



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS  
**Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce**

Post Office Box 1727  
Majuro, Marshall Islands 96960

February 1, 2022

**Trip Summary**

<b>Reporting to:</b>	Secretary, Iva R. Roberto and UNDP
<b>Travel dates:</b>	January 24 <sup>th</sup> to 31 <sup>st</sup>
<b>Atoll visited</b>	Mejit Island
<b>Program(s):</b>	Implementation of Ridge to Reef Project
<b>Organizer(s):</b>	Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce and United Nation Development Programme (UNDP)
<b>Program Goal:</b>	<p>The goal of the Ridge to Reef Project is to protect RMI's natural resources and promote the livelihoods of community members at five target project sites, which include (Mejit, Aur, Wotho, Likiep, and Ebon. With the continued threat of climate change, particularly sea-level rise, natural hazards have impacted the daily sustenance needs of communities in the outer island populations. The proposed activities will increase food stocks by replanting staple food sources, including taro, banana, papaya, breadfruit, pumpkin, and pandanus, etc. Additionally, the project will distribute and replant propagated indigenous salt-tolerant trees for coastal protection. These species stabilize the beach crest to prevent coastal erosion, they provide wind and salt protection for inner agroforestry sites.</p>
<b>Program Objective:</b>	<p>A team comprised of 2 from MNRC and 1 representative from UNDP visited Mejit Island for the purpose of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introduction of Forest Action Plan</li><li>2. Importance of Agroforestry in the Marshall Islands</li><li>3. Introduction of R2R Food Security and Sustainable livelihood project to Mejit Community.</li><li>4. Community and landowner consultation</li><li>5. Planted targeted seedlings into designated sites.</li><li>6. School Outreach</li><li>7. Train Site Coordinator on Propagation methods and gardening.</li><li>8. Established school gardening for Mejit Elementary School.</li></ol>
<b>Program Description:</b>	<p>The following works was undertaken during the mission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Collect and propagate seeds/seedlings of well-known heritage and selected species</li><li>2. Clearing of selected areas for replanting of propagated seedlings;</li><li>3. Distribute and replant targeted seedlings to schools and communities;</li><li>4. Keep records on tree and shrub seeds &amp; seedlings collected and distributed;</li></ol>

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5. Educate the community on the importance and benefits of selected crops; and
  6. Preservation of knowledge on traditional food preparation
  7. Drought Assessment
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From Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, the MoNRC along with UNDP representatives, visited Mejit Islands to work with the community to implement the U&CF and R2R project activities. They collected and propagated seeds/seedlings of the selected species and cleared areas for planting the seedlings. Seedlings were distributed and planted at schools and amongst the communities. This included banana, cassava, swamp taro, breadfruit and sweet potato. Additionally, the MNRC distributed vegetable seeds such as cucumber, okra, squash, corn, long beans, and watermelon. Sessions were held to educate the community on the importance of the selected crops to share knowledge on traditional food preparation.

MoNRC and UNP representatives also work with the women group called (AKIM-Ainikien Kora in Mejit) to collect and plant 180 pandanus and 180 coconut on their terrestrial protected areas.

A questionnaire was developed during the visit to Mejit to identify resilience capacities to climate change and food security for all the food producers. Most of the people interviewed in Mejit developed either fishing and agroforestry activities (36%) or agricultural and agroforestry activities (27%) for food production.

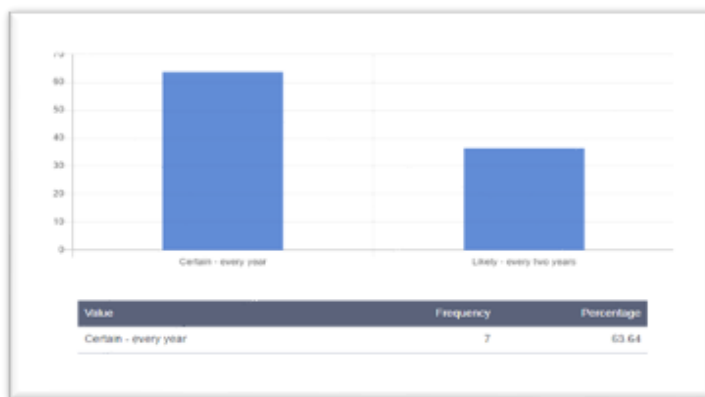
**Program  
Activities:**

Main Food Production Activities

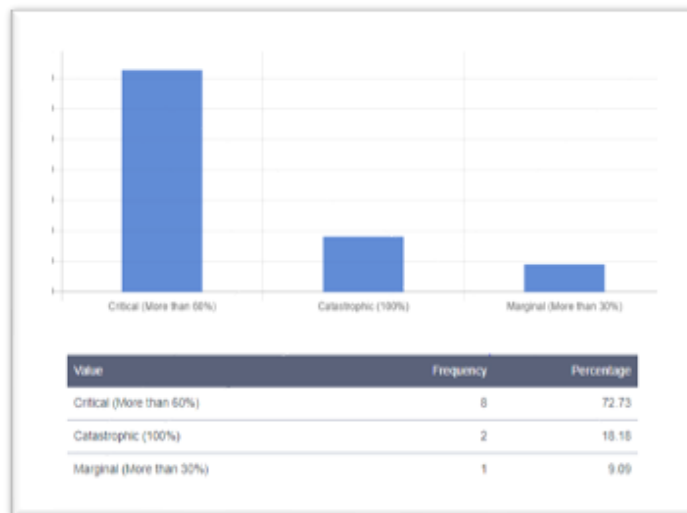


The questionnaire was also conducted during the time visited to collect information on drought verification status on agriculture. Since RMI is entering drought season, Mejit Island is one of the islands that is experiencing severe drought conditions. The community in Mejit shared that changes in the weather have affected their farming, fishing or agroforestry management practices. From the survey report, the drought affected the production of food trees and catch losses. 72% of people interviewed agreed that the total losses in production of subsistence crops and catch losses after drought are critical over 60%.

### Drought condition



### Crop and catch losses



Given the Atolls in the Marshall Islands are drier, some local farmers know what are the salt and drought tolerant crops to plant during drought, so that food can still be available to feed the people. Also, not all crops and food trees are drought tolerant in the Marshall Islands, however giant land taro

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(Marshallese variety called Wōt) was identified as one of the best resistant crops that can tolerate drought. Also, during drought, farmers still practice the use of preservation of Marshallese local food trees and crops.

In relation with food security, all farmers, agroforesters and fisherfolk interviewed mentioned that they often face shortage of food in their households not having enough nutritious and safe food products for their families.

Food insecurity



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**Follow up action:**

Schedule a meeting with Hon. Mayor of Mejit to discuss the outcome and the way forward for all activities mentioned above. Also, to discuss progress report for site coordinator and AKIM. Community concern regarding sawmill training.

**Photos:**







Summary prepared by:

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