed to enhance women’s leadership and participation and to benefit from accountable governance systems, unlock economic opportunities for women within the expanding of Rwandan private and public sector markets, and to contribute to the prevention of violence of women and girls by addressing its root causes as well as enhancing access to quality services to survivors.

The analysis of the JP's theory of change and the entire result framework responds to the standards of programme concept, with the required causal and effect relationships between the outcomes, outputs, interventions, and indicators. However, two concerns were observed in the mismatch between the output 2.1 and its indicators as well as in the partial retouch of the initial JP document, as mentioned also in the mid-term review. At this point, the output 2.1 is about the monitoring and strengthening of the "Accountability mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in government agencies, CSOs, Faith – Based Organisations (FBOs), International/National Non-Governmental Organisations (I/NGOs) and political parties" while indicators are formulated around the "Level of citizen satisfaction with service delivery in local administration" (indicator 1), and the percentage of citizen's satisfaction with the performance of Local Governance councils" (indicator 2).

In addition, the JP initial document was revised in 2021 in order to align it with the reality, especially with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused all the systems to be adjusted. In revising JP, the budget has decreased from 19,096,661 US Dollars to 13,463,495 US Dollars. This implies a decreasing financial capacity of the programme to deliver on its targets. Similarly, some activities were also removed and others combined while the indicators and the targets remained the same. Going forward, future programme design and implementation will have to consider regular monitoring starting from the beginning of the programme in order to facilitate further stages of the programme cycle.

3.1.2. *Alignment of interventions with relevant normative (national and international) frameworks for GEWE*

Finding 2:

JP is in line with national, regional, and global strategies and efforts to sustainable development such as Rwanda's Vision 2050, National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), National Gender Policy (2021), EAC Vision 2050, African Agenda 2063, Sustainable Development Goals, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) (1995), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), UN Security Council 1325, and many others.

A look at the programme's theory of change and its interventions reveals how these are well supported by the national policy and strategic thinking as enshrined in the Global Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 5), Vision 2050, the prevailing National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and the National Gender Policy (2021). Rwanda's Vision 2050 recognizes the progress made in the past three decades in promoting gender equality and women empowerment. The same country's Vision 2050 considers gender equality and equity and inclusiveness part of the positive values meant to support Rwanda's social transformation. For instance, on May 8th, 2024 Rwanda celebrated 30 years of promoting GEWE after hosting the "Women Deliver International Conference", among other national and regional activities.

The NST 1 (2018-2024) accounts for cross-sectoral efforts to promote gender equality and women empowerment. Despite the fact that NST1 is in its final year (2024), the implementation period of this Joint Programme falls in the NST-1's period 2018-2024. The commitment in NST1 enforces the notion of mainstreaming gender equality and women empowerment across all sectors through the Sector Strategic Plans (SSPs), and the District Development Strategies (DDSs). This implied the proposal of strategic interventions on gender by the lead Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion that other sectors and districts would consider during the design and implementation of SSPs at sector level and DDSs at District level as a decentralized entity. Three specific interventions are proposed under gender and family promotion:

- (1) Mainstreaming gender in employment and job creation strategies;
- (2) Strengthening capacities of gender machinery and use of gender mainstreaming tools and disaggregated data to inform policy formulation and resource allocation;
- (3) Continuing awareness and fighting against gender-based violence and human trafficking

Table 2: Links between the programme’s goals and NST1’s pillars

Joint Programme’s goal	NST 1’s Pillar addressed by the programme’s outcome
Enhance women’s leadership and participation in and benefits from accountable governance systems.	Transformational governance
Unlocking economic opportunities for women within the expanding of Rwandan private and public sector markets.	Economic Transformation
Contributing to the prevention of violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes as well as at enhancing access to quality services to survivors.	Transformational Governance Social Transformation

National Gender Policy (2021). The theory of change and the proposed activities of the programme reflect well the provisions in the national gender policy of 2010 also revised in 2021. The current national gender policy focuses on accelerating the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and accountability for national transformation. Its logic is to go beyond gender mainstreaming and have gender sector specific interventions to ensure gender transformation along the overall national socioeconomic transformation. Key prospects and targets embedded in the JP’s goals are well supported by three of the eight priority areas of the policy:

- (1) Priority area #2: Accelerate women’s economic empowerment.** This is directly linked with the second thematic area aimed at unlocking **economic** opportunities for women within the expanding Rwandan private and public sector markets.
- (2) Priority area #6:** Increase women’s meaningful participation and representation in **leadership** and decision-making positions in public and private sector as well as CSOs at all levels. **Proposed** actions under this priority area are consistent with proposed interventions under the first thematic area aimed to increase women’s leadership role and participation in the governance system also by ensuring equal benefits for both men and women and boys and girls.
- (3) priority area # 8:** Conducive Legal Framework for Gender equality. **Provisions** under this priority area are in line with the proposed 3rd thematic area of the programme aimed to make a contribution in preventing **violence** of women and girls by addressing its root causes as well as at enhancing access to quality services to survivors. Proposed interventions under the JP gender are highly correlated with those actions identified in the national gender policy especially under the above three priority areas documented (2,6, and 8). Therefore, most of the policy issues identified and addressed by the national gender policy are similarly addressed by the proposed

joint programme. Thus, the JP on gender has addressed issues pertaining gender transformation along the overall national transformation strategic framework

The African Agenda 2063. The agenda emphasizes women empowerment in all spheres of social, economic and political lives leading to inclusive economic growth with expanded job opportunities, especially for the youth and women. In the same area, the agenda envisions an African continent where no child, woman or man will be left behind. Clearly, the three thematic areas of this programme are well supported and coherent with the provisions in the African Agenda 2063.

The EAC Vision 2050. The vision recognizes that no society can reach its full potential, unless it empowers women and remove all obstacles to women's full participation in all areas of human endeavours (EAC, 2016). This is directly linked with the first and second thematic areas of this Joint Programme.

Sustainable Development Goal # 5: the SDG # 5 is a specific goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A look at the SDG5's targets, it is clear how the programme's targets and planned interventions respond to SDG5's targets. For instance, targets 5.1 entails ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere while target 5. 5 is to ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. These two target areas are captured by interventions under the first thematic area. Targets 5.2 and 5.3 provide for elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres including harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage. Target 5.4 deals with recognition and value of 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. This target is in line with planned interventions and activities under the second thematic area of the Joint Programme.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) (1995). Initiated in 1995, the BPFA has proposed 12 of strategic areas and actions whose majority of the actions fall under the three thematic areas or pillars of the Joint programme. Since 1995, the adoption of the BPFA marked a turning point for Rwanda's commitments to promote gender equality and women empowerment.

3.1.3. *Integration of beneficiaries and alignment of interventions to their needs and priorities*

Finding 3:

Alignment of Programme's interventions and the needs of beneficiaries is a key prerequisite of the programme's success. The needs of the beneficiaries were assessed at the beginning of the intervention in order to formulate activities that are relevant in addressing their needs. Continuous monitoring of the JP on gender and the mid-term evaluation were also planned and implemented as continuous means to ensure that the programme's interventions are in line with beneficiaries' needs and priorities. Furthermore, the types of activities implemented have involved the beneficiaries in defining their priorities such as in capacity development through training, financial support, and other activities through TVET and Small and Medium Enterprises.

JP is a programme that is jointly implemented by partners of different categories and from different sectors as they fit into the thematic areas of interventions. These vary from individuals through groups and associations to national institutions in public, civil society and private sector. All these partners are experienced in community interventions and always build upon their previous experience to improve the next interventions. They form and participate in different platforms through which challenges facing the communities are presented and discussed by the stakeholders through the sector working groups or cluster and thematic groups by the stakeholders from the public, civil society and private sector actors. In addition, supported by the current policy planning best practices, evidence-based policy planning and decision-making process offer greater opportunity to consider people's needs through the situation analysis often conducted before policies and strategies are formulated. It is in this regard that every public strategic planning at district and national level involves the beneficiaries, at least at the initial level of needs assessment (Hafidzi Razali, 2020). During the data collection for this evaluation, many respondents (NWC, ARCT, UNDP, etc.) referred to the studies or mid-term evaluation of their programmes explaining how they assessed the needs of the beneficiaries and the level to which they involve them in the implementation, especially during the COVID 19 period (UN Women, 2022). Thus, the needs of beneficiaries are assessed in the beginning of the intervention, during the midterm evaluation, and during the supervision and monitoring of the implementation, then the intervention or strategy are defined or adjusted accordingly.

Through desk review and primary data collection, it was revealed that JP gender has highly contributed to the increase of knowledge, skills, and capacities of beneficiaries through various training programmes offered by different implementing partners, increased their access to finance and improved their financial inclusion, access to off-farm jobs through job creation initiatives including coaching and mentorship, and increased participation in the governance system especially at decentralized entities.

3.1.4. *Consideration of gender and human rights*

As specified in the previous sections, gender and human rights were respected in the essence and all the steps of JP. Concerning gender, the entire programme is about gender and the promotion of the respect of gender principles. The focus of the programme was on three aspects of gender promotion, namely, women's participation in decision making and leadership, women's economic empowerment and women's safety. In addition, the section 2.2 on gender responsiveness narrates how women were involved in the programme since its inception, during the design and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and coordination. Women's specific need was particularly addressed, women were the main target as beneficiaries and they were supported in the businesses of their choice. The midterm review and the final evaluation of the programme also have involved women and men at all steps and levels.

Likewise, human rights respect was part of the programme's concern from the beginning to the end. In this regard, JP considered the principle of leaving none behind, by including those who used to have less opportunities such as people with disabilities, women in rural areas, teenage mothers, refugees, etc. In addition, all the categories of beneficiaries were consulted during the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of JP. Thus, the interventions were based on the needs expressed by the beneficiaries. The mid-term review and the final evaluation have also respected ethical principles, including no maleficence (no harm), participants' consent, freedom to participate and to withdraw at any stage, respect of privacy and discretion, etc.

3.2. Coherence of JP

Finding 4:

JP coherence is assured through its alignment with the existing initiatives promoting gender equality and women's empowerment at national, regional, and global level. Its activities are also in line with other initiatives in Rwanda by the United Nations, public institutions, Civil Society organizations, and private section.

The focus of the JP was on three thematic areas: (1) Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from the governance system, (2) Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy, (3) All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence. These themes are not new within Rwanda's efforts to development, in partnership with the UN family as well as other contributing partners. For example, the Constitution of Rwanda of 2003 and its subsequent revised versions of 2015 and 2023 have considered gender among top provisions and guidelines during the course of development. Furthermore, the government of Rwanda has established prerequisite institutional and legal frameworks to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) are observed and pursued in their highest eminence. Thus, gender machinery institutions work in synergy to ensure that national gender policies and strategies are defined, their implementation is effectively monitored, that Rwandans in general and women in particular are mobilized for this purpose, and that gender related laws and gender equality best practices are advocated for.

Moreover, in Rwanda, like in other countries whose leaderships are gender sensitive, every initiative, project and programme of all kinds has to demonstrate how gender has been mainstreamed before this is approved. Current and previous national strategies such as Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies (I and II: 2008 – 2012 and 2013 – 2018), National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) 2017 – 2024 and NST2 (2024 – 2029), and many other initiatives, which are also in line with regional and global development strategies, have been seriously considering GEWE as an important cross-cutting area during the strategic planning process. Clearly, the proposed activities and programmatic interventions under the JP fall into existing and well politically supported national and regional strategies promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition, the programming of JP was informed by the recommendations from the final evaluation of the previous and pilot JP on "advancing and sustaining gender equality gains (2013-2018).

3.3. Effectiveness of the Joint Programme

This subsection presents the performance of the JP against its planned targets. During the design of JP, four outcomes corresponding with the programme’s thematic areas were formulated as reflected in the following table (Table 3). Detailed description of achievements, impacts, and sustainability for each outcome and their outputs is provided in the next subsections.

Table 3: JP thematic areas and corresponding outcomes

<i>Thematic area</i>	<i>Outcome #</i>	<i>Description</i>
1. Women lead	1	By 2023, people in Rwanda will benefit from enhanced gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security (UNDAP Outcome 5).
	2	By 2023, people in Rwanda participate more actively in democratic and development processes and benefit from transparent and accountable public and private sector institutions that develop evidence-based policies and deliver quality services (UNDAP Outcome 6).
2. Women have income	3	By 2023 people in Rwanda will benefit from more inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth that generates decent work and promotes quality livelihoods for all (UNDAP Outcome 1).
3. Women and girls are free from violence	4	By 2023 people in Rwanda, particularly the most vulnerable, will have increased resilience to both natural and man-made shocks and enjoy a life free from all forms of violence and discrimination (UNDAP Outcome 4).

3.3.1. Enhanced gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security (JP Outcome 1: UNDAP Outcome 5)

Output 1.1: Women’s capacity to compete for leadership positions and to lead decision making processes at local and national level strengthened

The findings under this subsection show the extent to which women’s capacity to compete for leadership positions and to lead decision making processes at local and national level has been strengthened. Two indicators were formulated for the output 1.1: (1) Number of women candidates with skills and capacities to participate in the electoral process, and

(2) Number of women and girls reached out through mentorship program in leadership and entrepreneurship.

Finding 5:

Interventions to strengthen women’s capacities to compete for leadership positions have had positive results, especially in fresh women graduates who were mentored, women in journalism, and women in political parties who were trained. Visible achievements were observed in this regard and have contributed to the improvement of the practice of their professions, although there are still some resistances due to cultural norms. About twenty (20) mentees were elected among the local leaders mainly at sector council during the 2021 elections and others got job opportunities in local governance. There is also hope that women will actively participate in the parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled in July 2024 are results.

The overall goal under this outcome is to enhance women’s leadership and participation in and benefit from accountable governance. In order to achieve this goal, the programme planned and implemented activities under the following intervention areas: capacity building programs for women candidates in the 2021 local and 2024 parliamentary elections, training on transformational leadership for aspiring and incumbent women leaders; a mentorship programme for young women and girls, induction training for newly elected women leaders in gender responsive budgeting principles, and building institutional capacity to implement gender mainstreaming strategies across sectors. This outcome area has three main outputs under which all implemented activities can be grouped and assessed for programme performance under this particular thematic area.

Major result statements

Data from secondary sources show that ninety-three (93) observers (66 [71%] females and 27 [29%] males) were trained in 2021 electoral monitoring. The purpose of this training was to continue tracking Rwanda’s progress in complying to gender equality considerations during the electoral process. In the same logic, meetings between GMO, National Electoral Commission and CSO were also organized. Those trained from the above training were deployed in the whole country, three in each district. Out of 1,674 applicants to District councillor level positions, 39.1% (655) were women, and 34.4% (535) were accepted for competition (82% of women candidates).

At the district council level, women represented 46%, and more qualified women have competed where all the NWC members at sector and district levels have a university degree (UN Women 2022 MTR; GMO, 2022 Annual report). In addition, 27% of presidents of district councils were women, with an increase of 20.5% as compared with 2016 elections [6.5%]. Women secretaries for district council were 78%, with a decrease of 6% as compared with 2016 elections [83.9%], which is positive due to the decrease of feminization of this position. District Mayors were 30% with an increase of 10.6% as compared with 2016 elections [19.4%] (GMO 2022 [Annual report]).

Women’s capacity was also strengthened through forming women’s networks. African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) Rwanda Chapter was launched during the Rwanda Women Leaders Network (RWLN) summit on March 01, 2023 in which the two (RWLN and AWLN-Rwanda chapter) were merged. This merger constitutes a pathway to align intervention of both platforms and to address identified gaps. It will also help to ensure that Rwandan women, like African women in general, participate in transformative and sustainable development.

Table 4: Outputs, targets, and result statements for the outcome #1

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
<p>Output 1.1: Women’s capacity to compete for leadership positions and to lead decision making processes at local and national level strengthened.</p>	<p>Target 1.1.1. The target was to have women candidates with skills and capacities to participate in the electoral process: 743 for parliament, 418 for local government, and 200 for mediators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through the Joint Programme, the National Forum of Political Parties Organizations (NFPO) train 231 women from 11 political parties increased their skills in transformational leadership by understanding their triple roles (Reproductive, productive and community management); also enhanced skills in political participation and decision making, coaching and support from role models; ● Through Women Leaders Network Summit, approximately 6,350 women leaders including ministers, parliamentarians, senators, senior officers committed to enhance women’s vertical and horizontal peer learning, mentorship of young women leaders to sustain the gains made around women leadership and participation in decision making; ● Through the Women Leaders Network Summit, the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) Rwanda chapter was launched with the aim to galvanize women’s leadership towards lasting peace and sustainable development, the promotion of gender equality, and women’s empowerment in all sectors and at all levels. The AWLN also seeks to enhance the leadership of African women in the transformation of the continent, in line with the Africa Agenda 2063 and the Global Sustainable Development agenda 2030.

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Under the UN Joint Programme, 93 observers (66 [71%] females and 27 [29%] males) were equipped with gender-sensitive monitoring and reporting skills during the 2021 elections; ● In collaboration with MIGEPROF and Rwanda Association of Local Government Authorities (RALGA), the JP supported a six-month professional internship programme to enhance leadership skills for 370 young women university graduates. These are constituted by 120 graduates for the 1st cohort, 150 for the 2nd cohort, and 100 for the on-going 3rd cohort. ● A total of 220 women leaders and members in political parties at district and regional level gained practical skills to become transformative agents of change through decision-making positions and play an active role in political parties; ● 655 women aspirants out of 1,674 applied for District councillor level positions and 535 women candidates were accepted for competition as results of skills acquired on gender-sensitive monitoring and reporting skills; ● A total of 211 women against 248 men were elected to the district council; and out of 27 elected Presidents of the Councils, 10 of them are women (representing 37%); ● A total of 239 young women were supported through a six-month internship programme. Some of these have increased their leadership skills and others (20 of them) earned leadership seats in different councils in the 2021 local government elections.

From the consultations done with the beneficiaries, the following testimonies and evidences were provided to support the programme’s achievements in their respective opinion:

- ✓ The beneficiaries who contributed to the evaluation confirmed that women’s capacity in leadership were strengthened. These include **graduate students** placed by districts for internship, with a monthly support of 70,000 RWF which later increased to 100,000 RFW. Three hundred eighty (380) young graduates benefited from this intervention.
- ✓ Beneficiaries in this thematic area involved also women **journalists**, women's media associations and cooperatives as well as journalism students who were trained as individual, association or group, on media literacy, gender sensitive reporting, and digital skills to empower women journalists and media professionals. Associations were trained in advocacy strategies, leadership development, and networking opportunities to amplify women's voices in the media and beyond. ARFEM as an association of women in media was supported to develop structures and administrative documents: e.g. statute, business plan. Other women journalists were recruited from the university to be supported with the internship of

six months. Some of the achievements as narrated by participants include the 40 media houses which now have developed and adopted gender media policies.

- ✓ Women members of **political parties** also were trained on topics like: “Women political participation: Women can do it: Political will, drivers, triggers and actors, current status, challenges”, “Women empowerment for transformational governance”, “Women roles in political party leadership positions”. From 2019 to march 2024, 1252 women wing leaders trained, all parties have set up women wings from national level to District levels. As a result, women have participated in political careers, have developed their confidence and are campaigning for decision making organs. They have also established micro-business that help them to be developed with their families. At the community level, women trained through political parties are familiar with the triple roles of a woman as a spouse, a mother and leader which are key in Rwandan transformational governance. Women wing leaders are strongly committed to become mentors and role models to their fellow women within the same political organization in order to ensure and sustain women achievements through different political agendas aiming at State welfare. There is another training plan to prepare women for the July 15, 2024 presidential and parliamentary elections, especially on various aspects of preparation and conduct of these elections; the role of women in the electoral process., and to equip them with knowledge and skills on political campaigning.

However, women’s leadership empowerment is still facing cultural barriers and resistance being in journalism and in political participation, thus some women are still reluctant to engage in these careers.

Output 1.2: Local and national level Government institutions’ capacities to coordinate and execute gender-responsive development frameworks and budgets are strengthened

This subsection shows the extent to which local and national level government institutions’ capacities to coordinate and execute gender-responsive development frameworks and budget have been strengthened through the JP’s interventions and activities.

Finding 6:

Government institutions' capacities to coordinate and execute gender-responsive development frameworks and budgets were strengthened through training in various areas such as gender responsive budgeting (GRB) and gender responsive economic policy management (GEPM). It also happened through the staffing and support of National Gender and Family Cluster (NGFC), the development of national policies and strategies. The real impact is yet to be observed by now but there is hope, viewed the success in implementation and the readiness of these institutions.

The findings from the evaluation give an estimate of about 12,115 people (majority being women and girls) compared to 10,000 targeted who were trained in various areas to ensure that the capacity of national and local level government institutions is increased to execute gender responsive development strategies. Sector strategies, district development strategies / plans and budget. Areas of capacity building include gender responsive budgeting (GRB), gender responsive economic policy management (GEPM), gender mainstreaming and analysis including the media, and result based management from the gender lens. Among people who have benefited from these training and capacity building interventions include staff from central and decentralized government entities, members of the parliament, media practitioners, implementing partners, and gender officers across the country's districts.

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
<p>Output 1.2: National and local level Government institutions' capacities to execute gender-responsive development strategies, sector strategies, district development plans and budgets increased.</p>	<p>Target 1.2.1. To reach out 10,000 women and girls through mentorship programmes in leadership and entrepreneurship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A total of 89 members of Parliament (56 women and 33 men) out of 106 (84%) were equipped with skills in Gender – responsive budgeting (GRB) and Gender Responsive Economic Policy Management (GEPM) for evidence-based legislation and oversight. ● A total of 20 staff from several partner organizations of MIGEPROF have increased their knowledge through trainings on coordinating and executing gender-responsive development frameworks and budgets; ● Previously, in 2020 it was reported that 6,605 people trained [773 (UNW), 5612 (UNHCR), 220 (UNDP)] in leadership and entrepreneurship. Additionally, 4100 women and girls participated at the Youth Connect in 2019/2020) as part of mentorship and training. ● A total of 45 media practitioners representing different media houses were equipped with analytical skills and knowledge on gender mainstreaming in the media, gender analysis, gender-based violence, contributing to enhancing gender responsiveness in media sector;

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More than 193 participants (79 women and 114 men) media practitioners were equipped with skills in media content and editorial management, communicable disease including COVID-19 reporting, climate change and disaster management, sign language, investigative justice reporting, family planning, and sexual harassment. ● In total, a total of 162 participants were trained on how to enhance the quality of programmes and improve the IPs capacity to deliver meaningful results across programmes; ● A total of 173 participants (91 males and 82 females) from central and district levels and National Gender Machineries (NGM) were equipped with skills in Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), gender analysis, and gender mainstreaming; ● A new National Gender Policy has been developed to address emerging gender policy related issues and to reiterate Rwanda’s commitments and domestication of the regional and international agenda and instruments ● National Men Engage and Gender Transformative Strategy for Gender Equality.

In addition, coordination was strengthened through the staffing of National Gender and Family Cluster (NGFC), the development of the NGFC coordination strategy, and the rollout of the new coordination architecture at national and local level, which includes three Sub-Clusters: Gender Equality and Women Empowerment, Family Promotion and SGBV prevention, and Early Childhood Development. The strengthening of the coordination was also realised through supporting NGFC meetings, stakeholders mapping, and revamping GRB.

Other organs that were strengthened through training are the Media High Council and the National Youth Council Committee. Various training sessions were organised for media practitioners with skills in media content and editorial management, communicable disease including COVID-19 reporting, climate change and disaster management, sign language, investigative justice reporting, family planning, and sexual harassment.

The strategic plan 2022 – 2026 for FFRP was developed and two policies revised (the 2010 National Gender Policy revised in 2020 and adopted in February 2021 and the 2011 GBV policy revised in 2021) in order to adapt them to the current realities.

Therefore, though several government staff have skills to systematize gender budget planning and execution tracking and reporting, a tool which can be used to track gender-budget planning and management is yet to be developed.

Output 1.3: Community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's rights to equal participation in decision making increased

This subsection informs on the extent to which the community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's rights to equal participation in decision making has increased through the JP's interventions and activities. The related output had one indicator 1.3: proportion of media houses with gender mainstreaming editorial policies in place. The results are depicted in the lines below.

Finding 7:

A number of categories of people were equipped on community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's rights to equal participation in decision making, including members of National Youth Council, members of civil society organizations, cooperatives of people with disabilities, and couples. They were equipped with awareness on gender equality, positive masculinities, and SGBV. Awareness was raised through campaigns, public forums, and community outreach programs to address gender stereotypes, promotion of women's rights, and fostering inclusive dialogue. Although their number is small as compared with the Rwandan community, most of the selected categories are in leadership and will reach other people under their responsibilities. It is also found that gender media policy was developed and adopted by 40 Media Houses, and 40 Media houses have an anti-sexual harassment policy.

The evaluation has identified beneficiaries of training and capacity building interventions on community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's rights to equal participation in decision making. A total of 2,450 members of the National Youth Council Committee at District and Sector levels were equipped with skills in gender equality, positive masculinities, and SGBV. Furthermore, a total of 335 out of 350 targeted couples were equipped with knowledge and capacity to drive change in promoting gender equality, preventing family violence, sexual and gender-based violence in communities, and workplaces, while supporting family economic empowerment and positive masculinities, among others. In addition, 7 CSOs were supported to deliver services among people with disabilities resulting in 11 cooperatives of PWDs (227 members of which 107 are women and 120 are men) to recover their businesses after Covid-19 pandemic. All these people were trained to drive change in promoting gender equality, preventing family violence, sexual and gender-based violence in communities, and workplaces, while supporting family economic empowerment.

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
<p>Output 1.3</p> <p>Community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's right to equal participation in decision making increased.</p>	<p>Target 1.3.1. To have a 20% proportion of media houses with gender mainstreaming editorial policies in place.</p> <p>Achievements under this target are those that are directly linked to the gender mainstreaming of editorial policies in place and those that contribute to the community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's right to equal participation in decision making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forty (40) media houses have been trained and supported, this has enabled them to develop and adopt gender media policies. Furthermore, women journalists individually or through their cooperatives or associations were trained in advocacy strategies, leadership development, and networking opportunities to amplify women's voices in the media and beyond. ● UNDP, in partnership with the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) and the Association of Rwandese Female Journalists (ARFEM) organized an annual conference on gender equality to enhance the capacity of 45 women journalists to promote the gender equality agenda. ARFEM was also supported to develop structures and administrative documents such as statute and business plan. ● A total of 115 ARFEM members were trained on how to increase their skills on innovation and entrepreneurship in the media sector and on the prevention and response to sexual harassment in their working environment; ● 2,323 National Youth Council Committee members at district and sector levels were equipped with skills in addressing gender equality and SGBV; ● A total of 127 youth committee members (86 men and 41 women) at district level and above were equipped with the knowledge and skills in gender equality principles in order to reinforce their roles as leaders and models. ● 7 CSOs were supported and empowered to implement activities of promoting GEWE at community level, delivering services to people with disabilities for economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic; ● With this intervention, 11 cooperatives of people with disabilities (227 of which 107 women and 120 men) were supported to resume business activities after the lockdown caused by COVID-19; ● A total of 335 couples out of 350 were equipped with knowledge and capacity to drive change in promoting gender equality, preventing family violence, sexual and gender-based violence in communities, and workplaces, while supporting family economic empowerment and positive masculinities, among others.

Concerning media, the results show that 40 Media houses have an anti-sexual harassment policy, a national anti-sexual harassment committee was formed to address the issues around anti-sexual harassment, and gender media policy was developed and

adopted by 40 Media Houses in Rwanda. There is also a gender desk help that was initiated to receive gender-based violence cases and act upon them.

The effectiveness of the interventions related to outcome 1 was due to a number of factors. The first factor is a political will and initiatives. Rwanda Constitution is clear about women's participation in leadership where at least 30% of decision-making positions are guaranteed to them before using other ways of access such as competitions and elections. This political engagement was translated into action through the establishment of conducive legal and institutional frameworks, which resulted into having the National Gender Machinery institutions (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, Gender Monitoring Office, National Women's Council, and Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum) that ensure that policies and laws are in place, and their awareness and implementation monitored. The other effectiveness factor lies in a close collaboration between National Gender Machinery, other public institutions, especially National Electoral Commission, pro-gender Civil Society Organisations, private sector and women, which facilitate women's engagement into leadership and decision-making positions.

3.3.2. *Women's active participation in democratic and development processes (JP Outcome 2: UNDAP Outcome 6)*

Output 2.1: Accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions strengthened

This subsection explains the extent to which the accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions was strengthened. There are two indicators associated with this output: (1) Level of citizen satisfaction with service delivery in local administration, and (2) percentage of citizen satisfaction with the performance of local government councils.

Finding 8:

The accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions was strengthened through gender accountability dialogues (GAD) carried out in Eastern, Northern, and Southern Provinces. Dialogues were organized with local leaders, and service providers such as police, youth leaders, and teen mothers were invited as well for advocacy purpose. The Gender Management Information System (GMIS) was established and managed by GMO. These interventions have added value to existing initiatives meant to improve the accountability and oversight mechanisms on GEWE especially in public institutions at all levels.

Interventions and activities under this output respond to the same goal related to enhancing women's leadership and participation in and benefits from accountable governance systems. Activities performed are more related to capacity building in a form of training and the conduct of gender accountability dialogues, gender-based violence prevention, and conference on gender equality.

Major result statements

The following are some of key results already documented:

Result area # 1. The evaluation has identified several Gender Accountability Days (GAD) organized by GMO and its stakeholders. GAD constituted a powerful accountability tool to engage leaders at all levels especially the community and local leaders across all provinces. As result, a total of 12,336 people were involved in GAD activities. These include 3,990 community and village leaders, police officers, the army, parliamentarians (senators and deputies), 4,959 local leaders, 1478 teen mothers, 400 youth, and 1500

community members at sector level. This has contributed to local authorities being more accountable to gender equality as well improving service delivery to victims of GBV.

Result Area # 2: There was also the operationalization and management by GMO of the Gender Management Information System (*GMIS*) as a hub of gender information. The system was developed as well as its handbook, and GMO and stakeholders' staff trained in using it. The GMIS will enhance the capacity of GMO to ensure public institutions' accountability to gender equality. The third intervention was the media involvement through conferences, training of journalists and 16 days of activism. In addition, 57 technical staff at central and district levels were equipped with the skills needed to improve collection of gender related data and statistics through GMIS while 115 ARFEM (Rwandan Association of Women in Media) members enhanced their skills on innovation and entrepreneurship in the media sector and on the prevention and response to sexual harassment in their working environment through the JP support.

Other results:

Accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions was also strengthened through training and organisation of events including policy dialogues. The annual conference on gender equality was organised to enhance women journalists' voice in promoting the gender equality agenda. In addition, the international campaign on 16 days of activism against GBV was annually organised and constitutes a space and opportunity for people and institutions to commit themselves to actively and collectively fight against SGBV and advocate for gender equality promotion.

In the same context, a number of gender profiles were developed, including, the country gender status of 2019 and its second edition produced in 2023, the Beijing +25 reports and preparation for the Beijing +30, as well as gender profiles in ICT, Education, Access to finance, and governance, which has facilitated availing analytical data for planning and decision making, thus the enhancement of gender accountability and evidence based advocacy.

Table 5: Output, targets and results statements under outcome #2

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
<p>Output 2.1:</p> <p>Accountability mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in</p>	<p>Target 2.1.1. An 80% level of citizen satisfaction with service delivery in local administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conducted gender accountability dialogues (GAD) with local leaders in the districts of Muhanga, Gicumbi, Nyagatare and Nyamagabe to enhance community awareness on gender accountability systems and galvanize their commitment to

Outputs	Targets and Result Statements
<p>government agencies, CSOs, FBOs, I/NGOs and political parties are monitored and strengthened.</p>	<p>address gender inequality barriers that affect men and women, boys and girls in their communities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through the above dialogues, the awareness and commitment were enhanced for more than 3,990 community and village leaders, police officers, the army, parliamentarians (senators and deputies) to challenge negative gender stereotypes which hinder women from accessing socio-economic and political opportunities and perpetuate gender-based violence; ● In Gicumbi and Nyagatare districts, stakeholder dialogue platforms were held with teen mothers and over 700 teen mothers participated in the dialogue platforms to advocate for increased commitment of stakeholders for the prevention and response to GBV; ● These dialogues strategically engaged a further 100 youth from Gicumbi district to raise their awareness on the role they need to play in advancing gender equality principles; ● In Gatsibo District, 671 village leaders were equipped with gender and GBV prevention skills through dialogue, 280 couples supported to legalize marriages and 25 couples supported with mattresses through Kuremera initiative; ● About 57 Technical staff (23 females and 34 males) including GMO and district statisticians were equipped with the skills needed to effectively manage and maintain the system, including on data entry as well as report production and wider dissemination of the information on the public portal; ● GMO has consistently reflected on innovative ways to produce, analyse and disseminate gender data in various development sectors. During the fiscal year 2021-2022, GMO pursued full operationalization of GMIS by populating gender indicators and updated data at different levels. As a result, 94 gender indicators were reported on by 27 districts and entered into GMIS, 33 indicators were reported on by 7 different Institutions, 39 indicators from different surveys (LFS, FINSCOPE, DHS, EICV, AHS), and statistical year books were collected and uploaded in the system (GMO, 2022). ● 2nd edition of the State of Gender Equality in Rwanda: Ensuring Gender Equality Gains from Sustainable Transformation produced in 2023. ● Gender Mainstreaming and Accountability Minimum Standards. ● Third generation of the National Action Plan (NAP) 2023-2027 for the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325



Figure 5: Gender Accountability month concluded in Western Province Dec 2023⁴



Figure 6: Activists during the 16 days of activism solidarity run in Kigali, 2022⁵

Paved by the political will and engagement as mentioned above, the effectiveness related to the outcome 2 was facilitated by the existence of Gender Monitoring Office, a government's organ in charge of monitoring of all that is related to gender in the country. This institution is very active and determined. Its interventions were innovative, especially in trying to institutionalise Gender Accountability Dialogues and the practice of *Kuremera* as home-grown solutions aimed at building self-reliance and resilience.

⁴ <https://www.gmo.gov.rw/news-detail/gender-accountability-month-concluded-in-the-western-province>

⁵ <https://rwanda.un.org/en/216456-16-days-activism-call-tackle-gbv-root-causes>

3.3.3. Women's inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth (JP Outcome 3: UNDAP Outcome 1)

The overall goal meant to be achieved under this thematic area is to unlock economic opportunities for women within the expanding of Rwandan private and public sector markets". For this goal to be achieved, various interventions were planned and implemented. These comprise: Support of emerging pool of women entrepreneurs to access formal finance, vulnerable women (such as women with disabilities, women affected with HIV, refugee women, and teenage mothers) to better benefit from unlocked opportunities and achieve economic autonomy, facilitate market linkages and capacitate women owned enterprises through procurement measures such as e-procurement, creation of knowledge management platforms and discussion fora to promote more exchange on effective gender responsive business practices, and support women in STEM industries. Targets and results statements are provided in the matrix below under each output area.

Output 3.1: Women have enhanced entrepreneurial skills, increased access to finance and markets to leverage business opportunities

This subsection explains the extent to which women have enhanced their entrepreneurial skills, and increased access to finance and markets to leverage business opportunities. The focus of the interventions was on capacity building in business and the start-up grant to enter the business world. The output 3.1 had two indicators: (1) Number of target population with entrepreneurship skills, and (2) Number of people reached through new financial products.

Finding 9:

JP's interventions and activities have led to enhanced women's entrepreneurial skills, and increased access to finance and markets to leverage business opportunities through a series of training of group and cooperative members, especially, women in cross border trade. Subjects covered include leadership, business plan development, business and entrepreneurial skills, cooperative management, and financial literacy. These ladies who initially worked individually and informally, were supported also to form groups then to become registered cooperatives with all the required documents, and have received start-up grants, Women's capacities were increased also in e-procurement and digital financing through mobile money technology, which has greatly improved their working conditions and their lives in general.

Major results statements

Result area # 1: Findings from the analysis of collected data shows that the Joint Programme has achieved its objective of equipping people with entrepreneurial skills and financial literacy. A total of 16,828 people majority of whom were women including 425 teen mothers have benefited training and capacity building services in various areas of skills which comprise leadership, business plan development, business and entrepreneurial skills, cooperative management, and financial literacy. These training also benefited 9053 people in refugee settings benefiting both refugees and their host communities. In addition, 175 women artisans received more training for their empowerment so that they can benefit from local markets such as made in Rwanda. Also, 60 Women were equipped with knowledge and skills in the mining sector. Moreover, 1,091 women and 945 men (732 refugees and 1,304 host community) received continuous training on climate-smart agricultural practices through the farmer field school (FFS) approach, training in business skills, entrepreneurship and cooperative management. Also 2,803 in the same refugee setting (refugees and host communities) received training in business start-ups and development as well as financial literacy. As result of these interventions, changes reported include increased capital for businesses especially women in cross-border trade, increased income leading to improved livelihoods for targeted households, access to decent jobs such as increased women's participation in the mining sector.

Result area # 2: As result of the various capacity building interventions by the programme, there was more formalization and registration of groups of people (1284 women in informal cross-border trade) into formal cooperatives, formation of 30 Savings and Loan groups, 450 people opted to use digital financing through mobile money, and 80 managed to open their accounts as part of financial inclusion in different banks such as SACCOS, EQUITY BANK, URWEGO OPPORTUNITY BANK and CLECAM EJO HEZA⁶. Consequently, these interventions have increased the creation of and membership to saving and loan schemes with increased capacity for saving, among others. Some beneficiaries sustain that they have been able to increase their monthly savings from Frw 10,000 to Frw 15,000.

To foster market linkages for women, the programme organized job fairs, learning visits, and peer-to-peer learning sessions, offering networking opportunities for 444 women to engage with representatives from both public and private sectors. These activities exposed them to national and regional markets and allowed them to learn from successful

⁶ More exploration on organizations and cooperatives created as result of the programme to ensure people gain from mutual cooperation

entrepreneurs. Consequently, 110 women secured 10 contracts to supply products to hotels, restaurants, and secondary schools. Additionally, 107 out of 270 TVET graduates, were facilitated to either secure permanent employment in various companies or launch their own businesses.

Furthermore, a total of 489 teen mothers have started income generating activities as a result of the training as part of means to create their own jobs. All these activities have contributed to the creation of off-farm jobs, increased income generating activities, and increased women’s participation in decent and off-farm income generating activities.

Table 6: Targets and results statements per outputs

Outputs:	Targets and Result statements:
<p>JP Output 3.1: Women have enhanced skills and access to finance and markets to leverage business opportunities.</p>	<p>Target # 3.1.1. About 10,600 people are equipped with entrepreneurship skills (disaggregated by Sex and rural or Urban area.</p> <p>Overall, a total of 13,847 people benefited and were equipped with entrepreneurial skills, business development, financial and business management, financial literacy, job creation in various trades, e-public procurement, among others. It is clear that this target has been achieved and details about the constituents of the above total number are provided below:</p> <p>A total of 1007 people who are members of 8 cooperatives and 31 women’s saving groups (including 898 women and 109 men) have been skilled in areas of leadership, business plan development, financial and business management, cooperative management, and gender equality/equity. These are from three districts, namely Karongi and Rutsiro Districts in Western Province and Gasabo District in the City of Kigali. The ultimate goal was to prepare them to receive a seed capital to support their businesses.</p> <p>The economic support of this project has also helped to strengthen the capacity of 560 women (including sex workers and teen mothers) in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, cooperative management, and technical and vocational educational training (TVET) and are grouped into 20 Savings and Loan Groups (UN Women, 2022).</p> <p>The skills acquired by TVET trainees helped them to improve their businesses and saving ability from 3,493USD by end of December 2021 to 19,910.70 USD by end December 2022 and a loan portfolio from 1,943 USD to 16,138.59 USD in the same period. Among the beneficiaries, 87 graduated in TVET and have improved skills in various trades including hairdressing, Arts and crafts, and auto mechanics.</p> <p>In 2020, a total of 1284 women from the districts of Rusizi and Rubavu who were involved in informal cross border trade before the COVID-19</p>

Outputs:	Targets and Result statements:
	<p>pandemic, enhanced their capacity in entrepreneurship development, cooperative management and financial literacy. This has resulted in formalization and registration processes of their groups as cooperatives and acquired provisional cooperative certificates from administrative sector levels (UN Women, 2020).</p> <p>Due to the training received, 103 women entrepreneurs have increased their capacity in e-public procurement to help unlock business opportunities.</p> <p>About 450 women have and are using digital financing through mobile money technology for different transactions. About 80 women opened bank accounts in different microfinance institutions.</p>
	<p>Target # 3.1.2. At least 80,000 women clients benefit from Women's investment fund.</p> <p>A total of 329 received cash as start-up support and were facilitated to access affordable loan.</p> <p>During Covid-19, UN Women provided start-up capital to 1284 women in informal cross-border trade. Each beneficiary received between RWF 70,000-100,000 (equivalent to 71- 102 USD at the same period), totalling RWF 87, 667 250 (equivalent to 91,000 USD) (UN Women, 2022).</p> <p>A total of 110 Vulnerable women from Musanze District increased their start-up capital, gained entrepreneurial and financial literacy skills. [needs to explore what new businesses ventured and new market opportunities secured]. Through a company, MAHWI Tech, specialized in connecting businesses to customers, these women have secured 10 contracts from different markets including hotels, secondary schools, and restaurants which helped them to increase their income in a more consistent and sustainable manner.</p> <p>National Strategy for accessing AFAWA facility (Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa) was developed and disseminated.</p>

As it can be expected, these interventions have improved beneficiaries' working conditions. For example, JP support, women in cross-border business stopped from using informal and dangerous paths to Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where they were in high risk of all kinds of violence, including sexual violence, theft, difficult transport of their merchandise, etc. They now started working together, supporting each other without fear of any authority or any form of attack. For other women, the improvement of working condition was manifested into having networks and connection with the markets, organising and keeping their business books, working with financial institutions.



Figure 7: A Burundian woman in her shop that she initiated thanks to the training in business and start-up grant within the refugee camp

Output 3.2: Women and men have equal capacity and opportunity to access existing and newly created off farm employment

This output is about the level at which women have the capacity and opportunity to access existing and newly created off farm employment as compared with men. It reflects more notions of gender equity resulting from women's empowerment. Interventions targeted women who initially were in off-farm business but needed more guidance, capacity building, and financial support to improve it. The indicator for this output is: the number of youth - led organizations and networks participating in national policy dialogue, advocacy and programming, including in humanitarian settings.

Finding 10:

The JP's goal of ensuring equal capacity and opportunity to access existing and newly created off farm employment has been achieved through provision of business start-up grants, vocational training (Hairdressing, Arts and crafts, and Auto mechanics) to beneficiaries. Those who completed the TVET training were support with start-up kit to start/improve their own businesses and join existing cooperatives. Women in business especially in informal cross border trade who struggled with basic needs due to COVID-19 response mechanisms especially border closures were provided with capacity building, advisory services, coaching, and start-up capital which helped them to create alternative income-generating activities and sustain themselves until cross-border trade resumed.

Majority of supported beneficiaries have to work through small groups and cooperatives. As result, the JP has been able to reach many people in terms of seed grants and capacity building through business plan development which in turn has helped to create individual off-farm jobs and employment among beneficiaries. Furthermore, some of the beneficiaries of the training and seed grants argue for being capacitated to create their own saving groups/ associations that allows them to save, access to less costly loan (up to 5%/ month) of up to 2 million (case of Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union-REWU) followed by increase in their capital and business expansion, among other benefits.

Result area # 3: The Joint Programme allowed some women in targeted areas to access seed funding for their business start-ups and functioning of their enterprises as they also improve their savings. For instance, a total of USD 91,000 equivalent to RWF 87, 667 250 was provided to a group of 1284 women in informal cross-border traders. Each has benefited an amount of RFW 70,00 to 100,000 (equivalent to USD 71-120) to finance her business activities. Also, 1091 beneficiaries (685 females and 406 males) received seed capital with USD 800 per person (this makes a total of USD 872,800). In addition, a total of 754 women were facilitated to access affordable loan for their businesses. Further, TVET trainees have increased their savings from 3,493USD by end of December 2021 to 19,910.70 USD by end December 2022 and a loan portfolio from 1,943 USD to 16,138.59 USD in the same period. In addition, 3,128 small businesses owners (52% are female) were provided business recovery grants to cope with the challenges of Covid-19. Further, a group of 608 female beneficiaries received cash grants to start their small businesses. With respect to loan facilitation, two IPs and one UN partners provided loans

to 1,171 beneficiaries (50% being women) to support their businesses. Further, a group of 329 women (that included 296 refugees) was provided an average of USD 500 cash grant per individual to start-up their viable business plans. These interventions have contributed to the financial inclusion of the refugees among other impacts. This allows them to save money beyond the refugee cards. Part of evidence is that those who had accounts even after the project has ended still use them for their financial transactions. A total of 19800 accounts have been created for individual people grouped into 400 groups or cooperative. This was proposed to be scaled out in other refugee camps. All these activities sustain the ability of women to invest in various businesses in the context of access to finance as far as financial inclusion is concerned.

Result area # 4: The Joint Programme facilitated women and young people to create/ access off-farm job opportunities. Among the TVET trainees, 87 graduated and have improved skills in various trades including Hairdressing, Arts and crafts, and Auto mechanics, 60 (31 in tailoring and 29 in hair dressing) while 50 received tailoring and hair dressing equipment for their own job creation, women were facilitated to participate in procurement as part of descent job opportunities and managed to secure about 10 procurement contracts.

Outputs:	Targets and Result statements:
<p>JP Output 3.2: Women's capacity and opportunities to access remunerated off-farm employment increased.</p>	<p>Target 3.2.1. Have at least 10 youth led organizations and networks participating in national policy dialogue, advocacy and programming including in Humanitarian settings.</p> <p>Over 1000 women involved in informal cross-border trade in Rusizi and Rubavu district have benefited from support to revamp their businesses in the context of COVID-19 and enhanced capacities in entrepreneurship and cooperative management.</p> <p>About 6 women led organizations were trained and supported to carry out various businesses including beautification, and greening-related businesses in the City of Kigali.</p> <p>About 20 women peer educators representing 300 women former street vendors grouped in 10 Village Saving and Loan Associations which UN Women organized in collaboration with Youth Association for Human Rights Promotion and Development have also been supported by UN Women to attend the Kigali shopping festival expo 2022, the first of this kind in Rwanda. This festival brought over 400 local and foreign exhibitors and offered a learning and networking opportunity for these women among others (UN Women, 2022).</p> <p>A total of 103 women entrepreneurs have increased their capacity in e-public procurement to help unlock business opportunities. It is reported that the capacity of 102 women led businesses (23 women in Kigali and members of the chamber of women entrepreneurs, 36 in Muhanga, and</p>

Outputs:	Targets and Result statements:
	<p>43 in Musanze districts) was increased in e-public procurement-Umucyo requirements and processes).</p> <p>A total of 60 teen mothers (31 teenagers in tailoring and 29 in hair dressing) have been enrolled and supported to be part of existing cooperatives for their economic reintegration Further, a total of 50 teen mothers (from Nyamasheke and Rusizi Districts) received tailoring and hairdressing equipment to start income generating activities.</p> <p>60 Women equipped with knowledge and skills in the mining sector.</p>

These interventions have allowed beneficiaries to improve what they had started before. During the time of COVID 19 (2020-2021), businesswomen were able to successfully deal with the impact of this pandemic and to stand firm. Those who followed the capacity building programme and those who received financial grants have improved their profit than before. They started opening bank accounts, forming their saving groups, supplying their products in other areas, extending their businesses and improving their quality, equipping themselves in order to ensure sustainability, covering their home provisions and their children’s education requirements.



Figure 8: Women in cross-border trade cooperatives in Rubavu district, Western Province receiving from Minister of Gender and Family Promotion, a grant of 62 million, February 20237.

⁷ <https://www.cnf.gov.rw/media/news-detail/cross-border-trade-realizing-its-potential-1>

Output 3.3: Corporate sector actors demonstrated increased understanding of and commitment to implement gender equality and women’s empowerment practices

The initial intent under this output was to deal with the extent to which the corporate sector actors have demonstrated the understanding of and commitment to implement gender equality and women’s empowerment practices. However, during the implementation of JP, it was decided to consider this under a separate programme of the gender seal being implemented by Gender Monitoring Office and the Private Sector Federation. This is captured in the addendum of the programme document.

Gender seal programme was initiated in 2017 by GMO in collaboration with Private Sector Federation with support from UNDP and UN Women, with the objective to promote gender accountability in the private sector. However, public institutions were also given the opportunity to participate. While the programme targeted 50 private companies to be enrolled, 54 companies and public institutions – 48 private companies including SMEs and 6 public institutions have been enrolled (surpassing program target). So far 30 institutions (26 private companies and 4 public institutions) have been certified with gold, silver and bronze gender seals. From the 30 certified companies and public institutions, 25 have gold gender seal, 2 with Silver and 3 with Bronze.

Through the GES program, certified and engaged companies have registered commendable gender equality gains, including improved work life balance for male and female staff where in some companies’ parental leave has been increased, flexi-working arrangements institutionalised, lowering gender pay gaps, increased women in decision making positions and traditionally male-dominated jobs, improved family-friendly initiatives like breast feeding rooms, child care facilities to mention but a few.

Notable to add is the development of the gender mainstreaming strategies for the Private Sector Federation (PSF), National Bank of Rwanda (NBR) and Rwanda Development Board (RDB). In addition, the GES program has informed the development of Gender Equality Standards as a step to institutionalising gender accountability in national standards and standards development processes championed by Rwanda Standards Board (RSB).



Figure 9: Certified and recognition event for Private sector companies/ Public institutions in March 2023⁸



Figure 10: Third cohort of Public and Private sector awarded for promoting gender accountability on May 10th, 2024⁹

⁸ GMO (2023). Gender Monitoring Office Annual report 2022/2023

⁹ <https://www.gmo.gov.rw/news-detail/third-cohort-of-public-and-private-sector-awarded-for-promoting-gender-accountability>

The effectiveness related to the outcome 3 was due to the availability of funds as well as the good management of available funds. Partners included countries through bilateral cooperation, as well as international institutions, the United Nations, and local implementers (government institutions, civil society organisations, and private sector). Thus, although the funds were very limited, available funds were efficiently managed (see the section of efficiency).

3.3.4. Women's resilience to both natural and man-made shocks (JP Outcome 4: UNDAF Outcome 4)

Output 4.1: Increased awareness among target communities on sexual and gender-based violence prevention, reporting, response, and service availability for victims.

This output relates to JP's contribution to the prevention of violence against women and girls by addressing its root causes as well as enhancing access to quality services to survivors. One indicator is ascribed to it: Indicator 4.1: Number of individuals that have improved knowledge and awareness of SGBV prevention and response (by target group). Planned and implemented interventions include support in community mobilization, peer-to-peer exchanges and educational programmes, strengthen awareness of survivors of violence on their rights and availability of services, and support ISANGE one stop Center and scale up the initiative.

Finding 11:

Interventions and activities by the JP in this particular area of awareness raising among the community and key actors from the various government and non-government institutions have achieved some positive impacts and yet with a lot of prospects in the nearest future. This is partly reflected by the TIP cases that have been already reported as result of the campaigns and training, the safety and stability expressed by beneficiaries, increased GBV prevention capacities among the communities as well as security organs.

Following the consulted reports, the key results related to the increased awareness among target communities on sexual and gender-based violence prevention, reporting, response, and service availability for victims include the following.

Result area #1: A total of more than **9, 966** people have been so far identified to have been able to be actively engaged in awareness campaigns and activities against GBV after being trained and supported by the programme. These comprise religious leaders, members of community policing and youth volunteers, media practitioners, rights holders, SGBV trainers, RCS senior managers, adolescents, teen mothers, owners and managers of mines and quarry companies, and community members, among others. Furthermore,

a total of 50,000 individuals have been reached through awareness raising campaigns on Counter Trafficking in persons (TiP) conducted in November 2023 to January 2024. As a result, 10 TiP related cases have been reported during the campaigns. Similarly, IOM and RIB jointly conducted a Training of trainers (ToT) on Counter Trafficking in Persons that enhanced the capacities of 43 officials (32 Males and 11 Females) from RIB, DGIE, the Isange One Stop Centre (IOSC) engaged on combating the Trafficking in persons (TiP) on ground, and counselling sessions and capacity building for women in cross border trade were organised.

Table 7: Outputs, targets, and result statements under the outcome # 4

Outputs	Targets and result statements
<p>JP Output 4.1: Increased awareness among target communities on available S/GBV services (e.g., at the IOSC), how to prevent and/or timely report and how to respond to incidents of S/GBV.</p>	<p>Target 4.1.1. Improved knowledge and awareness on S/GBV prevention and response (by target group): Security Organs (500), HeforShe outreach (20,000), Women and men in cross border trade (2,000), Inmates convicted of SGBV (2,000), and Refugees (446).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Using multiple approaches including sports, mobile clinics, mass awareness during the 16 days of activism and face to face workshop, 84,904 individuals (65% female), including security personnel, community leaders, local and religious leaders, youth, teen mothers and their parents, broader community, and media practitioners enhanced their understanding of GBV prevention and response. For instance, the Africa Women in Media Conference held in December 2023 concluded with a declaration on media's role in GBV prevention, underscoring its influence on public attitudes and actions; ✓ Media campaigns were also leveraged, including drama series, radio/TV programmes reaching over 2.7 million people with improved understanding of GBV prevention, positive masculinity, and the role of men in supporting gender equality initiatives; ✓ In collaboration with different partners including RNP and Reseau des Femmes among others; ✓ A total of 671 village leaders were equipped with gender and GBV prevention skills. <p>In collaboration with RNP, 300 Community Policing Committees and Youth Volunteers (170 Males; 130 Females) have committed to increasing accountability and timely reporting of cases for adequate case management, and effective support to victims;</p> <p>A total 100 media practitioners (46 Females, 54 Males) and 52 youth volunteers (16 Females, 36 Males) working in community policing have</p>

Outputs	Targets and result statements
	<p>increased their awareness of GBV prevention and response as well as the news reporting;</p> <p>About 807 religious' leaders have committed to leveraging the awareness-raising using the GBV handbook developed in 2020 with UN Women support;</p> <p>About 786 rights holders (563 women, 223 men) were helped to increase knowledge and understanding in legal rights using GBV mobile legal clinics approach;</p> <p>A pool of 82 SGBV trainers (41 women and 41 men) within RCS was established and additional 45 RCS senior management increased their understanding in SGBV Prevention and response;</p> <p>A total of 1,028 adolescents (583 girls, 426 boys) from Children Forum Committees were equipped with skills in prevention, identification and reporting of violence against children (VAC);</p> <p>A total of 512 teen mothers and their parents have participated in counselling and parent- adolescent communication (PAC) and knowledge building of Sexual and Reproductive Health Right (SRHR) and positive behaviours and communication;</p> <p>Through awareness raising in mining and quarrying sector, 2,889 individuals (1,405 females, 1,484 males), including mine employers, labour inspectors and Rwanda Mining Board (RMB) increased their knowledge on gender equality, GBV prevention and response including their roles and responsibilities in tackling GBV in the sector. A baseline survey on sexual harassment and GBV in mining companies in Muhanga and Gakenke districts was also conducted, and findings informed evidence-based advocacy and influenced decision makers. As a result, work environments have improved: seven companies formed anti-GBV committees, twelve introduced complaint suggestion boxes, and eight established changing/breastfeeding rooms. The RMB now mandates anti-GBV committees and inclusive recruitment policies for mining license renewals for every mining company. To scale-up awareness raising in mining sector, the use of various media channels reached approximately 17,850 people. As a result, 576 women and girls have overcome societal barriers to pursue careers in mining, improving their livelihoods.</p> <p>About 769 community members (362 Men and 407 women) were increased awareness of on GBV, its causes, consequences, existing response mechanisms and referral structures to increase adolescent youths' access to GBV services;</p> <p>Under the JP on gender about 2,075 adolescents (1,576 girls and 499 boys) participated in community dialogues which enhanced their awareness</p>

Outputs	Targets and result statements
	including on their rights and VAC and Sexual and Gender based violence (SGBV).
	A total of 781 people (including 300 youth, 331 elected local leaders and 150 teen mothers) were enhanced their capacity on how to fight, report and respond to GBV as well as referral pathways, especially to IOSCs and RIB;
	About 300 Inshuti z'umuryango (IZU) were trained on GBV prevention, child abuse and handling issues related to conflicts at household level;
	Twenty (20) women were trained in basic counselling and are now helping their colleagues, safe space for women (urubuga rw'abagore) were established, SGBV and mental health awareness were raised in the community, group therapy was organized, some GVB cases were referred, and clinical supervision was organised in health facilities.

The data collected from the field confirmed the increased awareness in the target communities. The beneficiaries of this intervention comprise Women in Cross-Border Trade (WCBT) and their families, victims of GBV in the community, Women and girls with disabilities (across the country), poor victims who are unable to pay for their legal case of claim for reparation, women working in mining, as well as the general community.

Interventions consisted of contributing to Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention through awareness and advocacy meetings, organizing a series of campaigns against GBV and child abuse, equip beneficiaries with knowledge and skills to break cultural norms, attitudes and practices that perpetrate GBV and violence against women and girls; training beneficiaries on how to lead the family evening forum (Umugoroba w'Imiryango: UWI), providing legal aid to GBV Victims, providing legal aid to GBV Victims using mobile clinics, individual and family or community counselling, mentor health, men engage, safe space for women (urubuga rw'abagore), Training of community facilitators (women) in counselling skills and following them up, referral mechanisms (Legal, psychosocial, migration officers, pro-femmes, IOSC (advertisements / communiqué, leaflets, ...), as well as awareness campaign.



Figure 11: Women in cross border trade’s counselling group (ARCT, 2022)



Figure 12: Awareness raising session on role of men in preventing and responding to GBV in Western Province (ARCT, 2022)

Output 4.2: Capacity of relevant institutions and Sexual and Gender Based Violence service providers to handle/respond to Sexual and Gender Based Violence cases, including capacity to harmonize and preserve forensic evidence strengthened

The activities and interventions under this output 4.2 are somehow similar and complementary to those under the output 4.1. The output 4.2 has one indicator: Number of service providers with the capacity to respond to cases of SGBV, child abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Finding 12:

Multiple categories of service providers were supported by JP in capacity building. Capacity and skills were increased through training in SGBV and child abuse prevention and response for staff from government institutions in charge of justice and security, local governance, detention, mental health, trafficking prevention. The beneficiaries also included the paralegals, community-based service providers like Inshuti z'Umuryango (IZU), and the youth. Delegates from Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), health providers, and ordinary community members have benefited the capacity building intervention. A training of trainers was organised, and a postgraduate diploma and certificate in child justices initiated and awarded, which has increased the number of professionals at lower and senior levels.

Result area # 2: The evaluation also found a total number of **853** service providers who were capacitated to respond to cases of SGBV, child abuse, exploitation and neglect. These include the paralegals, provision of legal aid to GBV victims, SGBV service providers including MIT of IOSC, 24 EAPCCO¹⁰ Gender focal points, Province Chief Investigators (PCIs), District Chief Investigators (DCIs) and Investigators from across the country, IOSCs Investigators in the City of Kigali, Investigators from SGBV and Specialized crimes division; RCS senior managers, SGBV trainers, and health providers to deliver high-quality sexual and reproductive health services and for early detection of GBV cases.

¹⁰ Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO). 24 delegates were from five countries (Rwanda: 16, Kenya: 2, South Sudan: 2, Sudan: 2, Tanzania: 2)

Outputs	Targets and result statements
<p>JP Output 4.2: Strengthened capacity of relevant institutions/GBV service providers to handle/respond to S/GBV cases including capacity to harmonize and preserve forensic evidence</p>	<p>Target 4.2.1. Increase the number of service providers with the capacity to respond to cases of SGBV, child abuse, exploitation and neglect: IOSC (from 4 to 23), IZU (from 0 to 29,674) and other Service Providers (MAJ/ MINIJUST, MINISANTE, RNP, NCC, CSOs, etc) (from 2 to 27).</p> <p>JP in collaboration with Haguruka NGO has continually enhanced the capacity of 67 paralegals (55 women and 12 men) in SGBV Law and SGBV case handling to effectively support SGBV victims with legal advice and referrals especially in rural areas.</p> <p>NCDA was supported to provide training to all 29,674 IZU and 60 District Child Protection and Welfare Officers in prevention to response to Violence Against Children (VAC), which strengthened community knowledge and awareness on VAC as well as increased access to VAC/GBV services by children and families. In 2022, IZU reached 545,970 children and their families with community-based care and 184,286 children with mental health and psychosocial support interventions.</p> <p>Jointly with the Institute of Legal Practice and Development (ILPD), NCDA and MINIJUST, UNICEF developed a post graduate diploma and short courses in child justice. 840 frontline professionals (42% female) made up of judges, RIB Officers, Prosecutors, Correctional Services, and Child Protection and Welfare Officers had received training in the short courses by December 2022. In addition, 30 Senior staff from MINIJUST, NCDA, MIGEPROF, RNP, RIB, RCS and the Judiciary had commenced the post-graduate diploma in child justice and are set to graduate in 2024. This has significantly increased the number of professionals both at lower and senior level with improved skills in handling SGBV cases and child Justice in general.</p> <p>Working with diverse stakeholders including security agencies, GMO, and women’s rights organizations, 9,568 GBV service providers (4,260 females and 5,318 males) including the multidisciplinary Investigative Team (MDIT) of Isange One Stop Centres enhanced their skills on GBV case management, GBV victims centered support, accurate reporting, forensic evidence collection and preservation (forensic evidence and chain of custody protocols), and legal assistance. The initiative benefited 706 multidisciplinary teams from IOSCs, alongside security personnel, investigators, health centers, local leaders, lawyers and paralegals, and Access to Justice Bureau (MAJ) officers.</p> <p>Toll-free helplines were also established for prompt GBV case reporting nationwide, crucial during COVID-19 lockdowns. These efforts led to 35,446 reported and assisted cases, including 26,570 females and 8,876 males. Services provided include protection through shelters, medical care, psychosocial support, investigations, and legal aid, including DNA testing.</p>

Outputs	Targets and result statements
	<p>1,832 children and adolescents (1,048 girls including 21 with disabilities, 784 boys including 18 with disabilities) enhanced their capacity in leadership, violence against children prevention and response and safe reporting channels which helped them to increase their awareness on protective measures and reporting of cases.</p> <p>JP in collaboration with Ministry of Justice, NPPA, RIB, and the RCS, have enhanced the capacity of 279 SGBV service providers (168 men and 111 women) to provide quality services to SGBV victims through SGBV management information system.</p> <p>In collaboration with RCS, 82 SGBV trainers (41 women and 41 men) and 45 RCS senior management increased their understanding in SGBV Prevention and response with the intention to help in preventing potential SGBV by or against inmates who will return to their respective communities after their period in prison;</p> <p>The programme through Rwanda Biomedical Centre enhanced the capacity of additional 135 Health Providers to deliver high-quality sexual and reproductive health services and for early detection of GBV cases.</p> <p>In close coordination with MINIJUST, IOM and RIB harmonized the Counter Trafficking in persons training manual and toolbox for awareness raising activities and the Counter Trafficking in persons policy was also developed to guide the fight against human trafficking country endeavours.</p> <p>In partnership with MINIJUST, RIB jointly with IOM have reached over 50,000 individuals through awareness raising campaigns on Counter Trafficking in Persons. As a result, 10 TIP related cases have been reported during the campaigns and referred to relevant institutions for case management.</p> <p>IOM and RIB jointly conducted a Training of trainers (ToT) on Counter Trafficking in Persons that enhanced the capacities of 43 officials (32 Males and 11 Females) from RIB, DGIE, and the Isange One Stop Centre (IOSC) engaged on combating the Trafficking in persons (TiP) on ground.</p> <p>IOM through ARCT finalized the Referral Mechanism for the Mental Health and Psychosocial support initiatives in favor of small-scale cross border traders and porters.</p>

The effectiveness of the interventions related to the outcome 4 was paved by the existence of National Policy against Gender-Based Violence (2011), and the Law N°59/2008 OF 10/09/2008 on prevention and punishment of gender-based violence, Isange One stop Centre, and the close collaboration between involved partners such as Police, National Gender Machinery, Ministry of Justice, and the population. All these

networks inspired the service providers to seek more capacities and skills and the victims to seek services.

3.4. Efficiency of the Joint Programme

This section is about the extent to which JP outputs and outcomes were achieved with the appropriate number of resources, namely the funds, expertise, administrative and procurement processes.

3.4.1. Fund Mobilization and Management of Joint Programme Budget

The fund for the Joint Programme is constituted by two types of funding management modalities – pooled fund and parallel funds management modalities. At the start of the Joint Programme, USD 5,988,278 (31.4%) was available and USD 13,108,383 (68.6%) was meant to be mobilized. The initial total budget for the JP gender was USD 19,096,661. Later this budget was downsized to USD 13,463,495 due mainly to limited resource mobilization capacity to reach the targeted budget. Clearly, the reduction of the initial budget of about 32% might have caused some implications in terms of the programming of interventions. With respect to the budget share among the UN agencies, it was planned that UN Women mobilizes a budget share of 57.8% followed by UNHCR with 17.9%, UNDP (7.9%), UNICEF (7.9%), UNFPA (4.6%), IOM (3.2%), and OHCHR (0.7%). But these proportions have changed over time as depicted in Table 8 and Figure 15. Clearly, there are major changes with regard to resource mobilization. The UN agencies have been able to mobilize their funds at 73.5% of the initial revised budget of USD 13,463,495. In addition, SIDA was able to support with a fund of USD 1,945,427 of which 95% was allocated to the support of the national gender machinery and 5% to IOM related initiatives but aligned to the joint programme.

Table 8: Joint Programme Budget by UN implementing Agency (2019-2023)

UN Agency	Initial Programme Budget (US)	% Share	Revised Budget (USD)	% Share- Revised Budget	Actual Budget Mobilized	% of actual UN Agency's Contribution
UNWOMEN	11,041,228	57.8	5,786,350	43.0	2,159,927	21.8
UNDP	1,515,240	7.9	1,403,000	10.4	89,462	0.9
UNICEF	1,500,000	7.9	1,435,185	10.7	538,141	5.4
UNFPA	875,498	4.6	1,322,000	9.8	923,548	9.3
UNHCR	3,414,960	17.9	3,111,960	23.1	6,023,864	60.8
IOM	609,335	3.2	57,000	0.4	167,005	1.7
OHCHR	140,400	0.7	NA		NA	
Total	19,096,661		13,463,495	100.0	9,901,947	100.0

Notes: NA- Not Available

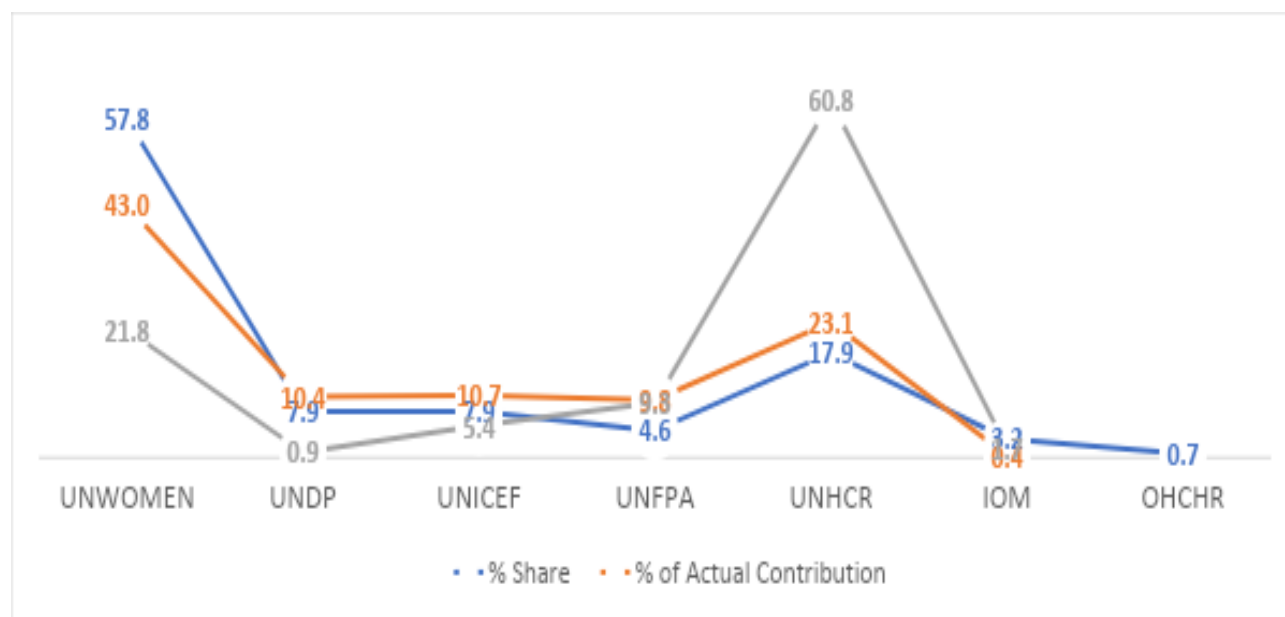


Figure 13: Trends of Budget's share by the UN implementing agencies (Planned, downsized, and actual contribution).

Table 9: Summary of the total budget

Total budget SIDA	1,945,427	% Share
Received	1,945,427	
UN Women/National Gender Machinery	1,845,427	94.9%
IOM	100,000	5.1%
Total budget SIDA	1,945,427	

3.4.2. Mapping and Engagement of Implementing Partners

The following matrix gives the number of implementing partners identified that worked with UN partner agencies for the Joint Programme. This identification was done per Outcome and output area. In total, we have identified 68 implementing partners across the outputs under the four outcome areas. It is clear that more concentration of the implementation partnerships is around the **output 4.1** related to increased awareness among target communities on available S/GBV services (e.g., at the IOSC), how to prevent and/or timely report and how to respond to incidents of S/GBV with **20.5%** representation. At the second position comes a representation of **19.1%** of the implementing partners of the **output 3.2** related to increasing women’s capacity and opportunities to access remunerated off-farm employment.

Table 10: Identified UN agencies and their implementing partners

OUTCOME	Output	UN Agencies	Implementing partners
Outcome 1: By 2023, people in Rwanda benefit from enhanced gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security (UNDAP Outcome 5)	Output 1.1: Women’s capacity to compete for leadership positions and to lead decision making processes at local and national level strengthened.	UN Women UNDP	MIGEPROF RALGA NWC
	Output 1.2: National and local level Government institutions’ capacities to execute gender-responsive development strategies, sector strategies, district development plans and budgets increased.	UN Women UNDP	MININFRA, MINAGRI) Districts NWC MHC MIGEPROF Media High Council (MHC)
	Output 1.3 Community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women’s right to equal participation in decision making increased.	UN Women UNHCR	NWC MIGEPROF Media High Council (MHC) NYC GMO CSOs RWAMREC
Outcome 2:	Output 2.1:	UN Women UNDP	GMO RCSP

OUTCOME	Output	UN Agencies	Implementing partners
By 2023, people in Rwanda participate more actively in democratic and development processes and benefit from transparent and accountable public and private sector institutions that develop evidence-based policies and deliver quality services. (UNDAP Outcome 6)	Accountability mechanisms on gender equality and women’s empowerment in government agencies, CSOs, FBOs, I/NGOs and political parties are monitored and strengthened.		ARCT-RUHUDA RGB ARFEM Districts CSOs CBOs
Outcome 3: By 2023 people in Rwanda benefit from more inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth that generates decent work and promotes quality livelihoods for all (UNDAP Outcome 1)	JP Output 3.1: Women have enhanced skills and access to finance and markets to leverage business opportunities.	UN Women IOM	ADEPE, AFR, AJPRODHO, Caritas Rwanda, Districts Food for the Hungry (FH), GIZ, Imbuto Foundation, Indego Africa, Inkomoko, MIGEPROF, NWC, Umutanguha, YWCA
	JP Output 3.2: Women’s capacity and opportunities to access remunerated off-farm employment increased	UN women	ADEPE, AFAWA, AJPRODHO, Districts, Duterimbere NGO, Imbuto Foundation, New Faces New Voices, NWC, Pro-femmes Twese Hamwe, RPPA, UNFPA, YWCA
	JP Output 3.3: Corporate sector actors demonstrate increased understanding of and commitment to implement gender equality and women’s empowerment practices.		

OUTCOME	Output	UN Agencies	Implementing partners
<p>Outcome 4: By 2023 people in Rwanda, particularly the most vulnerable have increased resilience to both natural and man-made shocks and enjoy a life free from all forms of violence and discrimination (UNDAP Outcome 4)</p>	<p>JP Output 4.1: Increased awareness among target communities on available S/GBV services (e.g., at the IOSC), how to prevent and/or timely report and how to respond to incidents of S/GBV.</p>	<p>UN Women UNICEF IOM UNHCR UNFPA</p>	<p>CLADHO, Districts, GMO, Haguruka NGO, Institute of Legal Practice and Development (ILPD), World Vision, MIGEPROF, MINIJUST, NCDA, NWC, RNP, RWAMREC, Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS), Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU), Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB), Rwanda Media Commission (RMC), Rwanda National Police (RNP), Rwanda Religious Leaders Initiative (RRLI) Imbuto Foundation, Alight, GNI</p>
	<p>JP Output 4.2: Strengthened capacity of relevant institutions/GBV service providers to handle/respond to S/GBV cases including capacity to harmonize and preserve forensic evidence</p>	<p>UN Women UNHCR IOM, UNFPA</p>	<p>Districts, MIGEPROF, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Sports, NPPA, RCS, Réseau des femmes, Haguruka, RIB, Rwanda Bar Association (RBA), Rwanda Women's Network (RW N)</p>

3.5. Coordination and Management of the Joint Programme

This section provides an evaluative reflection on how the Joint Programme was managed, how interventions were coordinated, mobilization and use of resources, and management of the partnership with implementers of the programme.

Management and coordination: A steering committee was established to provide strategic orientation of the programme, fiduciary and management oversight and coordination. This was chaired by the Minister of Gender and Family promotion and co-chaired by the UN resident coordinator or the UN Women representative. There is evidence of steering committee meetings and resolutions, but the activity plans were not jointly planned. In this regard, the UN women was the managing agent of this joint programme.

Technical programme management unit. A programme manager was recruited, and the management unit was supposed to recruit several technical staff from the implementing UN agencies and implementing partners to ensure effective day to day implementation and management of the joint programme. The evaluation has observed some gaps in systematic documentation of the reports from quarterly meetings by the programme management unit, copies of background notes submitted to the steering committee for guidance, implementation reports submitted to the steering committee by the technical team, and technical staff recruited for the implementation of the programme.

Joint Programme Work Plan and Budget. Apart from the first six months of programme implementation, subsequent annual work plans were supposed to align with the government of Rwanda's fiscal planning calendar (July to June). But the planning has been more of integrating individual mandate-related activities in response to UNDAP outcomes as part of the JP without necessarily responding to an integrated planning between UN agencies.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting. The monitoring roles fall under the technical programme management unit guided by an agreed performance monitoring framework. With respect to evaluation, two evaluations were planned, and these were implemented during the programme duration. A mid-term review was done in December 2022 complemented by this final evaluation. The mid-term evaluation was expected to give the progress made towards the achievement of the outcomes and to provide constructive recommendations to address any constraint identified. The reviewers' observation is that the period of one year between the mid-term and the endline evaluation is not sufficient to allow programme implementers to execute proposed actions or necessary adjustments in the programming. On the report side, narrative and financial reports were supposed to be made by each implementing partner. These were consolidated by the Management Agent.

During the consultations, it was observed that no additional baseline data were collected to inform the baseline conditions of the JP. Similarly, there are no mid-term and endline surveys conducted to support the M&E of the programme.

3.6. Impact

The impact of JP is assessed at each outcome.

Outcome 1: Enhanced gender equality, justice, human rights, peace and security (UNDAP Outcome 5)

Finding 13:

The JP's interventions in this particular thematic area have had impacts in enhancing gender equality, justice, human rights, and peace and security. Some of these impacts are easily traced while others can still be observed in the long-run or in the period after the JP also depending on the nature and the types of interventions such as in areas of capacity building and coaching of the young graduates from the universities and women journalists. The impacts will be observed first at personal capacity development before these are translated into community level impacts as far as gender equality and women's empowerment are of interest.

The nature of interventions and activities carried out have dictated the types of expected impacts. Most of the interventions in this particular area are linked to mentorship in leadership, capacity building and training, and community awareness campaigns. At this stage, the programme's impacts stand out in the increased number of young women and girls now participating in local and community level leadership and decision making through the 2021 elections. Praise to the JP's coaching and capacity building, the evaluation has identified a total of 20 candidates who were elected, especially at sector council and one who outperformed to be elected even at District Council (i.e., Gisagara District in the Southern Province) plus one who is currently the executive secretary at sector level as result of the mentorship programme within the JP. Apart from the results of the elections, other young ladies who were being mentored have gained professional network facilitating them in getting temporary employment in line with the domain of study, and those who happened to be employed have improved their living conditions and those of their families.

In addition, the results of the 2021 elections of local leaders show that out of 1,674 applicants to District councillor level positions, 39.1% (655) were women, and 34.4% (535) were accepted for competition (82% of women candidates). More qualified women have competed where all the National Women's Council members at sector and district levels have a university degree. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of presidents of district council were women, with an increase of 20.5% as compared with 2016 elections [6.5%].

Other forms of impact are related to skills gained by the various categories of people trained and coached, in the context of strengthening government institutions in addressing gender issues. There was an increased understanding of gender related dimensions as well as improved quality and efficiency of the service delivery on gender.

Furthermore, specific to community awareness through women journalists, the JP has enabled them to strengthen their networks and alliances among themselves and media organizations, fostering collaboration and collective action for gender equality. For instance, one female Journalist has testified that "my judicial and gender sensitive reporting skills and confidence has really improved as a result of being trained among other journalists". This has enabled her to pursue challenging assignments with zeal. It was also realised that today beneficiaries of JP participate in media competition and become successful. In addition, as already reported above, 40 media houses have developed gender sensitive policies to address all forms of gender-based violence. This is expected to yield positive and sustainable impacts. It is also expected that the GBV policies developed by media houses will not delay to yield in the nearest future.

Overall, the programme has significantly contributed to capacity building and coaching of women and girls in leadership and more impacts will be observed in the future because some of the impacts may take time to materialize- a time that is beyond the project period under evaluation.

Outcome 2: Women's active participation in democratic and development processes (UNDAP Outcome 6).

The impact of the interventions of strengthening accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions has started being observed in the lives of the beneficiaries. This includes numerous couples that regularised their marriage and teen mothers that have received support through "kuremera" system during GAD event. This has improved the living conditions and increased security and peace among the couples and increase teen mothers' chance to cope with challenging lives they go through. The support to teen mothers included material gifts like clothes for babies, mattress, school fees, etc.

For example, over 3,787 couples legalized their marriage during gender accountability week in Northern and Eastern Provinces, March 2024. In 2021, 280 couples were supported to legalise marriages, 25 couples supported with mattresses through Kuremera initiative, 716 Children registered, 113 teen mothers benefited from different services, 15 teen mothers supported to return to schools, 34 Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) cases filled, and 22 cases of child defilement filed in RIB. Almost the same results were observed in Muhanga District during the same period.



Figure 14: Over 3,787 couples legalizing their marriage during gender accountability week in Northern and Eastern Provinces, March 2024



Figure 15: Supported teen mothers during GAD

Outcome 3: Women's inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth (UNDAP Outcome 1)

Finding 14:

Interventions and activities under the JP's thematic area of women's economic empowerment have led to a number of livelihoods impacts contributing to the economic empowerment of women and girls' beneficiaries, especially in areas of entrepreneurship and business development, financial inclusion both in terms of access to capital for investment and easy financial transactions with commercial banks and microfinance. Building on some of success stories recorded in the context of this evaluation, there is evidence that lives of women and poor or vulnerable beneficiaries have improved. Lives for some of these beneficiaries have changed from addressing and being concerned of how to survive but also embarking into business lives. This applies for beneficiaries being in refugee and non-refugees' settings.

JP has impacted beneficiaries' lives in the area of women's inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth. Thus, women's businesses were improved in size and quality as well as service delivery. Beneficiaries testified of the improvement of their family life, working condition with much security and safety, the stability of their family

relationship, education of their children, and financial growth. The following selected success stories are more eloquent on this matter.

Selected Success Stories (SS)

SS#1: Transformed Life in a Refugee Camp as result of the JP's interventions:

One Beneficiary (NS) from the refugee camp has testified the benefits of the cash grant received after the training. She argues *"After training sessions, I received an 800,000 RWF (610\$) cash grant, and decided together with my family to invest in livestock and small business. We bought one cow and two goats with 500,000 rwf (381\$), and initiated a shop for clothes with 300,000 RWF (230\$). My father was in charge of the cow while my mother was responsible for the goats and myself became in charge of the shop"*. At the time of the present evaluation, this investment had generated so far three cows and the family was waiting for a new calf to be born. They have also three goats that had started giving birth while others were sold in order to generate additional income. The clothes' shop was generating a monthly income of 106,000frw (812\$), the cow's milk 24,000 frw (19\$), and goats 20,000 Rwf (16\$), without mentioning the manure used in their gardens. Now the lady who is the primary beneficiary of the grant is capable to cover the household's needs, saved between 8,000Rfw (6.1\$) and 32,000 frw (25\$) per month in the Duterimbere Savings and Lending Group, where she counted 384,000 Rwf (293) of total savings, and she had shared out about 460,000 Rwf (351\$).

She said, *"My family has basic household needs: my mother, my father, and I have an occupation; we are no longer dependent only on UNHCR support. I got married, the situation has changed, there is happiness at home; our home is a good example among our neighbours; and my father stays at home taking care of cows; he is no longer drunk."*

S# 2: Cross-Border Trading: A testimony from one women beneficiary involved in the cross-border trade in Rusizi highlighted that *“I was found a street sex worker, but with the support from JP on gender and now I am a happy mother, financially independent, able to pay for school fees of my children, I have built my own house that costed me about Frw 6 million Rwandan francs (4,600\$) paid in cash, I am capable now to save at least Frw 300,000 (230\$) every month as an income after paying all the expenses”*.

S#3: A young man from KIZIBA Camp (from DRC). In his statements he confirms that *“I am open in my mind for business and I am confident that I can do it, I am doing well, my business will last long, I have an interest of not less than 150,000RWF (115\$) of monthly interest. For example, in April 2024 I had an interest of 157,000RWF (120\$), in March 2024 I had 225,000RWF (172\$). Now I belong to 2 saving groups where we give the amount of money that you can afford every week, and we share this amount after a year of saving. I recently received 257,000RWF (196\$) that I am going to use for cultivation of Irish potatoes.*



Figure 16: An auto mechanic female thanks to JP



Figure 17: Successful young lady who now has cattle and a shop thanks to JP start-up support in refugee camp

Outcome 4: Women's resilience to both natural and man-made shocks (UNDAP Outcome 4)

Some sketches of impact related to the increase of resilience to the natural and man-made shocks and enjoyment of a life free from violence and discrimination were identified as well. With the awareness raising among the religious people, a permanent gender desk was set up for religious community to monitor implementation of their commitments and share their experiences, which will have a positive impact on GBV awareness and constitutes a way to tackling social norm changes.

With the awareness raising efforts in Rwanda Extractive Industry Workers Union (REWU), the work environment changed. Thus, more than 8 mining companies have set up anti GBV committees and have availed or improved the breastfeeding rooms at their workplace. In addition, 134 women and girls have enrolled in mining sector and are making a living while mining professional area was initially considered ad men's domain.

The awareness campaign on women's rights also has contributed much to the reduction of home conflicts as observed by some informants. The project has contributed to breaking the silence to GBV, challenging negative social norms, and promoting mind-set change with men and boys as partners and allies of development

Empowering vulnerable women and girls to create businesses through entrepreneurship, financial literacy, technical skills and market linkage initiatives has increased their economic empowerment and self-confidence leading to their resilience as a pathway to living a dignified life. A combination of mobile GBV clinics and toll-free lines caused

21,941 GBV victims (14,123F&7,818M) have benefited from legal services and referral mechanisms

The life conditions in the community also changed because of JP. Through community-based platforms, parent-adolescent communication sessions were organized for 246 participants (84 young mothers, 83 mothers and 79 fathers) in which family conflicts caused by teenage pregnancies were resolved resulting in increased family reunifications and commitment by community members to end GBV in households.

With counselling intervention, couples improved their relationships with more stability, to invest in successful business, children from former conflicting couples were able to go back to school, victims of SGBV know where to seek services.

3.7. Sustainability

Like with the impact, the JP sustainability was assessed throughout the outcomes. The sustainability expected in the achievements for outcome 1 are observed throughout the three outputs. Thus, there were networks opened for young graduate women during their mentorship period which are potential for future employment. The 2021 elections also have displayed the involvement of more qualified women in local leadership and the increase of women potential and involvement in electoral competition. All these accounts prove the sustainability of the results of JP efforts to strengthen women's capacities to compete for leadership positions and to lead decision making processes at local and national levels.

Also, the various training followed, such as GRB and GEPM for the staff from government institutions and other organs, as well as the support in the establishment of coordination organs, ensure the sustainability of the impact of the interventions of strengthening local and national level government institutions' capacities to coordinate and execute gender-responsive development framework and budget.

Furthermore, the policies and strategies developed by media houses in the perspective of addressing or responding to sexual abuse, the gender-sensitive reporting skills gained by women journalists, and the high number of women journalists having their own journals are tangible signs of the future continuous contribution of the media, especially women's media, in promoting the community awareness of gender equality and civic understanding of women's rights to equal participation in decision making. So, there is expectation of long-term changes in media practices and narratives, resulting in a more balanced and inclusive reporting on gender issues.

The sustainability of the interventions related to outcome 2 is observed in its achievements. Thus, there is engagement of local leaders, parliament members, security officers, IOOSC and RIB, journalists, and technical staff of institutions in the process leveraging gender accountability in public institutions. There was also a GMIS system developed to facilitate gender accountability through Monitoring and evaluation, the development of tools and documents and reports, and returning teen mothers to school. These are the elements that demonstrate that the impact of JP regarding the accountability and oversight mechanisms on gender equality and women's empowerment in public institutions will last very far beyond its implementing period.

The sustainability related to the outcome 3 on the inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic growth that generates decent work and promotes quality livelihoods for all can be appraised through a number of intervention aspects. The support of beneficiaries went hand in hand with capacity building and the culture of financial independence. So, women are supported financially and in business skills development. Women were also initiated to work together through cooperatives and financial institutions which can intervene in case of crisis. Another point is that the businesses that were supported are owned by women and these have a reputation of good management of financial resources. The fact of including refugees also gives hope that they will continue to benefit from wealth and skills they gained even when they return to their home countries or relocated to other countries. Combining economic intervention with other programmes like counselling and eradication of sexual and gender-based violence and abuse is a guarantee of a safe working environment, which is likely to contribute to sustainability.

The resilience to shock brought by JP as related to the outcome 4 is likely to be sustainable on a number of aspects. This programme contributed to building the structures that will last long. Thus, the permanent gender desk established religious community to monitor the implementation of their commitment, the anti-SGBV committees and breastfeeding rooms which are part of REWU working conditions, and the referral structures in the community will serve for a long time. Women's economic empowerment also will contribute to their safety and freedom. Ordinary women were also involved into counselling, which they will do for long after the programme has ended. JP has also involved volunteers from the community who will always be there. JP has involved opinion leaders like religious leaders, and the youth.

4. CONCLUSION, LESSONS LEARNED, RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. Conclusion

The overall goal of this evaluation is to document and present the achievements of the joint programme on gender in terms of ensuring gender equality and equity in Rwanda. The joint programme was initiated and implemented by UN agencies and government entities in collaboration with the civil society organizations in different parts of the country for a period of five years (2019-2024). All the interventions and activities implemented by the Joint Programme were under three thematic areas, namely, (1) Women lead, participate in and benefit equally from governance system; (2) Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy, and (3) All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence. The performance and remaining gaps in these particular areas have been assessed and the following are some concluding messages.

- ***Women and Girls have been capacitated in leadership and they have been able to participate and benefit from the governance system in Rwanda.*** Findings from the evaluation have confirmed the hypothesis and sustain attainment of the goals set in promoting gender equality in leadership and governance system in Rwanda. Particular attention by the joint programme was made on mentorship and capacity development for women and girls to compete for leadership positions and to participate in electoral processes at different levels. However, more efforts are needed to sustain the gains achieved especially in public institutions while increasing women's representation at local level. Additionally, greater emphasis is needed on law enforcement especially in the private sector to ensure higher representation of women in boards and senior management. Mentorship programmes for young women and girls remain instrumental in fostering their self-esteem, confidence and leadership skills and preparing them for competing for leadership positions across government, CSOs and private sector institutions.
- ***Women and girls have been supported and have been capacitated to gain income, obtain off-farm job opportunities as well as decent income towards their economic empowerment.*** The evaluation revealed how women and girls have been economically empowered through initiatives such as capacity building in entrepreneurship, financial literacy and access to low-cost loans, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), seed grants/start-up capital, and promotion of saving schemes. Other interventions include establishment of women investment fund, formalising informal women groups to registered cooperatives. Supported women have gained more income, created their off-farm jobs and employment, and accessed more capital for investment and business development for their economic empowerment. Supported women have gained

more income and self-esteem, created off-farm jobs and employment, and accessed more capital for investment and business development for their economic empowerment. However, women entrepreneurs continue to have small capital and savings which confines them in micro and small business with limited multiplier effects. In addition, women-led businesses are primarily focus on local markets and require support for expansion and exposure to regional market opportunities including those offered by AfCFTA.

- ***All forms of gender-based violence have been addressed and the status has improved as result of programme's implemented interventions.*** The joint programme implemented a range of interventions aimed at strengthening the capacity to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV). These included awareness raising campaigns to mitigate and prevent all forms of GBV including through mobile clinics, capacity development of various GBV service providers including multidisciplinary team of one stop centres, community structures, security organs, local leaders among others for them to effectively address GBV. Additionally, accountability for GBV prevention and response with opinion leaders, and community leaders have increased through Gender Accountability Dialogues (GAD) at provincial and district levels in partnership with Gender Monitoring Office (GMO). The JP has also increased service delivery to GBV victims especially the provision of legal aid services GBV victims and related services.

GBV remains deeply rooted in negative social norms and patriarchal attitudes, requiring sustained and collaborative efforts to transform behaviours, attitudes and practices. Engaging men and boys, along with nontraditional actors such faith-based organisation, youth, media, etc is paramount. Furthermore, there is a critical need to strengthen integrated approaches to addressing GBV by combining economic empowerment, social transformation and leadership to achieve sustainable and resilient outcomes.

4.2. Key Lessons

L&R # 1: The programme's design is in line with the national policy and strategic thinking and context. Implemented interventions are relevant and they address pertinent gender related issues facing national socio-economic transformation in Rwanda. But the programme targets were too ambitious at the scale of Government making it difficult to isolate government interventions as compared to national interventions by the government in the same gender sector.

L&R # 2: Interventions implemented fall in the mandate of the implementing partners from both the public and civil society organizations. However, looking at how the activities

were planned, it is difficult to differentiate specific interventions implemented as “Joint activities or interventions” by implementing partners despite their complementarity nature. Going forward, it would be better to identify joint interventions that can be funded through the joint programme and those that can be implemented and funded by individual agencies. This helps further to avoid any duplication and enhance efficiency in the targeting of beneficiaries as well as the delivery of service.

L&R # 3: Mobilization and Use of resources for the Joint Programme: the process of resources mobilization and use of the resources was not implemented as initially planned. It was planned for joint mobilization and allocation of resources for the joint programme. However, most of the UN agencies implementing partners and MIGEPROF have mobilized resources at individual level and financed their activities as if it is in their normal frameworks. In this regard, each UN agency had to identify the planned activities that fit into the joint programme for implementation without necessarily having these jointly planned and implemented. Consequently, it is difficult to demonstrate what additional resources were mobilized by individual partners in support of activities defined under the Joint Programme. Also, there was no budget allocated from the JP budget to individual UN agencies so that they can implement the agreed joint and complementary activities. As a result, it became difficult to have one or joint delivery model of the proposed interventions. These remain specific to each UN agency or MIGEPROF and GMO. Furthermore, it is difficult to show what was the government’s financial contribution to the JP since it was not included in the programme budget.

L&R # 4: Gender specific interventions will lead to more gender transformational impacts: The choice of interventions in the three thematic areas, namely participatory leadership, economic empowerment, and prevention of GBV has focused mainly on soft interventions rather than on long-term programmatic and transformative action and projects to ensure sustainable transformational impacts. Predominantly, capacity building, awareness raising, and gender related dialogues were the main types of interventions across the three pillars. Cognizant of their importance, the changes linked to such interventions take time to demonstrate and more often beyond the programme’s period and hence difficult to account for a change within the JP’s timeframe.

L&R# 5: Capacity building on gender equality and women’s empowerment has contributed to women and girls’ capacities and community ‘s awareness on gender related issues, best practices, and prospects. Training, skills transfer, and awareness raising in various areas of governance, economic empowerment, and prevention of gender-based violence have been critical in enhancing women and girls’ capacities to participate in leadership at different levels, create off-farm jobs, increase their entrepreneurship skills, initiate new businesses and trade activities, and the ability to mitigate and prevent the different forms of GBV. These achievements constitute a good

basis, among other national achievements, to take gender related interventions to the next level of institutionalization of gender transformation, comprehensive education about gender equality focusing on children and parents, and more engagement of the youth (both girls and boys).

L&R#6: Women and Girls beneficiaries of the Joint Programmed have been financially included and their livelihood conditions have improved. Programme’s interventions in area of financial inclusion have demonstrated the ability to empower economically women and girls so that they take part in various economic and business-related activities. Praise to capital received through seed funding, women investment fund, financial literacy, and other facilitation in accessing finance have been instrumental to ensure that women have income needed for their investment and business expansion. Looking at the multiplier effects observed in terms of improved people’s livelihood conditions, more funding in the form of seed funding, investment fund, and other innovative financial products are needed to ensure sustainable financial inclusion of women and girls for their economic empowerment.

L&R # 7: Impacts and Sustainability. The design and implementation of the joint programme is a good learning process to plan interventions and deliver them as one. The choice of targets in the logical framework was too ambitious and took national level targets as benchmarks with a modest budget of about USD 13 million. The targets were not revised as results of the budget revision from USD 19 million to USD 13 million. Therefore, the impacts of the programme remain at result level with little evidence of transformational impacts. For example, it is not easy to indicate the extent of the JP’s contribution and attribute the change in the trend of GBV to the improved awareness and change of mind-set towards zero tolerance already documented as part of the JP results.

4.3. Key Recommendations

Key recommendations to inform future programming and decision making were formulated based on the desk review and primary data collection which included outcomes from the JP stakeholders’ meeting held at Ubumwe Hotel in Kigali on the 16th of August 2024. These recommendations are categorised by thematic area and are outlined and prioritised in the table below:

No	Thematic area	Priority	Timeline
Women leadership and participation			
1	Strengthen women’s capacity to prepare for the leadership roles and meaningful participation (findings 5, 7&13): Scale up capacity building initiatives including mentorship programmes and	High	High

	transformational leadership training targeting women across various sectors such as journalism, politics and university graduates to enhance their preparedness and readiness for leadership roles and their meaningful participation while adopting innovative approaches that address norms, policies and representation. Leverage existing networks of women's lead organisations such AWLN to enhance impact.		
2	Promote accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment (Finding 8): Advance gender accountability in public and non state institutions through structured dialogues, intergenerational approaches, community awareness campaigns and scale up gender accountability days (GAD) in all districts to address cultural norms and stereotypes that hinder women's leadership and participation in governance systems.	High	High
Women's economic empowerment			
3	Enhance women's access to finance and entrepreneurship (Findings 9&14): Scale up access to finance model tailored to disadvantaged groups of women in micro and small particularly women in informal cross border trade, street vendors, sex workers, teen mothers, refugees and rural women. This should include enhancing their financial literacy, providing access to low interest loans, offering capacity building in entrepreneurship, business skills, and mentorship. Extending these support systems to women's groups and cooperatives will empower them to expand and sustain their businesses, hence driving economic empowerment and greater access to financial resources and prevention of GBV.	High	High
4	Enhance women's participation in decent work and male dominated sectors (Findings 9, 10&14): Going forward, it is important to create more targeted programmes that facilitate women's access to market opportunities and regional trade including leveraging the AfCFTA opportunities. Focus should be on sectors which employ many women like agriculture, informal cross-border trade and tourism sectors. Further actions are needed to promote women in male	High	High

	dominated domains such as mining, infrastructure, transport and public procurement including supporting prominent businesswomen to mentor and coach others, particularly those in small scale businesses such as women in informal cross border trade, street vendors and others in small scale businesses which will help them to expand their market reach, tap into regional markets and trade networks for sustainable growth.		
5	<p>Forster negative social norms change and promote integrated approaches to GBV (Findings 11&12):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV in Rwanda remains deeply rooted negative social norms, patriarchal attitude, practices and behaviours. It is therefore important to promote men and boys' engagement as well as non-traditional actors such as faith-based organisations, youth groups, media among others to challenge and transform these harmful social norms, promote positive attitudes towards gender equality, social respect and non-violence in public, private and online spaces. • To address GBV a comprehensive and sustainable manner, it is important to strengthen integrated approaches that tackle women's economic dependence, challenge negative social norms and empower victims to assert their rights, timely report GBV cases and hold perpetrators accountable. 	High	High
6	<p>Strengthen coordination, research and documentation of gender equality and women's empowerment (Section 3.5 on coordination):</p> <p>Strengthen joint planning and coordination: Improve the alignment of planning and budgeting across implement UN Agencies to ensure a more integrated approach, particularly coordinating work plans with government's</p>	High	High

	fiscal calendar and UN Agency plans fostering synergy among partners, more cohesive and effective programme implementation and result reporting.		
7	Strengthen monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems (Finding 3 and Section 3.5 on coordination): Ensure that the next joint programme follows the principles of result-based management (RBM), particularly in the result framework, with clear baselines, realistic targets and indicators that align with defined outputs and outcomes. The result framework should be informed by findings from the M&E system and mid term review and adjusted as necessary based on the results.		

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ANNEXES (See document 2)

Annex 1: Evaluation of the Joint Programme (JP) on Gender

Annex 2: Organization and Contacts for SDC Funded Projects

Annex 3: List of participants

Annex 4: Interview guide for UN agencies

Annex 5: Interview guide for Implementing Partners (IPs)

Annex 6: Interview guide for beneficiaries (individuals and group representatives)

Annex 7: Evaluation matrix

Annex 8: Evaluation Terms of References