



JP RWEE Global Coordination Unit

JP RWEE Mid-term Review [Consolidated] 2022-2025

1. Introduction & Purpose

This synthesis paper presents the consolidated findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) Phase II, bringing together evidence from country-level reviews and insights from the strategic dialogue with programme partners.

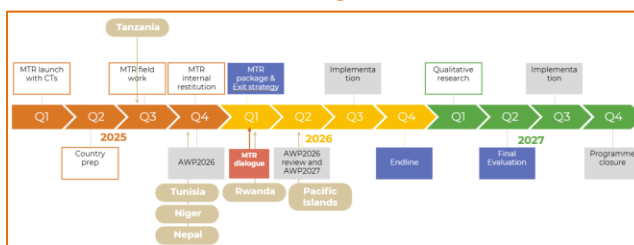
It aims to provide a forward-looking analytical reading of progress achieved to date, identify areas requiring consolidation, and inform programme prioritization for the remaining implementation period (2026–2027).

The synthesis is anchored in the JP RWEE Theory of Change and Performance Results Framework and is structured around four core research questions: **(i) Relevance & Adaptability, (ii) Efficiency & Synergy, (iii) Effectiveness & Impact, (iv) Sustainability & Institutionalization**. In addition, it integrates the two JP RWEE cross-cutting lenses: **gender-transformative change** and **climate resilience**—which are central to the programme's approach and results.

Box 1. Research questions



Box 2. Timeline and coverage



Rather than replicating country findings, this paper highlights common patterns, divergences, and emerging strategic insights across contexts. It also reflects key messages raised during the partner dialogue, particularly regarding market systems development, financial pathways, and institutional embedding.

The objective is to support evidence-based decision-making for the 2026 Annual Work Plan review, clarify realistic expectations for sustainability and institutionalization by 2027, and contribute to ongoing reflections on the future evolution of the programme.

2. Cross-country Results Snapshot

The Mid-Term Review confirms that the JP RWEE has established **solid foundations across its core areas of intervention, with consistent evidence of progress across countries**. Results are particularly strong in improving food security and nutrition outcomes, strengthening women's agency and collective action, and expanding access to productive resources and local economic opportunities.

Under **Outcome 1**, the programme has contributed to **increased production of nutritious crops, improved dietary diversity**, and enhanced household food security. Across contexts, women report greater availability of food, **more diversified diets**, and improved capacity to manage seasonal variability. These gains are closely linked to **increased access to climate-resilient inputs**, extension services, and improved production practices.

Equally, under **Outcome 2 and 3**, the programme demonstrates clear and consistent **progress in strengthening women's voice, agency, and leadership**. The combined use of group-based approaches, gender-transformative methodologies such as Gender Action Learning Systems, and engagement of male champions has contributed to **tangible shifts in decision-making dynamics at household and community levels**. Women's participation in producer groups, local governance structures, and community dialogue platforms has increased, reinforcing both individual and collective agency.

A central strength of the programme lies in its joint and integrated delivery model. The sequencing of interventions—linking empowerment, capacity-building, livelihoods, and market engagement—has enabled **more inclusive participation, particularly for women facing multiple constraints**. Complementarity across participating agencies has supported integrated delivery on the ground, reducing duplication and enhancing the coherence of support provided to rural women.

The programme also demonstrates **strong relevance and alignment with national policy frameworks**. Across all countries, interventions are anchored within existing agricultural, gender, decentralisation, and climate strategies.

Under **Outcome 4**, there is emerging evidence of policy uptake, local government engagement, and **initial co-financing mechanisms**, indicating that JP RWEE is contributing to shaping enabling environments for women's economic empowerment.

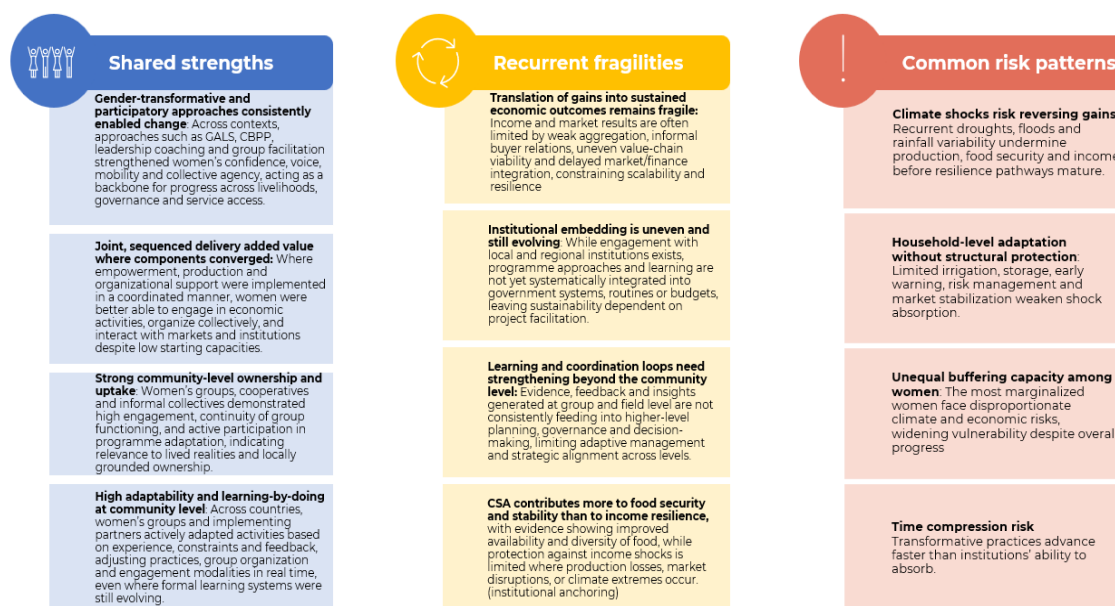
At the same time, the MTR highlights three interconnected areas that require further consolidation:

First, while production and group strengthening are well established, **market systems integration remains uneven**. Women's economic activities are still largely linked to informal or local markets, with **limited engagement of upstream value-chain actors** and insufficient aggregation to enable scale and profitability.

Second, **financial graduation pathways remain underdeveloped**. Although savings groups and initial financial inclusion mechanisms are functioning, there is a persistent "missing middle" between group-level savings and access to larger-scale investment or credit, **limiting the ability of women-led enterprises to grow**.

Third, **institutionalisation is progressing but not yet fully embedded**. While policy alignment is strong and entry points exist, the integration of programme approaches into formal mandates, budget systems, and routine government processes remains uneven across contexts. **Institutional uptake is evident, but often still relies on programme facilitation** rather than fully routinised systems.

Overall, the MTR suggests that **JP RWEE has moved beyond initial implementation and is now at a consolidation stage**. The programme is delivering results and demonstrating a viable model, but further effort is required to strengthen economic pathways, deepen market integration, and secure institutional anchoring to ensure the sustainability and scalability of outcomes beyond the programme cycle.



3. Findings

3.1 Relevance & Adaptability

The programme remains highly relevant across all contexts, with strong alignment to national priorities and rural women's needs.

However, the depth of market systems and climate adaptation does not yet fully match the ambition of programme design, requiring further contextual consolidation.

The Mid-Term Review confirms that JP RWEE interventions remain highly relevant across all programme contexts, demonstrating strong alignment with national policy priorities and with the lived realities of rural women. Across countries, activities are well anchored in existing policy frameworks, including agriculture, food security, gender equality, decentralisation, and climate strategies. This alignment has supported government ownership and ensured that programme interventions respond to nationally defined development objectives.

At community level, the programme addresses multiple, intersecting constraints faced by rural women, including limited access to land and productive resources, restricted mobility, low literacy, climate exposure, and weak participation in decision-making processes. The integrated design of JP RWEE—combining empowerment, livelihoods, and access to services—has enabled a more holistic response to these challenges, reinforcing its continued relevance.

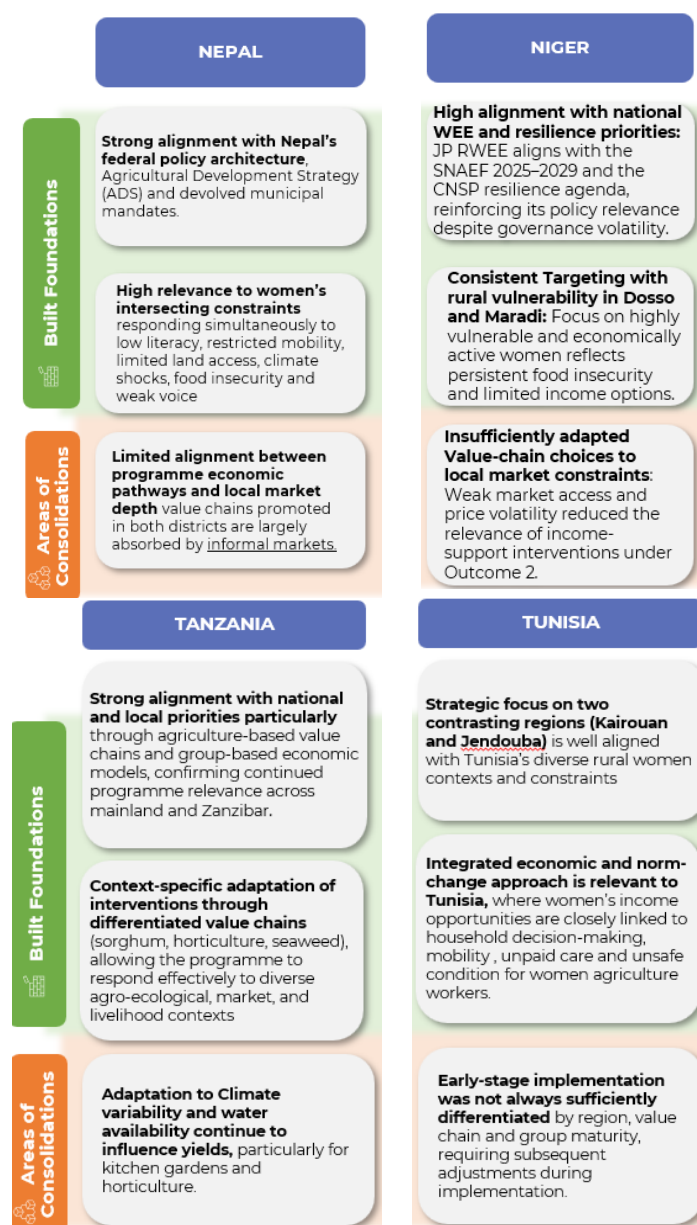
The programme also demonstrates a **high degree of adaptability across diverse contexts**. Country teams have tailored interventions to different agro-ecological zones, livelihood systems, and market opportunities, with differentiated value chains such as horticulture, cereals, and seaweed. This flexibility has allowed the programme to respond to varying environmental conditions, economic opportunities, and local priorities, while maintaining a coherent overall approach.

At the same time, the MTR identifies areas **where further consolidation is required**. In several contexts, the depth and maturity of local market systems do not yet fully match the ambition of programme-supported value chains. While production and group-level capacities are well developed, market demand, aggregation capacity, and value-chain integration remain uneven, limiting the potential for sustained income growth.

In addition, while climate considerations are integrated into programme design through the promotion of climate-smart agriculture practices, adaptation remains uneven across contexts. Climate variability, water availability, and exposure to shocks continue to affect productivity and outcomes, highlighting the need for stronger alignment between livelihood interventions and broader climate adaptation and risk management strategies.

Overall, the programme remains **highly relevant and context-responsive**, with **adaptability as a key strength**. The next phase of implementation will need to **deepen the alignment between production systems**, market realities, and climate conditions to ensure that relevance **translates into sustained economic outcomes**.

Box 5. Country Insights on Relevance



3.2 Efficiency & Synergy

The joint and integrated delivery model is a core strength of JP RWEE, particularly through effective sequencing and agency complementarity at community level.

Efficiency gains at field level are not yet fully matched by streamlined coordination and institutional-level integration.

The Mid-Term Review finds that JP RWEE demonstrates strong efficiency gains through its joint and integrated delivery model. Across countries, **collaboration among participating agencies has enabled complementary interventions** that span empowerment, livelihoods, market access, and policy engagement. This functional complementarity **reduces duplication** and allows each agency to contribute according to its comparative advantage, **strengthening overall programme coherence**.

A **key strength** lies in the **sequencing of interventions** at community level. In most contexts, efforts to strengthen literacy, agency, and social norms precede or accompany livelihood and market activities. This sequencing has enabled more **meaningful participation of rural women**—particularly those with low literacy or limited prior engagement in economic activities—thereby **improving the inclusiveness and effectiveness** of programme delivery.

Coordination mechanisms at country level, including joint planning processes and regular inter-agency exchanges, have supported alignment and operational coherence. In several contexts, **the use of local facilitators and community-based platforms** has further improved delivery efficiency by **reducing operational costs** and ensuring continuity, particularly in remote or fragile settings.

At the same time, the MTR highlights areas where efficiency and synergy can be further strengthened. The multi-agency nature of the programme, while a strength, also introduces **coordination complexity**. Planning, approval processes, and the need to align different agency **procedures can lead to delays** in implementation, particularly where sequencing of activities is required.

In addition, while **synergies** are strong at community level, they are **less consistently realized at higher institutional levels**. Linkages with local government structures and technical services do not always translate into sustained operational collaboration, and opportunities for integration with broader public systems remain under development in some contexts.

Overall, the programme's joint model provides clear efficiency and **effectiveness gains, particularly at field level**. Further consolidation will require streamlining coordination processes and **strengthening institutional-level synergies** to ensure that the benefits of integration extend beyond programme delivery into longer-term system embedding.

Box 6. Country Insights on Efficiency

	NEPAL	NIGER	TANZANIA	TUNISIA
Built Foundations	Effective inter-agency sequencing at community level, with literacy, empowerment and norm-change interventions preceding or accompanying livelihood and market support, <u>reducing drop-out and enabling meaningful participation</u> of low-literacy women. Clear functional complementarity among JP RWEE agencies, with distinct roles across literacy, livelihoods, markets and norms, limiting duplication and enabling integrated delivery at field level.	Strong inter-agency coordination enabled coherent delivery: Regular coordination mechanisms and joint supervision supported alignment among PUNOs despite security and access constraints. Improved cost efficiency and outreach through use of local facilitators: Reliance on CEAP facilitators and community-based structures reduced operational costs and ensured continuity in remote communes.	Effective collaboration at field and district level enabled efficient delivery and reduced duplication, with the MTR noting good coordination among PUNOs, LGAs, and implementing partners in Singida, Dodoma, and Zanzibar, particularly for training delivery and community engagement Synergies across agencies were strongest where interventions were sequenced around women's groups, allowing production, income, and norm-change activities (e.g. CSA/GAP, entrepreneurship, GALS/SASA) to reinforce	Clear complementarity across programme components (production, processing, market access, norm change and policy dialogue) reduced duplication and allowed activities to reinforce each other at field level (CBPP and SBCC). Existing coordination structures (COPIL and Technical Working Groups) provided a functional platform for information-sharing and joint visibility across institutions, supporting programme coherence
Areas of Consolidations	Coordination-intense and delays linked to multi-agency delivery, particularly in joint planning, approvals and roll-out of sequenced activities, <u>affecting timeliness</u> in some locations.	Synergies with local institutions remain under-exploited: Collaboration with communes and technical services did not consistently translate into operational support at local level (security related).	Market linkages are still developing in several value chains (e.g., banana and sunflower), offering scope to strengthen connections between producers and buyers.	Differences in implementation pace (procurement) and follow-up across partners and levels occasionally delayed joint activities and reduced timeliness, indicating a need for tighter coordination and clearer sequencing.

3.3 Effectiveness & Impact

The programme delivers strong results in food security, agency, and participation, demonstrating the effectiveness of its integrated and gender-transformative approach.

Economic gains, however, remain fragile and insufficiently scaled, pointing to the need for stronger market integration and financial pathways.

The Mid-Term Review provides strong evidence that JP RWEE is delivering meaningful results across its core outcome areas, particularly in strengthening women's agency, improving food security, and supporting engagement in income-generating activities. Across countries, women report increased confidence, greater participation in household decision-making, and stronger roles within community and group structures. These changes are consistently observed across different contexts and are reinforced by the programme's integrated and gender-transformative approach.

Under **Outcome 1**, improvements in food security and nutrition are among the most tangible results. Increased production of nutritious crops, combined with enhanced knowledge of nutrition and food practices, has contributed to more diverse diets and improved food availability at household level. Women also report greater capacity to manage seasonal food gaps, supported by access to improved inputs, extension services, and climate-resilient practices.

Under **Outcome 2**, the programme has supported the expansion of income-generating activities, particularly through agriculture-based livelihoods and small-scale enterprises. Women's participation in value chains and local markets has increased, and there is evidence of growing economic activity linked to vegetable production, processing, and other locally relevant sectors. At the same time, under Outcome 3, collective platforms and group-based approaches have strengthened social capital and enabled women to participate more actively in economic and community life.

NIGER

- ❑ Women with access to land: 55.8% → 93.2%
- ❑ Women using at least one improved agricultural input: +31.1% vs baseline
- ❑ Households cultivating ≥3 crops: 23% → 47.7%
- ❑ Women consuming ≥5 food groups: 40.4% (+23.3% vs baseline)
- ❑ Consumption of other vegetables: +20.5%
- ❑ Producers selling part or all of harvest: 40.4% → 50%
- ❑ Women using savings or credit services: 70.8%

NEPAL

- ❑ Increase Vegetable production: **+120%**
- ❑ Dietary diversity (women): **+5%**
- ❑ Farm income (women): **+6%**
- ❑ Women linked to markets: **+964**
- ❑ Women in leadership roles: **+2,917**
- ❑ Government co-funding: **USD 17,000**
- ❑ **2,000 sq. ft.** of public land for Mithila Agri-produce Collection Centre

The effectiveness of the programme is **closely linked to its integrated model**. The combination of group formation, gender-transformative methodologies, capacity-building, and livelihood support has created reinforcing pathways that contribute to both individual and collective change. In particular, approaches such as **Gender Action Learning Systems, community dialogue, and engagement of male champions** have supported shifts in norms and behaviours, enabling women to translate increased capacity into actual participation and decision-making.

"After trainings, my husband asked me for my opinion when planning expenses. That never happened before." Women's member group - Jendouba, Tunisia

At the same time, the **MTR highlights that economic gains remain fragile and uneven across contexts**. While income-generating activities have expanded, **income levels are often modest** and largely **concentrated within supported groups**. Limited market integration, price volatility, and constrained **access to larger-scale financial services continue to restrict the potential** for sustained economic growth and scaling of women-led enterprises.

"Buyers still fix seaweed prices; we cannot negotiate," Member of cooperative in Dodoma, Tanzania

"For the first time, we were asked to map our goals. It made us see we could work together, not just wait for instructions." Women's member group - Kairouan, Tunisia

In addition, **spillover effects beyond direct beneficiaries remain limited**. While group members benefit significantly from programme support, the diffusion of economic and social gains to wider communities is less evident, indicating that pathways to scale are still under development.

Overall, the **programme demonstrates strong effectiveness in achieving intermediate outcomes**, particularly in agency, food security, and participation. The next phase of implementation will need to focus on strengthening the depth, stability, and scalability of economic outcomes to ensure that these gains translate into sustained improvements in livelihoods.

TANZANIA

- ❑ Women with access to land increased from **85% to 93%**, but formal land ownership remains limited—only 267 CCROs had been issued by Oct 2025.
- ❑ Women with control over income rose from **70% to 94%**, yet very few women had accessed formal bank credit.
- ❑ Group participation increased from **20% to 74%**, though youth and persons with disabilities remain underrepresented.
- ❑ Seaweed yields doubled from **1,510 to 3,170 kg/ha**, but women still lack bargaining and price setting power in the market.
- ❑ **Sorghum yields increased by 55%** in Singida, while Dodoma yields declined due to drought and delayed delivery of inputs.

3.4 Sustainability & Institutionalization

JP RWEE has successfully achieved policy alignment and initial institutional entry points across countries.

Institutionalization is progressing but not yet system-embedded, reflecting structural constraints in mandates, financing, and absorption capacity rather than programme design gaps.

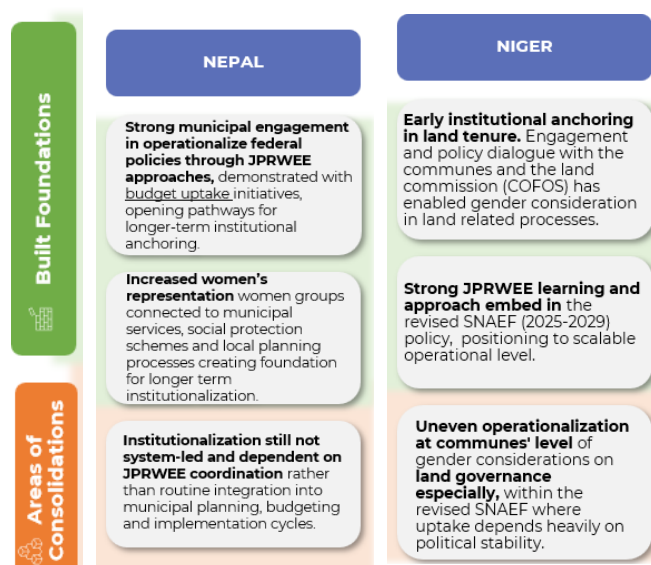
By 2027, sustainability should be assessed in terms of policy anchoring and selected institutional uptake, not full programme transfer.

The Mid-Term Review finds that JP RWEE has made important progress in strengthening the enabling environment for rural women's economic empowerment, particularly under Outcome 4. Across countries, the programme demonstrates strong alignment with national policy frameworks and has contributed to advancing gender-responsive policies, institutional capacities, and women's participation in governance processes.

There is growing evidence of institutional engagement at multiple levels. At national level, JP RWEE has supported policy dialogue and contributed to positioning rural women's economic empowerment within broader agendas on food security, climate resilience, and social inclusion. At sub-national level, local governments are increasingly involved in programme implementation, with emerging examples of budget allocation, co-financing, and integration of activities into local planning processes. Women's groups are also increasingly linked to public services, social protection systems, and local decision-making platforms.

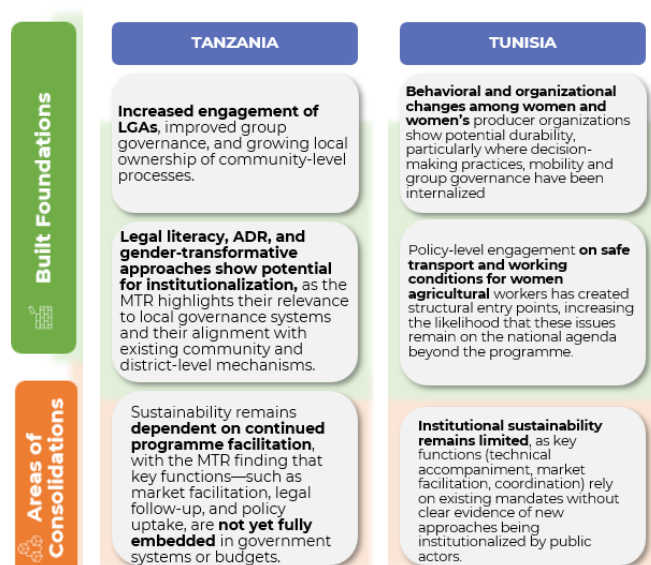
However, both the MTR and the subsequent dialogue with partners highlight that institutionalisation remains uneven and is not yet fully system-embedded. While policy alignment is well established, the translation of this alignment into formal mandates, routine budget allocation, and standard operating procedures is still in progress and varies across contexts.

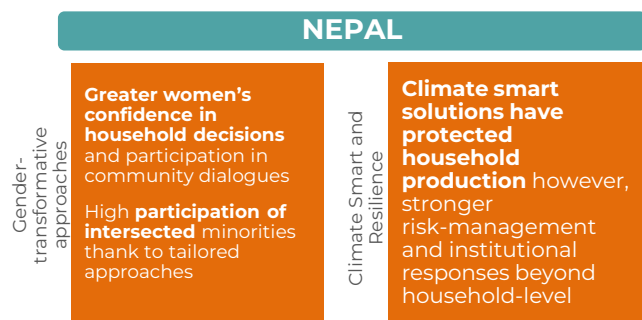
A key clarification emerging from the dialogue concerns how institutionalisation should be understood within JP RWEE. The programme design and Performance Results Framework did not envisage full operational or financial transfer of programme functions to government systems within the Phase II timeframe. Rather, institutionalisation refers to the progressive anchoring of approaches within policy frameworks, the strengthening of institutional capacities, the formal recognition and linkage of women's organisations to public systems, and the establishment of initial co-financing and budget entry points.



From this perspective, the MTR indicates that institutionalisation is advancing, but at a pace consistent with broader system reform processes. Constraints relate primarily to three factors: the absence of formal mandates for certain transformative approaches, partial integration into public budget systems, and limited absorption capacity for methodologies that require intensive facilitation. In several contexts, institutional uptake is evident but remains dependent on programme support rather than fully routinised systems.

Overall, sustainability should therefore be understood as the consolidation of policy anchoring, selected institutional mandates, and operational linkages between women's groups and public systems, rather than full programme transfer by 2027. The next phase of implementation will need to prioritise securing a limited number of concrete institutional anchors per country, ensuring that key functions are embedded within existing systems and can be sustained beyond programme support.



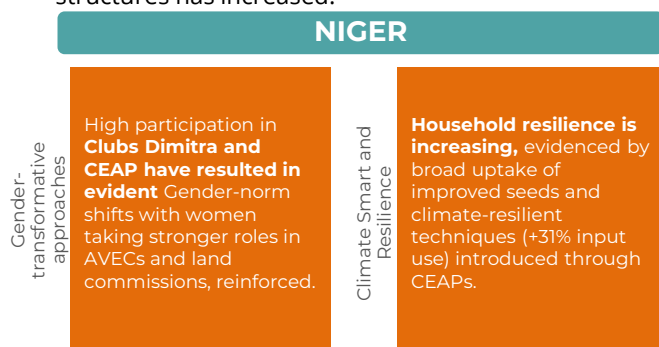


4. Cross-Cutting Insights

4.1 Gender-Transformative Approaches

The Mid-Term Review identifies **gender-transformative approaches as one of the most consistent and impactful dimensions** of JP RWEE across all countries. The combined use of group-based platforms, Gender Action Learning Systems, and the engagement of male champions has contributed to tangible shifts in gender norms, roles, and decision-making processes.

Across contexts, women report **increased confidence, greater control over income and productive assets**, and stronger participation in household and community decision-making. These changes are not limited to individual empowerment but extend to collective agency, with women's groups playing a central role in strengthening social capital, peer learning, and collective action. At household level, there is **evidence of more equitable decision-making** and redistribution of roles, while at community level, women's participation in dialogue and local governance structures has increased.

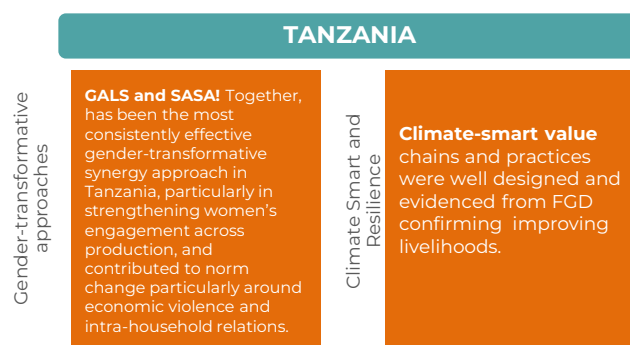


Importantly, the MTR indicates that these approaches are beginning to influence institutional spaces, with **women engaging more actively in local planning processes**, producer organisations, and governance platforms. While these shifts remain emergent, they signal the **potential for longer-term transformation** beyond immediate programme results.

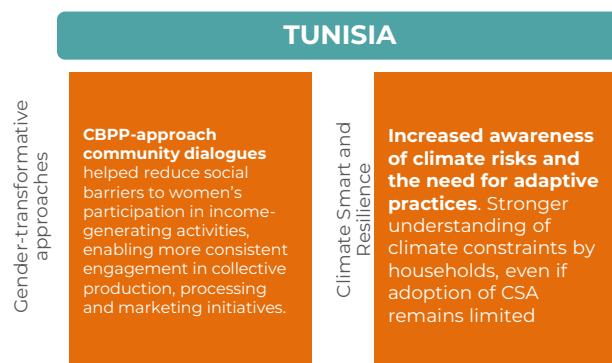
4.2 Climate Resilience

Climate resilience is embedded in JP RWEE through the promotion of climate-smart agriculture practices and improved access to inputs, knowledge, and services. Across countries, **women have adopted improved production techniques**, diversified crops, and strengthened their capacity to manage climate variability, **contributing to more stable food production and enhanced household resilience**.

However, the MTR highlights that climate-related gains are currently concentrated at the household and group levels. While these practices improve adaptive capacity, broader **system-level integration remains limited**. Linkages to climate risk management mechanisms—such as insurance, large-scale water and irrigation systems, and climate financing instruments—are not yet fully developed.



This points to a **gap between household-level resilience and system-level responses**. Strengthening this connection will be critical in the remaining implementation period to ensure that climate resilience is supported not only through individual practices, but also through institutional frameworks, **infrastructure investments, and financing mechanisms** that can sustain and scale these gains over time.



5. Recommendations and Implications for 2026–2027

The Mid-Term Review indicates that JP RWEE has moved beyond initial implementation and is now entering a critical consolidation phase. The remaining period to 2027 should therefore focus on deepening results and securing the conditions for sustainability, rather than expanding activities.

Three priority areas emerge for the final phase of implementation.

First, market systems strengthening must become a central focus. While production and group-based approaches are well established, stronger engagement with market actors, improved aggregation, and more structured value-chain integration are required to stabilise and scale income gains. This includes formalising buyer relationships, strengthening producer organisations, and addressing key bottlenecks within selected commodities.

Second, financial graduation pathways need to be reinforced. The persistent gap between savings groups and access to larger-scale financial services continues to limit the growth of women-led enterprises. The programme will need to prioritise structured engagement with financial institutions, explore risk-sharing and blended finance mechanisms where feasible, and strengthen the readiness of women’s groups to access formal financial services.

Third, institutional anchoring must be secured through targeted and realistic approaches. Building on the clarified understanding of institutionalisation, efforts should focus on embedding a limited number of core functions within public systems, including through defined mandates, budget entry points, and integration into planning processes. The objective is not full programme transfer, but irreversible anchoring of selected components.

These priorities should be reflected in the 2026 Annual Work Plan review, with a shift toward fewer, more strategic interventions that consolidate gains and strengthen system linkages. Exit and sustainability strategies at country level will play a key role in operationalising this transition, ensuring that consolidation efforts are clearly defined and aligned with institutional opportunities.

In terms of sequencing, 2027 should be understood as a hybrid year, combining continued consolidation of key programme components with final evaluation processes. Core implementation activities are expected to progressively de-escalate in line with programme timelines, while ensuring that critical consolidation milestones are achieved. Endline data collection will need to be completed in early 2027 to inform reporting, while the final evaluation and complementary qualitative work will run in parallel to capture both outcome-level results and evidence of institutional anchoring.

Overall, the final phase of JP RWEE should be guided by a shift from delivery to consolidation, ensuring that programme achievements are stabilized, embedded, and positioned for sustainability beyond the current cycle.

Strategic Priorities for Consolidation (2026–2027)

From Programme Delivery to System Anchoring

NEPAL	NIGER	TANZANIA	TUNISIA
- Strengthen market integration and digital linkages - Expand access to financial services through local systems - Institutionalise GRB and governance at municipal level - Consolidate climate-smart agriculture within local systems	- Strengthen management of collective infrastructure (gardens, storage) - Financial pathways remain limited / emerging - Integrate WEE into commune planning (PDCs) - Clarify roles and ownership for post-programme continuity	- Prioritise structured value chains with formal buyer engagement - Strengthen graduation from VSLA to formal finance - Embed systems in government (PORALG, district plans, SOPs) - Institutionalise monitoring systems and inclusion mechanisms	- Scale digital platforms, branding, and market access (OPAs) - Develop co-financing and sustainable income models - Formalise MoUs and embed approaches in national systems - Align exit strategy with national reforms

Across countries, the programme is shifting from delivery toward consolidation through market integration, financial pathways, and institutional anchoring.

6. Forward-Looking Reflection: Toward JP RWEE+

The Mid-Term Review and dialogue point to the need to frame the **next generation of JP RWEE** both as an expansion of this successful model to similar context areas and in parallel an **evolution of the model for those countries of phase I and II entering consolidation**.

Emerging reflections suggest a shift toward a more differentiated and strategic architecture, potentially combining consolidation of results in some contexts with **accelerated system-level engagement in others**. This includes positioning JP RWEE as a catalyst for market integration, institutional embedding, and stronger linkage with **public and private financing**.

Looking ahead, a JP RWEE+ could play a more explicit role as a **system-level accelerator for rural women's economic empowerment**, with greater focus on sustainable economic pathways, climate-resilient livelihoods, piloted by government and financing systems.

SPOTLIGHT: KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

The dialogue confirmed strong alignment with MTR findings and highlighted three priority areas for consolidation: market systems, financial graduation, and institutional anchoring. Partners emphasised that while production and group-based approaches are well established, stronger integration with markets, financial institutions, and public systems is needed to ensure sustainability.

There was also a shared recognition that institutionalisation by 2027 should focus on policy anchoring and selected system uptake, rather than full programme transfer. The remaining period should prioritise consolidation and generate forward-looking evidence to inform potential next-phase investment.



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