



IOM staff Nathan Glancy inspects a damaged house in Chuuk during the JDA. Credit: USAID, 2019

## Typhoon Wutip Destruction

Typhoon Wutip passed over Pohnpei, Chuuk, and Yap States, FSM between 19 and 22 February with winds of 75–80 mph and gusts of up to 100 mph. Wutip hit the outer islands of Chuuk State, including the ‘Northwest’ islands (Houk, Poluwat, Polap, Tamatam and Onoun) and the ‘Lower and ‘Middle’ Mortlocks islands, as well as the outer islands of Yap (Elato, Fechailap, Lamotrek, Piig and Satawal) before continuing southwest of Guam and slowly dissipating by the end of February. FSM President, H.E. Peter M. Christian issued a Declaration of Disaster on March 11 and requested international assistance to respond to the damage caused by the typhoon.

Consistent with the USAID/FEMA Operational Blueprint for Disaster Relief and Reconstruction in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), a Joint Damage Assessment (JDA) was carried out by representatives of USAID, OFDA, FEMA and the Government of FSM from 18 March to 4 April, with assistance from IOM. The JDA assessed whether Wutip damage qualifies for a US Presidential Disaster Declaration. The JDA found Wutip had caused damage to the infrastructure and agricultural production of 30 islands, leaving 11,575 persons food insecure.

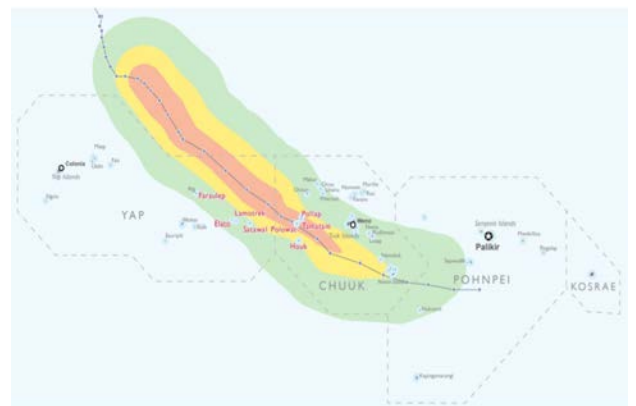


Figure 1 Path of Typhoon Wutip in FSM, Feb 19–22

The path of Typhoon Wutip Feb 19–22, 2019. Credit: US JDA, 2019.

# Response to Typhoon Wutip

IOM, with the support of USAID/OFDA, has responded with continued distributions of relief items stored in IOM warehouses such as tarps, rope and reverse osmosis (RO) units to affected communities on the outer islands of Chuuk, Yap and Pohnpei states. On the 1st of March, a patrol boat with supplies from Yap State, Red Cross and IOM left for the five affected islands of Satawal, Lamotrek, Elato, Fechaulap and Piig.



Food supplies are loaded into the shipping container. Credit: Lee Arkhie Perez 2019.



USD \$450,000 mobilized from donors



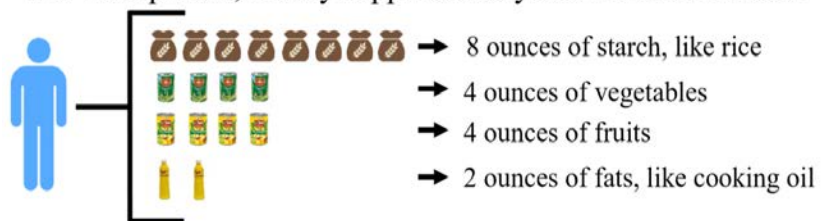
Complete food baskets delivered to 23 islands

The latest shipment departed for the Mortlocks in Chuuk State on the 29th of April, loaded with over 254 sacks of rice, 65 cases of vegetables and 213 gallons of cooking oil. IOM has now mobilized approximately USD \$450,000 from various donors such as USAID/OFDA, the New Zealand Embassy and Australian Aid, to support the response effort and to purchase food baskets for distribution to affected populations. Complete food baskets have been delivered to twenty-three islands that received major damage to agriculture, benefiting 9,295 people. A further 2,280 people living in areas which suffered moderate crop damage will receive supplemental food to ensure their needs are fully met. IOM staff will also participate in post-event assessments.



The Voyager distribution ship in Chuuk lagoon. Credit: Lee Arkhie Perez 2019.

For each person, a daily supplementary food basket includes:



# Message from Chief of Mission Stuart Simpson



Over the past 10 months, IOM's presence and work on the ground has delivered tangible results across the region. This is epitomised by the quick, coordinated and comprehensive response to Typhoon Wutip in affected FSM states. Just days before Wutip hit, communities in Yap state had completed disaster management plans, School Emergency Plans and rehearsed hazard drills, while many children had participated in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction lessons - part of the CADRE + project. Immediately after Wutip, community groups and state governments were able to assess and convey the situation on the ground through the completion of Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) forms, an exercise practised under the PREPARE project. Examples such as this showcase the work of IOM in supporting communities and governments to mitigate impact, and build resilience and response capacity in a holistic manner.

In March, the handover ceremony for the MIDAS border management system took place in Majuro. This has been a huge achievement by everyone involved, from the RMI government to the immigration officers newly trained in the system - the first of its kind in the Pacific region. We also have some exciting projects in the pipeline for 2019. IOM is supporting important research into Marshallese women's menstrual health management, in association with the Cookhouse Confidential group. Information gathered from this research will assist IOM to understand the unique vulnerabilities, challenges and needs of Marshallese women and girls in everyday life, and during times of disaster.

I hope you enjoy reading the numerous activities and achievements of IOM and the people and governments of FSM, RMI and Palau – it has been a productive 10 months. If you'd like more information on projects featured in this newsletter, do not hesitate to contact the IOM office.

## Community Vulnerability & Capacity Mapping Exercise and Assessment (CVM)



Community members hold up their disaster risk management plan.  
Credit: Ann Chong Gum, IOM, 2019.

In the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the CVM team has been busy conducting participatory hazard risk mapping with outer island atoll communities to improve community-based disaster risk management capacity, especially in regards to Early Warning Systems (EWS). This data will be compiled and incorporated into the design of a holistic community-based disaster risk management strategy for RMI, contributing to the creation of an easy-to-use open source mapping platform. This platform will include key public assets and infrastructure, especially emergency evacuation shelters across all atolls and islands.

# RMI's New Border Management System: MIDAS in Full Swing



**RMI Immigration Officers examine arriving travelers to Amata Kabua Airport. Credit Muse Mohammed, IOM 2019.**

The Republic of the Marshall Islands has become the first Pacific nation to own and operate the Migration Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS). In November of last year, the Division of Immigration, RMI's national police, customs and marine surveillance successfully completed a Border Management and Passport Examination Procedures course in preparation for MIDAS. In December 2018, MIDAS became fully operational at Amata Kabua International Airport where IOM supported the team through monitoring flight arrivals and departures as well as providing technical support to build confidence in using the new system, and to ensure its sustainability.



**IOM hands over the MIDAS key for Phase I to the RMI Immigration Division. Credit: Anfernee Kaminaga, IOM 2019.**

Since the launch of MIDAS, IOM has delivered monthly refresher training sessions focusing on primary controls, document control screen and registration, data management, capturing biometrics, purpose of travel, troubleshooting, IT equipment, generating reports, visas and alert lists. IOM handed over the key to RMI government at an official handover ceremony that took place on the 7 March at Amata Kabua International Airport (pictured above). IOM is now in the process of doing the final installation of MIDAS at Uliga docks and Kwajalein.

# Celebrating Women Across the Region

The 3rd Annual Women and Girls Festival at the Pohnpei Swimming Pool was a great success. Various activities kept attendees entertained throughout the day including the swimming carnival, prizes, a film screening and IOM art competition for which there were 35 entries each showing creative and inspirational ideas on how to better the world. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Australian Embassy, US Embassy, FSM National Olympic Committee, College of Micronesia FSM, Pohnpei Public Library, UNDP and Pohnpei State Government for assisting in the celebrations. In Majuro, IOM celebrated International Women's Day at Delap Park with a variety of activities. These included the Cultural Attire Parade, informational booths and the garden of inspiration.



International Women's Day celebrations in Pohnpei. Credit: Genevieve Gruss, IOM, 2019.

## Tabletop Exercises for Disaster Response

Tabletop Exercises consist of capacity-building activities designed to test the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for disaster response and readiness. In Pohnpei, a Tabletop Exercise was held at the Governor's Building from 12 to 14 September 2018, facilitated by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management (DECCEM) in coordination with IOM and USAID. The exercise brought together community leadership of the municipal governments, and State and National Government emergency response focal points to practice roles designated to them in the SOPs with the aim of increasing Pohnpei's capacity for disaster preparedness and response in the future.



Table Top Exercises underway in RMI. Credit: Laura Freeman, IOM, 2019.



IOM representatives at the Typhoon Tabletop Exercise held in RMI. Credit: Laura Freeman, IOM, 2019.

In December 2018, RMI held its first ever National Typhoon Response Tabletop Exercise, designed by IOM and supported by the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). Over 80 participants from the government, public sector agencies, civil society, and private sector worked together to respond to a simulated typhoon event. At the end of the two-day event, a situation report was produced, along with an initial response plan, budget and request for international assistance.



Satawal school children after participating in CCA/DDR lessons. Credit: IOM, 2019.



Community members attend a HVCM session in Lamotrek. Credit: IOM, 2019.

In 2019, the CADRE + team has been facilitating community disaster preparedness planning, DRR training workshops, and classroom instruction on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (CCA/DDR) across FSM. In February, community disaster preparedness and management trainings were held in Yap, on the neighbouring islands of Satawal, Lamotrek, and Elato. Community members participated in Hazard Vulnerability Capacity Mapping (HVCM), coming together to discuss and document vulnerabilities and strategies for mitigating disaster impact. Community Disaster Committees were established, comprised of male and female members. Just days before Typhoon Wutip made landfall on the neighbouring islands of Yap, the communities were able to create disaster management plans, School Emergency Management Plans (SEMPs), and rehearse hazard drills. CADRE + staff also taught lessons on CCA/DDR to 94 male students and 89 female students across seven schools in Yap.

The CADRE + team has been active in women's health promotion in Yap, collaborating with the Women's Interest Office, Australian Volunteers International, and the Neighboring Island Women's Association (NIWA) for the procurement of menstrual kits for women living on outer islands - a crucial resource during times of drought and disaster. IOM is facilitating two Women's Health training sessions with a local head nurse in July 2019.



The newly established Elato Community Disaster Committee Credit: IOM, 2019.

In Pohnpei, CADRE + partnered with the Department of Education (DOE) to distribute emergency medical kits and CCA/DDR storybooks on the topics of climate change, landslides, and drought to schools throughout the state. DOE selected seven schools to receive these kits based on geography, population, and access to medical treatment facilities.

# Alii CADRE Achievements in Palau



IOM staff Dale Jenkins shows a WQMT team leader how to check water levels by manually measuring temperature. Credit: IOM, 2019.

Water quality management and conservation initiatives are a major part of alii CADRE activities across Palau. In 2018, ten schools received water catchment systems and each now has a Water Quality Management Team (WQMT) to assess and treat collected water.

IOM has continued to assist schools and communities to build disaster risk reduction capacity in Palau, as part of the alii Climate Adaptation & Disaster Risk Reduction Education (CADRE) project. From January to March 2019, the alii CADRE team worked with the Palau National Emergency Management Office and Ministry of Education to assess the rehabilitation needs of identified evacuation shelters. Ngaremlengui State Office (the largest shelter with an area of 6,000 square foot and 200 beneficiary capacity) will soon have typhoon shutters, a new water system and updated electrical wiring installed, thanks to Civic Action Teams (CAT). A water system will also be installed at the Aimeliik Elementary School.



Alii CADRE staff member demonstrating the proper technique of cleaning the flush function. Credit: IOM, 2019.



Water catchment tanks at an outer island school. Credit: IOM, 2019.

**100%**

of 6th - 8th grade students learning CADRE curriculum

**47**

Leaders trained in Evacuation Shelter Management

**9**

Communities maintaining water collection capacity

**47**

Individuals trained in water quality management

**15**

Schools equipped with fire extinguishers

Alii CADRE staff have been leading training on system maintenance, result collection, and data reporting with WQMTs. Between 4-8 March, focus group discussions were held with at eight different schools in Palau to assess if WQMTs have increased the knowledge and awareness of water quality management among students. Results of the study will be presented to the Ministry of Education to assess the value of establishing more WQMTs in schools. Alii CADRE has also delivered fifteen fire extinguishers and emergency medical kit content cards, to complement previously distributed emergency medical kits, to the Ministry of Education to distribute to schools. Nine schools also received forty water filters. The alii CADRE project, funded by USAID/OFDA, is now in its final cycle and will close in September of this year.

# FSM and RMI Face Threat of Drought

Dry conditions continue to affect the region with food and livelihood crops increasingly vulnerable. In FSM's Chuuk state, many of the outer islands recently affected by the Typhoon Wutip are now grappling with dry conditions. This may mean crops that survived salt water inundation caused by Wutip in late February could be ruined in the future due to a lack of rainfall.



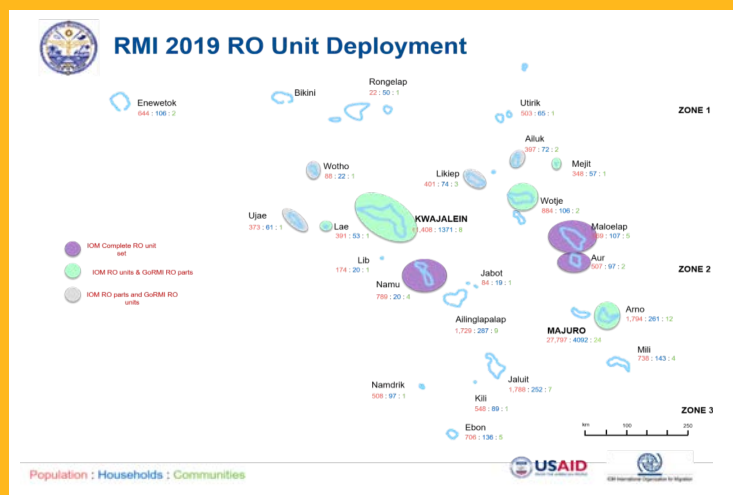
Women read an awareness poster placed in a local hospital in Chuuk. Credit: IOM, 2019.



Dry conditions on the outer islands of RMI. Credit: Steve Enoch, IOM, 2019.

According to the National Centres for Environmental Information (NOAA), the islands of Fananu and Lukunor in Chuuk state have been experiencing abnormally dry conditions. IOM has been raising awareness on water conservation strategies by placing posters in important locations such as hospitals and workplaces. The posters communicate tips on saving water and ways to be more conscious of water usage during daily activities such as washing, drinking, and cooking.

In the Marshall Islands, IOM worked alongside the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to conduct drought assessments and installation of Reverse Osmosis units in the communities of Ujae, Wothe and Lae. As of April 2019, IOM Reverse Osmosis full unit and/or parts deployment now covers 12 atolls across the RMI.





# New Typhoon Shutters in Palau



The ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the newly installed typhoon shutters. IOM, 2018.

In August 2018, IOM along with partners in Palau completed the installation of typhoon shutters to better protect community members in the event of a natural disaster. Through community-level emergency planning consultations in Palau, typhoon proofing of key public buildings was found to be a necessity. Part of the alii CADRE program, IOM partnered with the National Emergency Management Office for Palau, Palau Vice President Oilouch and the United States Civic Action Team to complete the works. IOM looks forward to continuing to work with partners in Palau to ensure communities and schools are better protected from extreme weather events.

## Pohnpei Radio Station Refurbishment

The Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corp. plays a vital role in keeping the community informed via news and public service announcements. For isolated communities, early warning messages ahead of disasters can mitigate impact, allowing increased time for preparedness activities. Thanks to the generous funding of the USAID and USDA as well as the Embassy of New Zealand, IOM has enhanced V6AH station's capacity to reach outer island communities, installing 40 solar panels for sustainable energy production. Refurbishment also included replacement of walls and ceilings, improvements to the draining system around the building to prevent rain damage, and soundproofing of studios.

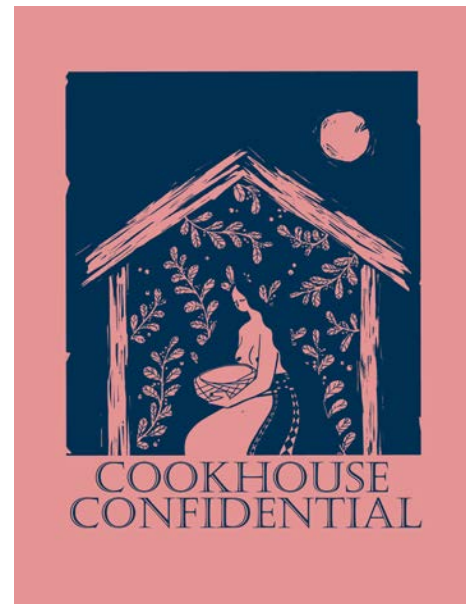


The 40 new solar panels on the V6AH radio station. Credit: IOM, 2019.

The newly refurbished V6AH radio station in Pohnpei was officially opened on August 29 2018. A ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark completion and handover was attended by representatives from traditional leadership, Pohnpei State Government, US Embassy Kolonia, and IOM, acknowledging Pohnpei Public Broadcasting Corporation's several decades of valued service and stating expectations of many more years to come.

# Cookhouse Confidential Research Project

Since inception in 2016, The Cookhouse Confidential working group has met regularly to discuss the impact of menstrual cycles on the lives of Marshallese women and girls, especially during times of disaster. The group has identified a number of issues surrounding menstrual, sexual and reproductive health that could benefit from further research. Out of these discussions, in early 2018, the current Menstrual Health Management (MHM) research project was born. The participatory project will run over a period of nine months from January to October 2019, and aims to uncover how Marshallese women understand their own menstrual health, MHM practices, menstrual product preferences, and how MHM differs depending on geographical location, socio-economic status, stage of life, and context (e.g. during natural disaster). The project involves over 100 participants, aged from 13-50 years old.



**The Cookhouse Confidential logo, designed by Marshallese artist Tiara Halferty, 2019.**



**Participant receives products during the first workshop. Credit: Laura Freeman, IOM, 2019.**

In February, the first focus group workshops kicked off in Majuro and Ebeye, as part of stage two. Groups were introduced to the project, received their research journals, information on reproductive health and five different menstrual products to trial. Over the months of March to August, participants will be testing the products and providing feedback on each one they did (or did not) try during each cycle. Information gathered from the journals and focus group workshops will be used to design disaster response kits tailored to the needs of women and girls, and inform a range of MHM developments in RMI. A report on the research findings will be completed in December 2019. The MHM research project is funded by OFDA, CFLI, Youth to Youth in Health, and Ez Price.

## Municipal Office Building Completed

In 2015, IOM was in Chuuk reconstructing homes and public infrastructure damaged by Typhoon Maysak. To acknowledge the work of the Typhoon Maysak Reconstruction Project (TMRP), Mr. Leon Fred, Mayor of Chuuk, hosted the blessing ceremony of the completed Municipal Office Building in Fonomo, Udot Fenuweisomw. TMRP was a collaborative effort between IOM and the local government, and IOM is proud of what was achieved with the local community and Community Focal Point (CFP) Mr. Fred. The CFP was able to hire only local workers for the project, for whom IOM provided training on construction standards and skills which can be applied in future projects. Thanks to [USAID Pacific Islands](#) and [US Embassy Kolonia](#) for continued support without which this project would not have been possible.

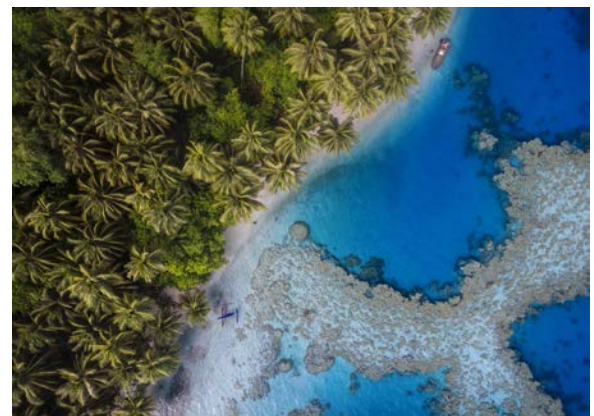
# IDF Virtual Reality Project visits the Marshall Islands

IOM official photographer Muse Mohammed and writer Fiona McGregor visited the Marshall Islands as part of an IOM Development Fund (IDF) project to capture how the lives of local people living on small island nations in the Pacific region are being impacted by climate change and strategies being pursued by communities to mitigate this impact.

With support from IOM's Youth and Community Mobilization Consultant, Anfernee Kaminaga, and Media and Communications Consultant, Laura Freeman, the team carried out interviews and site visits with a range of Marshallese people involved in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies both in Majuro and the outer islands of Likiep, Namdrik and Arno. The project employed 360 virtual reality, drone and other creative media to connect the audience with local stories. Kaminaga described that the project '...displays the importance of keeping a culture thriving as well as keeping up with what's around us and what influences us. As time goes by there's concern for the threats that are at hand, but we get to show the world that we're doing something about it and that we're in it for the long haul'. Stories gathered from the RMI will be showcased at an interactive booth in Dubai International Airport transit area for travellers to visually experience life for those living in small island nations in the Pacific region.



**Three generations of family members on Namdrik. Credit Muse Mohammed, IOM, 2019.**



**The shores of Namdrik, taken with a drone camera. Credit: Muse Mohammed, IOM, 2019.**



**The re-erected antenna at the Pohnpei Disaster Coordination Building. Credit: IOM, 2018.**

## Damaged Antenna System Fixed

Late last year, IOM responded to a request by the Department of Public Safety to restore the HF and VHF radio antenna system installed at Pohnpei Disaster Coordination Building. Strong winds had damaged the antenna, disabling communication to the outer and main islands of Pohnpei state. After an initial survey of the damage, IOM together with Pohnpei Division of Fire and Emergency (PDFES), procured a local vendor to re-erect and rust-proof the antenna mast, painted red and white to maximise visibility for aircraft. The radio room was then moved to increase communication capacity, and the system was connected to a back-up battery.

Broadcasting range of the radios has increased from five miles to more than twenty miles. Thanks to the combined efforts of IOM, DECCEM, PDFES and funding from USAID, communication to Pohnpei outer islands was restored in December and DECCEM can now coordinate more effectively during a disaster or rescue mission.

# Additional Highlights from Across the Mission



IOM Senior Programme Assistant, Ms. Ann Chong Gum represented RMI in November 2018 at the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Hiroshima training programme in Japan.

Ms. Tiare Eastmond, Regional Advisor for USAID/FDA in the Pacific, visited IOM's sub-offices in Yap, FSM in February 2019 to get an update on IOM's activities and to review pre-positioned emergency stocks.

In January 2019, IOM and NDMO held an After Action Review (AAR) for Tropical Depression 01W which passed through the Marshall Islands between the 4 and 8 January. Participants from key organizations discussed what was expected to happen, what occurred, what went well, and what improvements could be made. The AAR is being compiled into a report for the NDC for review and further action.

In January 2019, IOM Majuro representatives worked with locals in the northern outer island of Ailuk to develop the first Community Risk Management Plan. The purpose of these initial consultations was to evaluate past disaster responses, assess vulnerabilities and capacity for resilience, and listen to needs. This project is one component of the larger European Union funded Readiness for El Niño (EU RENI) project to ensure food and water resources of local communities in the North Pacific region are secured in the event of drought.

Nationwide early warning system surveys (EWS) were taken across RMI in February 2019 as part of the CVM project funded by World Bank with National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Marshall Islands Weather Service Office (WSO), Red Cross Society and Clusters. The survey aims to gather data on the types of early warning products, communication preferences and shelter available and utilised by respondents during disaster.

Pacific Climate Warriors came to Marshall Islands in April 2019 to facilitate a workshop on digital storytelling in partnership with Jo Jikum and IOM. The workshop aimed to give young people of the Marshall Islands the skills to powerfully communicate their stories digitally. The Jo-Jikum Digital Story Telling Workshop began on April 22nd and ended May 3rd at ICC in Majuro.

In July 2018, RMI and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Partnership co-hosted the Partnership Dialogue for RMI in Majuro. The focus of the event was on mobilizing support for the implementation of RMI's NDCs. The Partnership Dialogue brought together existing and new global, regional, and local partners to support the RMI in responding to climate change through the development of a results-based Partnership Plan, which will complement RMI's key priorities for NDC implementation in the coming years. The Partnership Dialogue addresses and directly feeds into the final stage of the development of RMI's 2050 Climate Strategy.

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