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Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States Individual Country Evaluation Report – Marshall Islands

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REPORT PREPARED BY

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is one of nine individual country evaluation summary reports produced as part of the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States post-project evaluation¹.

The Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) Project is a European Union (EU) funded initiative to assist nine smaller Pacific Island states (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu) to adapt to climate change. The project was implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC), with an implementation period from July 2011 through to November 2016².

The overall objective of the project was to support the governments of nine small island states of the Pacific in their efforts to tackle the adverse effects of climate change.

The GCCA: PSIS project consisted of on-ground climate change adaptation activities in specific sectors – coastal protection, marine resources, health, agriculture, and freshwater; supported by mainstreaming of climate change into national and sectoral policies, plans, budgets and procedures. The project also provided technical assistance, capacity building and supported regional collaboration.

The four components and key result areas (KRA) of the project were:

1. Climate change mainstreamed into national and/or sector response strategies.
2. Well-articulated sectoral adaptation strategies that address budget support criteria.
3. National climate change adaptation projects implemented.
4. Streamlined technical assistance that supports national adaptation responses delivered by regional organisations in a collaborative manner.

The individual country evaluation report presented below is guided by responses to the key evaluation criteria provided in the original terms of reference:

- Relevance & EU Coherence
- Effectiveness
- Impact
- Efficiency
- Sustainability
- Cross-Cutting themes of gender and the environment
- Visibility

The report also provide a summary of best practices and any specific recommendations for future action or improvement.

¹ The evaluation report is presented as a full report containing all sections, as well as separate executive summary, individual country evaluation summaries and case studies.

² The project was granted a one-year extension.

2. MARSHALL ISLANDS EVALUATION REPORT

Sector for Climate Change Adaptation Project

Coastal Protection

The water sector was originally selected in 2012. This was changed to coastal protection in 2013 on recommendation from the RMI Chief Secretary, based on consultation with the Climate Change Committee, who indicated that the water sector was adequately covered by other projects.

Project

Building Capacity to Address Coastal Protection in the Marshall Islands

The project successfully constructed a new causeway on Woja Island, a remote outer island situated in Ailinglaplap Atoll, Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI). The project built capacity within the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) to plan and implement coastal protection projects in small outer island atolls. Capacity was built through the experience of implementing the project, observing the feasibility and detailed design process, the placement of an external civil engineer within MPW to oversee the coastal works and the purchase of a used excavator, compactor and rock truck.

The implementation was preceded by a feasibility study, and a detailed design based on an integrated coastal management approach with both soft and hard coastal protection measures included.

Community education on climate change, coastal protection measures, coastal planting and home food gardening increased local knowledge and capacity of school children and the general community on Ailinglaplap Atoll to adapt to climate change.

Implementing Entity

A collaborative partnership between the Office of Environmental Policy Planning and Coordination (OEPPC), MPW and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) was formed to implement the project. This is one of the first times this level of multi-agency collaboration has occurred to implement a climate change project in RMI and similar arrangements could be used in future projects as all three agencies play important roles in coastal protection projects. There were some challenges in the collaboration, specifically, a general lack of clear and frequent communication between parties, including communication to SPC.

The RMI Coastal Management Advisory Council (CMAC) was involved in the Project Planning Workshop in February 2014 and one member of the CMAC was involved throughout the implementation phase.

There was little evidence of any active oversight committee at the national level. Two stakeholders recommended that RMI's retired National Climate Change Committee (NCCC) should be reinstated with broader cross-government representation to facilitate a whole of government coordinated approach to climate change projects and potentially take on this oversight role.

Relevance & EU Coherence

The RMI project is highly relevant to national priorities as documented in the RMI National Climate Change Policy Framework 2011 (Goal 2, Adaptation and Reducing Risks for a Climate Resilient Future), the RMI's Joint National Action Plan (JNAP) for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management³ and National Climate Change Policy Framework 2011 (Goal 2, Adaptation and Reducing Risks for a Climate Resilient Future).

The Woja causeway project in Ailinglaplap Atoll was already listed as one of many priority projects in the MPW's Proposed Climate Change Related Infrastructure Projects (2010) document. OEPPC conducted further survey work in 2013 to verify Woja causeway as the priority target area. The Woja causeway was selected because coastal erosion was advanced and impacting copra production and community access to key services (school and drug dispensary) during high tide.

The project is also highly relevant to meeting the needs of local communities. Chiefs and communities in Ailinglaplap Atoll were consulted regarding the preferred site for the intervention. After discussion involving assessments of all the possible intervention sites, consensus was again formed around the Woja causeway.

Other complementary climate change projects were being implemented in RMI during the planning and implementation stages of the GCCA project. These projects include:

- Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) – Focused on mainstreaming climate change in national and sector policies and implementing measures to improve water security.
- Coastal Community Adaptation Project (C-CAP) 2013-2017 – Focused on building the resiliency of vulnerable coastal communities.

Effectiveness

Most effective in remediating and raising the Woja causeway to enable safe passage at high tide

Overall the project was found to be highly effective with the project purpose being achieved and all components of the key results areas delivered as documented in the revised logframe (February 2015).

Expected result	Indicator	Indicator achieved
Overall Objective: Improve resilience to coastal climate change impacts in RMI	Use of integrated coastal management tools demonstrated as effective resilience building approach	Achieved: Combination of hard (elevated causeway constructed) and soft (coastal replanting) engineering methods applied to Woja causeway. Integrated approach also achieved through collaboration between MPW, OEPPC and EPA.

³ Two objectives relate to the project: a) Public education and awareness of effective CCA and DRM from the local to national level; b) Enhanced local livelihoods and community resilience for all Marshallese people

Expected result	Indicator	Indicator achieved
<p>Purpose: Increase capacity of RMI stakeholders to plan and implement effective coastal protection measures that reduce vulnerability to climate change</p>	<p>Skills and capacity of MPW enhanced to implement coastal protection measures, especially in outer islands by 10/2015</p>	<p>Achieved: MPW capacity has been enhanced through managing the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of the project. Capacity to undertake future hard coastal protection works (and maintenance) has also been increased through the purchase of used machinery-excavator with claw attachment, a compactor and a rock truck.</p>
<p>Key Result Area 1: Increased awareness in some local communities in RMI about integrated coastal management practices</p>	<p>Schedule of education and awareness activities prepared by 03/2015. At least four education and awareness activities conducted by 08/2015.</p>	<p>Achieved: Very basic schedule developed detailing five trips to Ailinglaplap. Trips involved community consultations and more than four education and awareness activities led by the EPA and partners (Ministry of Education, CMI-Land Grant). Education activities included topics: school gardens, replanting activities, creating temporary natural berms, GIS, integrated coastal management awareness, water quality management and Sandwatch.</p>
<p>Key Result Area 2 Capacity of Ministry of Public Works to plan and construct coastal protection measures enhanced</p>	<p>Minimum 2 community consultations conducted to provide input to project design by 06/2014</p>	<p>Achieved: Community leaders and Women's Group representatives consulted on Woja (February 2013, November 2013). Project planning workshop also held (February 2014) with various Government and non-Government stakeholders, however, logistical issues prevented representation from the Woja community attending the planning workshop. Consultations also helped provide a historical context to coastal erosion on Woja.</p>
	<p>Coastal protection measures selected, designed and costed by 06/2014</p>	<p>Achieved: Coastal protection measure selected, designed and costed, evidenced by Woja</p>

Expected result	Indicator	Indicator achieved
		Causeway Project: Coastal Processes and Feasibility Study (February 2014) and Woja Causeway Project: Detailed Design and Monitoring Plan (March 2014) developed by consultant e-Coast Marine Consulting and Research.
	Heavy duty equipment (compactor, large rock truck and excavator with claw attachment) procured and purchased by MPW by 07/2015 and available for coastal protection works	Achieved: Compactor, rock truck and excavator with claw attachment procured by MPW (April 2015). The rock truck only came into MPW's possession in February 2016 after project works had been completed. An existing rock truck was used for the project on Woja.
Key Result Area 3 Marshallese glossary of climate change terms available for use in primary and secondary schools and local communities	Report on National Climate Change Dialogue by 09/2014	Achieved: First ever National Climate Change Dialogue was conducted (September 2014). The two dialogue objectives ⁴ were achieved. 320 people attended the events (including RMI's President) and 84 survey responses were also received as input into the process.
	Marshallese glossary available for use in primary and secondary schools by 08/2015	Achieved: National glossary produced including definitions of climate change terminology as it relates to key sectors in RMI (coastal protection, water security) in both Marshallese and English (December 2015). Marshallese language arts and science students were involved in glossary development. Opportunity exists to add more illustrations to visually complement text definitions.

The project logframe is missing an indicator to measure one of the key project outputs, the completion of coastal protection works on the Woja causeway covering 70 meters of coastline

⁴ Dialogue objectives: 1). Discuss the long term future of the Marshall Islands in the context of climate change; and 2). Share and receive feedback on climate change policies, plans and actions in the Marshall Islands.

(priority area 1⁵). This indicator was deliberately omitted from the logframe because it was unclear in February 2015 whether the causeway could be completed by the end of 2015 due to ongoing challenges with marine transportation to the outer islands. However, at that time, MPW committed to finishing the causeway outside of the project timeframe if necessary.

Works to build the causeway and raise the height of the road were completed⁶ by MPW for priority area 1 (November 2015) and a temporary road further inland was constructed to provide transport access along the longer Woja road section (150 meters) at priority area 2. MPW noted that without works on the Woja road (priority 2) the causeway project will not be beneficial. The shortfall in funding (and time) to complete the coastal works as per the specified design for the priority 2 site puts into question the desirability for relatively small projects like SPC GCCA to fund coastal protection work on outer islands where the costs can be very high and difficult to estimate. Ideally, projects would have sufficient funding to implement the project as per the design as opposed to scaling back the design and scope of works to fit the project budget.

The arrangements to implement the coastal works in Woja changed from those documented in the first signed PDD (June 2014). An exploration of the reasons for the change in arrangements is presented below.

When procuring services to undertake the Woja causeway works, interest was received from two national bidders. However, only one submitted a bid response after a site visit and further clarification of works was provided. The one bid was rejected as the price quoted far exceeded both the project's estimated costs and GCCA project funds available. The estimated cost for priorities 1 and 2 as per the feasibility and detailed design documents was approximately USD 0.98 million. The bid price received was USD 1.35 million. Pre-procurement costing estimates included in e-Coast's detailed technical design document were based on cost estimates from RMI contractors. Recognising that there was a lack of competition in the bid process, the bidder may have inflated their price⁷. Negotiations with the one bidder resulted in an informal revised lower offer being made, however, the revised bid amount still exceeded the project budget and conditions transferred additional costs to MPW⁸. Additionally, a proposed two month increase in construction time increased the risk the works would not be completed within the project timeframe.

Following the review of the one bid received by the Bid Review Committee, the bid was rejected and the Review Report recommended an alternative (MPW-led) implementation arrangement that would see MPW use the project funds to procure heavy equipment and MPW would cover the cost of building the causeway (labour, transportation, fuel, supplies). SPC's preference was to accept the revised bid and they were willing to invest a further USD 100,000 to contribute to the funding shortfall, however, this would still have not bridged the funding gap. The RMI bid review committee rejected the revised offer and preference was given to the alternative implementation arrangements. These alternative arrangements were later supported through a revised PDD being signed off in February 2015. Stakeholders interviewed indicated that the change in procurement arrangements

⁵ Priority area 1 at the southern end of causeway was more vulnerable and heavily eroded. Priority area 2 is less vulnerable, but still impassable by vehicular traffic for one to two hours either side of high tide.

⁶ An 'Irish Crossing' structure at priority area 1. It is designed to allow over-topping of the causeway in extreme cases (cyclone or storm surge events).

⁷ The bidder in question provided much lower estimated costing to e-Coast during the design phase.

⁸ MOPW potentially needing to supply and transport heavy equipment to Ailinglaplap Atoll. MOPW reported that they were unable to fulfil these requirements.

and progress being made in this regard could have been better communicated with all stakeholders, including with SPC.

A project engineer – recruited from overseas and positioned within MPW – was contracted to oversee the construction works.

The alternative implementation arrangements were successful in completing the project works despite some issues⁹ in the procurement of the heavy equipment and some logistical issues resulting in two additional (one potentially unnecessary) barge trips to Ailinglaplap to provide additional fuel and supplies to complete the project.

Stakeholders consulted as part of the evaluation had differing views regarding the implementation arrangements for the causeway project. There was some criticism levelled at the selection of the project engineer as well as design consultants. Interestingly, some criticism was levelled at SPC's role in the selection process; on one hand for not being sufficiently involved in the recruitment of the project engineer¹⁰, and on the other hand for playing too much a role in the selection of the design consultant without sufficient local input¹¹. It should be noted OEPPC were involved in the selection of the design engineer and that MPW were involved in discussions with the design engineer during his preparation of the design documents.

Additional Activities beyond the Focus of the Coastal Protection Sector

The project funded a review to examine the extent of mainstreaming of climate change into national plans and policies. The mainstreaming of climate change into government plans and policies is one indication of readiness to obtain direct budget support. The resulting report¹² indicated that climate change was mainstreamed into national policies and plans; however, improvements were recommended¹³ that could be supported by future projects.

A succinct assessment¹⁴ of RMI's likelihood to qualify for climate change funding through direct budget support was completed in 2013. The government budget was regarded as having poor transparency and there was also a need to strengthen monitoring, evaluation and external audit capabilities. A lack of information made the assessment difficult and overall the likelihood of RMI accessing climate change funding through budget support modalities was rated as low.

⁹ Short bid time focusing only on national tenderers resulting in only one bid received for the truck, potentially reducing value for money. Rock truck price increased at time of procurement as budgeted model was not available on-island. Rock truck delivered past the project end-date. Decision to use national tenders only based on Cabinet Decision C.M 173 (2014) which waived the normal international bidding procedures.

¹⁰ One stakeholder questioned if the project engineer had the skills and experience to oversee the project. They had allegedly not ever been to an Atoll island before the project.

¹¹ One stakeholder reported that MOPW should have played a greater role in selection of the coastal engineer. Some shortfalls in the design were experienced during implementation.

¹² 'Review of mainstreaming of climate change into national plans and policies: Republic of the Marshall Islands' (November 2013)

¹³ a) Development of sector plans (Vision 2018 Masterplans, with costed and prioritised activities and specific reference to climate change; b) establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework for Masterplans; c) identification of climate-relevant expenditure within departmental budgets.

¹⁴ 'Project countries that are most likely to qualify for accessing climate change funding through budget support modalities' (2013)

A comprehensive assessment of climate change funding in RMI was conducted in 2014¹⁵ supported by multiple donors¹⁶ (including the SPC GCCA project) through financial and technical assistance. Lengthy findings and recommendations were consolidated in a Climate Change Finance Action Plan to guide future progress. The costed plan presents an opportunity for RMI to invite future donor projects to support key initiatives.

A first ever climate change glossary was created that provided climate change terms and definitions as it relates to key sectors in RMI (coastal protection, water security) in both Marshallese and English.

A national climate change dialogue, the first of its kind in RMI was hosted in Majuro to discuss the long term future of RMI in the context of climate change and to share and receive feedback on climate change policies, plans and actions.

Training in 'Proposal Preparation using the Logical Framework Approach (LFA)' was delivered to 29 people (8 women, 21 men) in July 2014. The majority of participants were youth leaders from outer islands and many did not have strong English language skills, and a number of participants had limited secondary education. For many, this was their first training workshop following their school education. These barriers were addressed through simplifying and reducing the amount of content covered and using government staff to translate content as it was delivered. A post-workshop evaluation found that most of the respondents indicated a fair to high degree of confidence in being able to complete the steps of the logical framework approach. Whilst overall the training was successful, the full benefits of the training were not realised due to the constraints mentioned above. The training impact survey revealed that only one participant had used the LFA and submitted a proposal since the training. Due to a very low response rate to the impact survey, this result may not be representative of all participants¹⁷.

Impact

Increased access to essential services on Ailinglaplap Atoll

The Woja causeway can now be crossed at all hours of the day (including high tide) which has increased the community's access to a school and pharmaceutical drug dispensary. It has also enabled uninterrupted travel for friends and family members visiting homes on either side of Woja Island. Without the Woja causeway project, the trade and transport of copra would likely have been impacted in the medium to long term.

Increased capacity of MPW to undertake coastal protection work

MPW now have three additional items of heavy machinery in their inventory to undertake capital works (including but not limited to coastal protection work). The additional experience they gained by implementing the capital works component as well as observing the consultation, feasibility study and detailed design work serves as a model for them to replicate in future projects.

¹⁵ 'Pacific Climate Change Finance Assessment, RMI National Assessment' (August 2014)

¹⁶ Australian Aid, USAID, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and PIFS

¹⁷ Five participants out of 29 responded to the impact survey.

Efficiency

Time

With the exception of the arrival of the rock truck, all planned project activities were completed within the allotted project timeframe. The project was set back by 12 months by a change in target sector. Some stakeholder acknowledged the slow progress that was made during implementation. The procurement process also took additional time as a result of the change from contracting out the Woja coastal work to MPW purchasing heavy equipment and conducting works¹⁸. At one stage, June 2014, the project was at risk of having its funding re-allocated to other countries due to a lack of progress. SPC made 14 visits to RMI (five in the 2015) which indicates that a high degree of intervention and encouragement was required to progress the project. The risk of losing all project funds and SPC's repeated visits helped to resolve issues and move the project along. On-ground implementation of coastal works was completed within a short timeframe (5 months).

Consulting with and obtaining consent from the communities took a significant amount of time due to the need for approval from three levels of chiefs and then land owners. A lack of communication between MPW and EPA regarding activity timing resulted in EPA coastal replanting rehabilitation works being delayed. However, as mentioned above, works were completed before the end of the project.

Cost

Marshall Islands had acquitted 97% of its €500,000 allocation for the on-ground project by March 2016 and all remaining funds are allocated which will result in 100% expenditure by the end of the project. €69,295 was allocated for national coordination and 87% of these funds were acquitted with the remaining funds fully committed.

The bulk of the funding was allocated to purchasing the heavy equipment. Government co-funded through both financial and in-kind contributions to undertake three project tasks¹⁹. Additionally, MPW provided an estimate of over USD 50,000 of in-kind labour to undertake the Woja coastal protection work.

The purchase of the rock truck ended up costing more than budgeted (reasons explained in effectiveness section) and this exceeded the amount of project funds available. As per agreements in place, the MPW was responsible for filling this funding shortfall.

When selecting approaches to address coastal erosion at Woja causeway and road, there is little documentation of the project using cost-benefit analysis or other tools to weigh up alternative solution options to achieve the same outcome. The only alternatives (a barge-and-pulley system or large-scale replanting across the whole area) were discussed at a design planning meeting in February 2014 where it was noted that these ideas came too late in the project planning process. Furthermore the barge and pulley system would have resulted in extensive environmental impact and been beyond the project budget. Replanting was not a feasible option for the type of erosion being experienced in Woja.

¹⁸ This effectively required two rounds of procurement to be initiated.

¹⁹ a) The detailed design and costing and monitoring plan work; b) engaging key stakeholders in the selection of the final design; c) submission of permit application to EPA.

The cost of undertaking coastal protection work in outer islands is high. Estimates (which were found to be insufficient) in the detailed design document assumed the project would be contracted out to a third party to implement. The estimates provided are evidence of the high cost – approximately USD0.98 million for protection for a total of 220 meters of coastal area. A very rough calculation provides an average rate of USD4,450 per meter of coastline.

Currency exchange rate fluctuations worked against RMI resulting in missed local (USD) currency to invest in the project. Alternatives to fix rates or guarantee the amount of funds in local currency at the start of the project should be investigated.

Staffing

The project funded a national coordinator and project engineer (in the final year). The PMU was very small in RMI with representatives from OEPPC, MPW and EPA. SPC and the national coordinator noted that staffing was sufficient, but that the project was also fortunate to have leadership support from the highest level (the President) which helped mobilise support and action for the project. Without this high level of support, additionally-funded PMU staffing would likely have been required to progress the project and achieve outcomes. The need for more project staff in the PMU (specifically OEPPC) was highlighted by both the EPA and other OEPPC staff. Additionally, the detailed climate change financing assessment report for RMI (p.12) also noted that *“OEPPC needs strengthening to enable it to fulfil its coordination mandate and act as the information hub for climate change-related activities as presently it is unable to meet its international meeting commitments and fulfil its domestic coordination obligations”*.

Overall the evaluation finds the project achieved an acceptable positive result in terms of its efficiency considering, time, financial investment and staffing.

Sustainability

The outcomes of the project are highly likely to continue in the short-term and reasonably likely to continue in the medium term (3 to 5 years) provided the monitoring plan is followed and maintenance work is funded.

Factors contributing to the sustainability of the Woja coastal works include:

- The engineering design for work on Woja considered sea level rise and maximum wave heights projected over the estimated 30-year life of the asset.
- A monitoring plan was developed during the engineering design work and the MPW has been tasked with monitoring the site. The EMP also mentions community involvement in monitoring, however, no project activities focused on building this capacity with the community.
- The need for maintenance was considered during the project design phase. Ongoing maintenance of the causeway structure(s) has become the responsibility of the MPW.

The maintenance of the new heavy machinery purchased will be covered by MPW's core budget.

The increased capacity within MPW through the experience of implementing the works and additional heavy machinery will assist them to plan, design, implement and monitor coastal protection measures on other outer islands. Whilst technical design work was carried out by e-Coast, MPW have learnt from the process of undertaking feasibility studies to select or verify the most appropriate coastal protection measure before developing detailed designs and costing.

In the longer term, the new Marshallese Climate Change Glossary will help build student and community literacy in climate change concepts which should help them better understand and contribute to projects in the future.

The GCCA: PSIS national coordinator was absorbed into the Ministry of Finance in 2016 where he has the potential to play a leading role in enhancing financial management of projects and progressing measures to access new modalities (or sources) of climate change funding.

One potential risk to sustainability of the project is the expected life of the temporary Woja road (priority area 2). The road was acknowledged as a temporary stopgap measure and both MPW and EPA are uncertain how long the temporary road will remain in place and provide safe transport access at high tide. Regular monitoring and maintenance of the site may be needed to ensure the full benefits of the Woja causeway project are continued into the future²⁰. Additional funding is required to implement the proper road works to implement the design as specified by e-Coast in the detailed design document. There are no immediate or short term plans or funding to conduct these works.

Cross-Cutting

Gender

Men (12) and women (8) were represented during the key project design meeting. The project discussed complementary activities during the project design phase that could have directly benefited women; however, there is no evidence that these activities²¹ were implemented.

Local men benefited from the project through local employment opportunities to support rock removal and re-vegetation. Increased income would have likely benefited the entire family and broader community, however, there was no time or scope in the evaluation to verify this outcome. Youth were involved in the replanting and home gardening activities in Woja.

Youth from outer islands were targeted for the proposal preparation training, however, this brought with it additional challenges, since many of the youth had an inadequate command of English to be able to fully benefit from the training.

Environment

The inclusion of the EPA in the PMU from the project outset assisted the project to follow correct environmental protection processes. After a review of the detailed engineering design and monitoring plan, and the marine survey that was conducted by the College of the Marshall Islands, it was determined that an EIA was not required and that the development of an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) would suffice. The EPA also oversaw that the correct permits for earth moving were obtained and that correct processes were followed to obtain consent from chiefs and land owners. A post-construction review conducted by the EPA revealed some violations²² of the EMP. MPW addressed these issues to the satisfaction of EPA. Whilst EPA involvement was beneficial, it was also discussed that there was a lack of monitoring from the EPA during the construction period as a result of limited funding. Alternative arrangements through a local island representative national

²⁰ Prior to the project, the priority 2 site experienced minor flooding during high tides.

²¹ Support for local handicraft development, training of women in weaving.

²² Violations: a) gap in (lowering) of the beachrock ledge; b) 2 holes in the beach where material had been removed; c) restoration of the crew camp site; d) reconstruction of roadway near priority site 2; and e) coastal replanting not completed.

EPA staff member on-site for longer periods during construction should be considered in future projects to provide additional monitoring.

Longer term environmental outcomes (reduced erosion, increased biodiversity, improved water quality) may result from coastal revegetation work undertaken by communities, schools and the EPA.

Visibility

The project did not develop a communications plan. However, there was some local media coverage of the project, specifically the opening with coverage in The Marshall Islands Journal and promotion by SPC's media release. The RMI EPA Facebook²³ and YouTube channel²⁴ page also promoted the project through a short video. Unfortunately the locally produced video focussing on the coastal replanting activities did not have acknowledgement of SPC or the EU.

The evaluation did find evidence of communications tools and knowledge management products that created awareness about the project with acknowledgement of the role played by SPC and the EU. These items include the project fact sheet, banner, technical reports, newsletters (SPREP Climate Change Matters) and videos²⁵. The National Climate Change Dialogue also helped to raise the profile of the project at the national level. The Capacity 4 Development website²⁶ also provided visibility about the project.

A national lessons learnt workshop (November 2015) was held to enable the project team and local partners to identify and document lessons learnt. A regional workshop (September 2015) involving all SPC GGCA: PSIS project teams and other development partners provided a forum to share national and regional lessons.

Overall, there was adequate visibility about the project and its support for implementation from SPC and funding from the EU. A communication plan should have been developed early in the project to guide more frequent communications through for example, a project webpage or photo stories or the creation of additional visibility products (e.g. hats or tote bags for school children).

²³ <https://www.facebook.com/rmiepa.outreach/videos/1690162314601656/>

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AunhShfoE50>

²⁵ "Strengthening Coastal Resilience in the outlying atolls of the Marshall Islands", <https://goo.gl/Prastx>

²⁶ <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/gcca-community/blog/coastal-protection-projects-opened-tonga-and-marshall-islands>

Best Practices & Recommendations

Best practices

1. MPW now equipped to undertake 'small' coastal protection measures in outer islands.

Recommendations

1. Projects undertaking coastal protection measures on outer islands need to allocate a large contingency to their estimated costs or use the "x 2 rule of thumb" described in the lessons learnt from the overall SPC GCCA project in their planning and costing.
2. Where possible, project design elements should not be left out in order to fit within a prescribed budget. Perspectives from all parties (donors, implementing agencies and national governments) need to be considered. The pros and cons of selecting a new project or continuing with a project that does not fully address or resolve the core problem need to be considered.
3. Regional and national projects should investigate ways to accommodate exchange rate variations so countries are assured of the level of funding they will receive to deliver their projects.