

Coastal Fisheries Management Section



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community



Republic of the Marshall Islands National Tuna Development and Management Plan

Social and gender considerations

Aliti Vunisea



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has, in the last decade, witnessed growth in the tuna fishing industry, mostly through the involvement of foreign fleets. The RMI's involvement in the industry has been through licensing fees and transshipment activities through bilateral and multilateral agreements. Majuro is a major transshipment port, with distant-water fishing nations regularly coming in for activities such as transshipment, fuelling, loading and off-loading of crew. Recently, the Marshall Islands Marine Resource Authority (MIMRA) has been interested in moving towards domestication of the industry, to ensure benefits for the local people. This interest is addressed in the development component of this study, which looks at the development of small-scale operations.

Transshipment and licensing fees, although bringing in substantial returns to the government, do not directly benefit the majority of the local population. Over the last few years, there has been an influx of foreign business people into the Marshall Islands. Foreigners have, in most cases, set up organised activities and exclusive entertainment areas to meet the needs of the boat crew that regularly come into port. This situation has bred a lot of suspicion and concern amongst the local population.

Currently, few men or women from RMI are employed in the tuna industry. Women's employment at the time of the study was in the loining factory, which has since closed down. Although the wages offered by the factory were very low in comparison to public service salaries and other forms of employment in the RMI, the opportunity for employment the tuna processing factory offered was viewed as the main benefit to people. The need for such development in the country is evident. The sex industry (with the associated HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases) and other related social problems continue to be a problem for the authorities in the RMI. There is a need for closer monitoring of the sex trade, suspected smuggling, drug abuse and other illegal activities.

MIMRA has to work with other government and non-government sectors such as the health, tourism, police, customs, education, and the social services sectors in trying to address these issues. A multi-sectoral approach is also needed to tackle environmental, economic and other social problems that arise as a result of activities related to the tuna industry. Policies and regulations already exist to address these activities but, like all such policies, they cannot work without proper enforcement. MIMRA, non-government organisations and the private sector could also involve communities in enforcement and monitoring work.

1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been produced as part of the National Tuna Development and Management plan developed for the Marshall Islands by the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). The planned development of the tuna industry (which is in another report) has a strong emphasis on the domestic development of the tuna fishery in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). The management and development plan includes management and development components, as well as the gender and social considerations covered here. The work for this component of the plan was conducted from 29 November to 15 December 2003.

A gender assessment of the National Tuna Management and Development plan is needed to ensure that there are good governance practices where women become partners in development. There have been instances of gender bias, usually to the detriment of women, in existing tuna processing plants and factories in the Pacific region. More importantly, women's roles in society and in the fisheries sector are changing rapidly, and the potential offered by the tuna industry should be maximised.

Due to its limited land area, RMI is characterised as a total coastal entity, with the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the rich tuna resource providing a fundamental source of economic development for the future. However, the return from the tuna industry cannot compare to the funding that RMI receives under the Compact of Free Association with the United States of America (USA), referred to as the "Compact agreement".

The limited land area means that the public sector, private enterprise, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and communities work together in many different areas. In recognition of this situation, this study was conducted with multi-sectoral involvement. Because of the current pace of development both in the private and public sector in the RMI, gender equity in employment is still secondary to the need to fill positions with suitable, qualified locals. Currently, both the private and public sectors employ people from other countries in the Pacific region to fill skilled or professional positions.

1.1 Goal

The overall goal for the planned development in the domestic tuna fishery is to have a sustainable and profitable private-sector tuna industry, harvesting at or near the total allowable catch. The major reason for the proposal to develop the domestic tuna industry is to maximise the benefits and economic return to the Marshallese, local communities and RMI as a whole. This can be achieved through employment and income-generating opportunities for Marshallese (including those in outer islands), and promotion of sustainable domestic development of the tuna industry, which can provide for both local consumption and export.

1.2 Why gender consideration?

Gender assessment has been a component of all the national tuna development and management plans developed by FFA and SPC. Such an assessment:

- helps to put into perspective gender participation in the industry;

- identifies gaps, needs and constraints to gender participation; and
- identifies existing national customs and norms and traditional gender roles, which have to be taken into account while undertaking an assessment of this nature.

Existing cultural practices and customary expectations could, to a large extent, influence the participation of men and women in the modern market economy.

Gender participation in fisheries has, in most cases, not been properly understood or assessed. This study looked at the broader aspects of the tuna industry, and at areas where both men and women can be employed or benefit. Such areas include port activities, customs and immigration activities, the harvest sector and transshipment activities. At the same time, the report assesses the implications of the development of the industry on men and women.

For the purposes of this study, social considerations are seen as fundamental to providing a broader background for gender discussions. An analysis of existing gender information and the key areas for gender considerations were identified (as required under the terms of reference; see below). The RMI currently depends significantly on transshipment activities, and has also started on small-scale processing activities. Because of the absence of any large-scale processing operation, and minimal participation in the harvest sector, there is little information on the participation of men and women in the existing industry structure.

1.3 Terms of reference

The key tasks identified in the terms of reference for the gender specialist include the following directives.

- Gather and review existing baseline data on the roles of men and women in the tuna industry.
- Identify the key gender issues in the industry.
- Consider the likely implications for both men and women of the different industry development and management options available.
- Identify strategies to monitor and address any undesirable gender impacts of these industry development and management options.
- Identify in particular the potential to enhance participation by women in the Marshallese tuna industry, including participation in terms of employment, management and investment; and strategies for achieving that potential.
- Discuss these issues with relevant national stakeholders, the project manager, and other members of the project team.
- Produce a written report addressing the above issues; and as part of the project team, assist the Project Coordinator to prepare and review those sections of the draft national management plan relating to the above issues.

To enable a proper study of gender considerations, it was necessary for the study to include an assessment of general socio-economic considerations in the industry.

1.4 Methodology

A review of relevant literature was undertaken before the work. The field work was undertaken over a two-week period in November and December 2003. It included meetings with different government department representatives, the private sector, NGOs, church groups, women's groups, youth groups and the public at large. There were also visits to vessels on transshipment (with the boarding party), and visits to bars and entertainment areas in Majuro. Discussions were also held with hotel and motel owners, and the public at large, through informal meetings and individual or group discussions.

Constraints

The time was not sufficient for an in-depth assessment of working conditions both onshore and in vessels. Many factors contributing to gender differences in employment could not be surveyed, given the time and other limitations of the survey. Information gathered was, however, sufficient to gauge current conditions, perceptions and the status of men's and women's participation in the industry.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Republic of the Marshall Islands

The RMI is a trust territory of the USA. The total area of the country is approximately 181 square kilometres, 20 per cent of which is uninhabitable because it was previously used as a nuclear testing site or because it is now used for military purposes of the USA. About half of the population live in Majuro, the capital, and about 20 per cent of the population live in Ebeye.

The government consists of a bi-cameral legislature, the President of the Senate, the judiciary and the public service. The two legislative bodies are the Council of Iroji, the upper house, and the Nitijela, the lower house. The legislative power is vested in the Nitijela, which consists of 33 members elected from 24 electoral districts, each district corresponding to an atoll. In the current house of Nitijela there is one female and 32 male senators. Women are still under-represented at this level of leadership in the country. In the Council of Iroji, which has a membership of 12, there has been better female representation. This is explained by the matrilineal nature of land ownership, where members are elected from 11 Iroji clans, and the remaining member is elected from two land-owning families. This body deliberates on any bill that affects customary law, traditional practice, land tenure or any such related matter. Bills having passed through the Nitijela are passed to the Council of Iroji for their approval.

2.2 Institutional structure

The RMI's political organisation is hierarchically arranged, with the chiefs at the top (*Iroji*). The primary social unit is the extended family group (*bwif*) living on one *weto* (land unit),

which usually comprises a cross-section of the atoll from the lagoon to the ocean. Land ownership in the RMI rests with the Iroji, who are usually the hereditary chiefs of several clans. The RMI is a matrilineal society where heritage and rights to land are passed through female lines. The inalienable inheritance of land rights and political office is primarily through the matrilineage (*buiji*). Respect for traditional systems is still strong in the RMI but, with modernisation, many of the traditional practices and customary use of resources have slowly eroded. One of the unique features of Marshallese culture is power in land rights and its associated authorities. The gradual erosion of traditional customs and norms, inadequate documentation and lack of appropriate legal mechanisms for land transfer in the past have resulted in current confusion in land rights, which have escalated to land disputes in some cases.

Land heritage, boundaries and access rights were usually passed on through oral means; therefore, loss of cultural knowledge could also account for loss of knowledge of tenureship arrangements. One of the reasons given for the lack of private-sector investment in recent times in the RMI has been problems with existing land tenure systems, the unclear boundary definitions and pending land disputes (MIMRA 2002).

Each atoll in the RMI has the right to create a local government, which consists of an elected council, a mayor, officials and a local police force. The atoll councils have a total membership of 393, of whom 40 are women. Women as mayors are even less common. However, in Majuro and Ebeye, in four of the last five terms the mayors have been women. This may represent a more progressive outlook by urban voters than by rural voters.

2.3 Population and demography

The population of RMI is about 51,000 (1999 census). The majority of these are Marshallese, with average households of about 8 — higher than most other countries in the region. From 1989 to 1999, population increased by nearly 65 per cent. This figure represents a fast-maturing population. Almost half the population in 1999 were under 18, again emphasising a fast-growing population that will need education, medical and other services but, more importantly, will be in the workforce in the near future.

Population figures, not including children under 10, are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Population age distribution in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1999

Adolescents (10–19)	13,829	27.2%
Youths (15–24)	10,861	21.4%
Women of child-bearing age (15–49)	12,325	24.2%
Adult men (25+)	9,340	18.4%
Elderly—males and females (65+)	1,185	2.3%

Source: Secretariat of the Pacific Community, *Oceania Population Data Sheet*, 2000.

Of the total population, 42.9 per cent are children (0–14), 27.2 per cent are adolescent (10–19) and 21.4 per cent are youths (15–24). Only 2.2 per cent are 65 and above. Almost half the population is under 20 years of age.

The RMI is one of the most urbanised countries in the Pacific, with almost 70 per cent of the population living either on Majuro or Ebeye. The high population densities on these two islands are a major cause of social, economic and other problems. Populations in the outer islands of Jabat, Jaluit, Mejit, Namdrik and Ujae declined in the 1999 census, and this is due to internal migration.

2.4 The economy

The RMI is heavily dependent on funds from the USA under the Compact agreement. Per capita income in 2002 was estimated at USD1867.00, which is amongst the highest in the region. In spite of the high aid through the Compact agreement, unemployment is high and there are wide disparities in salaries between the public service and the private sector, with the public service paying more. Small business investment has increased in recent years, with more traders from Asian countries like China, Taiwan/ROC, Hong Kong and Korea providing strong competition for local businesses. Foreign investment, however, is viewed with suspicion by locals.

The 15-year funding authorisation of the Compact of Free Association between the USA and the RMI expired on 30 September 2001. Under the terms of agreement, a two-year extension is automatically granted for negotiations. One of the concerns in the new agreement is the loss of access to key programmes, and continuing eligibility for certain education programmes. Losing out on some education programmes could mean a setback in the progress that has been achieved so far, and this could slow human-resource development in the country.

One of the most valued rights or privileges enjoyed by the RMI people through the Compact agreement is the right to migrate to the USA and its territories. Under US law they are “habitual residents”, not citizens and not migrants. The original purpose of this free access was to provide the opportunity to seek education and to be allowed to work with a minimum of interference. One of the results of this privilege has been the out-migration of nearly 20,000 Micronesians (from RMI and FSM) to Guam, Hawaii and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This migration has mostly been by highly educated and qualified people. In most cases, when RMI students study in foreign universities, they find employment in those countries and do not return to their home country. Migration of skilled and highly qualified people has left a gap in the workforce in the RMI, with professionals and skilled workers from Fiji, Vanuatu, Kiribati and other Pacific Island countries being recruited by government to fill vacant positions.

In 2002, the government undertook a Participatory Assessment on Hardship study. The study highlighted the existence of hardships and poverty in the country, despite the high input of funds under the Compact agreement. The study also highlighted the rising gap between the rich and poor, especially between rural people and highly paid public servants in the urban areas. There was a general consensus from people interviewed that hardships had worsened in

the last five years. Some of the consistently identified problems included increasing numbers of school dropouts and of children who have never been to school. Coupled with this are problems of teenage pregnancies, alcohol abuse and parents increasingly facing difficulty in dealing with the conflicting financial demands of church, school and other family obligations.

In the urban areas of Majuro and Ebeye, causes of poverty and hardship were related to inadequate health and education support for children, overcrowding and low-quality housing, poor water and electricity services, and youth-related problems of school dropouts, unemployment, alcohol abuse and teenage pregnancy. The three groups identified as most affected by these problems are children, youth and women.

The RMI has one of the youngest populations in the Pacific. About two-thirds of the population were below 24 years in 1999, with the population still growing steadily. Low educational attainment aggravates the situation and the problems that the youth are already experiencing. This is even more of a concern when there are minimal employment opportunities. Many young, unemployed women may actively participate in the sex industry and other associated activities related to transshipment activities because of the lack of alternatives and opportunities.

2.5 Health services

Health services are available from the hospitals in Majuro and Ebeye and other smaller dispensaries. It is difficult to assess the status of health in the RMI given the lack of reliable data (Statistical Yearbook 2002). There are high incidences of diabetes and lifestyle diseases, and this could be due to changing lifestyle and food preferences.

HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and the risk of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) have become a serious threat because of the mobility of foreign crew frequenting the ports, and the increase in numbers of fishing vessels that use Majuro port. Facilities for STD tests are only available at the STD clinics in Majuro and Ebeye, and not on the other atolls. Health authorities maintained that there were only two confirmed cases of HIV/AIDS, and these were people who had resided outside the Marshall Islands. However, facilities to carry out confirmation tests are not available locally and tests have to be sent to Hawaii. There are problems in sending samples to Hawaii: for example, samples for the confirmation of one HIV-positive case could not be sent for over a year. Given the lack of equipment and facilities to conduct tests, the occurrence of HIV/AIDS could be higher than the recorded figure.

2.6 Education system

The education system in the RMI consists of four levels. These are pre-school programmes, compulsory primary education, secondary education and post-secondary education. These programmes are supported under the Compact agreement. Various programmes, like the Head Start and Kindergarten programmes, are available for the very young. Primary

education is free but private schools charge some fees. Most private schools are affiliated with churches.

The problem of dropouts exists from an early age, with 23 per cent of females and 18 per cent of males from grade 1 to grade 8 dropping out in 2003. Students are therefore not even completing basic primary education, and the possibility of acquiring higher education or the skills required for available jobs for these dropouts is minimal. Secondary education is free in government schools, but fees are levied in private schools. Total enrolment into secondary education is low — 51.9 per cent in 2002–2003. The problem is worsened by high dropout rates from this level of education. The percentage of those completing grade 9 who did not complete grade 12 was 42.4 per cent in 2002–2003, almost half the total number of students enrolled. The dropout rate for female students was higher than for males, at 43.3 per cent as compared to 38.7 per cent. This was explained as being due to the practice of early marriage and teenage pregnancies.

3 WOMEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Women in the RMI traditionally hold high status, with land ownership and traditional authority being passed through matrilineal lines. This authority over land is also associated with leadership and other rights in clans and kinship groups. Women also have the roles of preserving the ties of family lineage, and are expected to solve problems of dissent within their family lineage. Clear patterns of customary tenure have begun to erode, resulting in women starting to lose their power base. Many women, especially those in urban areas, no longer live on their own lands. Extended families are breaking down, and fewer men move into the family home of their wife upon marriage. These women lack the protection that would be afforded to them by their brothers and mother's brothers under traditional arrangements. A woman has a traditional legal right to protection from violence by virtue of living with her mother's family. With fewer men moving into their wife's land and family, the status quo has changed in a lot of cases.

Sexual encounters outside of marriage are culturally accepted in the RMI and the violence caused by jealousies in modern cases is condoned as a result. Thus, the increased cases of domestic violence and alcohol abuse are signs of people trying to grapple with modern changes and the erosion of their culture. Domestic violence exists in urban and rural areas, although there is little documented evidence of such violence. A reason for this is that domestic violence and sexual abuse are issues that are not discussed openly because of concern for family reputation. In the urban areas, women are subjected to men's drinking and violence, but most of these cases are not reported. Many cases of violence have been tied to alcohol abuse and the pressures of unemployment.

In the public sector, women have not achieved top leadership positions in the country, although as landowners they are well represented at the Iroji level. There are, however, attempts to include women at all levels of the public service. Until recently, RMI women had been disadvantaged, with no specific policies addressing their rights and aspirations. In

March 1991, the Cabinet appointed a Women's Policy Development Task Force to formulate a policy document, specifying how women could be included in national development. This policy document is the first product of the task force. The task force objectives are to ensure that:

- customary values are consistent with the need to promote the cultural development of women and gender equality;
- the traditional role of women can be blended into a forward-looking role for women in the RMI;
- the nutrition and reproductive rights of women are protected;
- there is equal access to education and elimination of gender bias in education at all levels;
- legal rights awareness is increased, and especially that matrilineal land rights are fully protected; and
- the importance of women in development is recognised, and that equal opportunities are provided in the workforce.

Practical implementation of these strategies may take some time. There is a large turnover in staff in the various government sectors in the RMI, and this has led to frequent staff changes in the National Women's Office. This has affected continuity of projects and the programme as a whole. Various NGOs working specifically with women have stepped in to try and fill this gap and to assist with the work on women in the country. One such organisation is Women United Together in the Marshall Islands (WUTMI), a national NGO that works with women's groups in the country.

4 THE FISHERIES SECTOR

4.1 The Marshall Islands Marine Resource Authority

The Marshall Islands Marine Resource Authority (MIMRA) has two major sections — one for coastal and one for oceanic fisheries. This study focused on the oceanic fishery. Oceanic and Industrial Affairs is the division responsible for the following:

- administration and issuance of offshore fishing licences to foreign, locally-based foreign fishing boats, as well as research activities conducted within the RMI exclusive economic zone (EEZ);
- acquisition, handling and provisioning of fisheries data, with respect to the operations of the licensed fleet;
- liaising, communicating and cooperating with organisations such as SPC and the FFA, with respect to activities and programmes, in MIMRA's capacity as the technical contact for regional organisations;
- conducting monitoring, control and surveillance activities at the national level, in collaboration and cooperation with the Sea Patrol, Environmental Protection Agency and

local governments, for information and operation of the fishery in the RMI, as well as participating in national, regional and international monitoring, control and surveillance schemes;

- administering the Port Sampling and Observer programme; and
- promoting the MIMRA Act, policy and regulations, through foreign investment(s) and access agreement(s) in fisheries in the RMI.

The division's responsibility is to look after the area from where the coastal jurisdiction ends out to the 200 nautical miles zone. Specific responsibilities also fall in the areas of coastal jurisdiction, including transshipment operations. In the case of Majuro, foreign boats call into port for crewing, fuelling, provisioning and transshipping.

Boarding and inspection are conducted by the customs, immigration, fisheries and police departments. As part of this study, the author accompanied the officers in Majuro on two of their boarding and inspection trips. These are mostly routine operations, with senior officers and the captain ready to meet the group with all necessary documents, such as passports of all crew members, figures and data. Discussions and note exchange take place in one of the larger rooms on the boats. After all necessary documents have been sighted the captain and other crew members (if permission has been sought and granted) can then come ashore.

Employment related to the tuna fisheries

Employment information relating to the tuna industry is minimal and fragmented. The lack of data on employment and other such features of the industry results in people not being fully aware of the operations of the industry. About 80 people are employed in the artisanal sector, and there are about 14 jobs on foreign vessels. Employment in the loining factory was about 500 in total but this figure is no longer applicable given the closing down of the loining factory soon after the study was carried out.

4.3 Marshall Islands Fishing Venture Inc.

Marshall Islands Fishing Venture Inc. (MIFV) is a subsidiary of the Hong Kong based company Luen. The MIFV occupies the Majuro Tuna Longline fish base vacated by Ting Hong in 1998. The company presently manages about 49 longline vessels. The company exports fresh tuna, frozen tuna, by-catch and tuna loins to Japan, the USA and Taiwan/ROC. Of the 430 employees on the 49 vessels associated with MIFV, there are no Marshallese. Ashore, the company has 46 staff, mostly foreigners.

Koo Fishing Company operates five purse-seine vessels, and tranships all its tuna catch in Majuro. The five vessels employ one Marshallese on each of the five seiners. The Edgewater Fishing Company operates five Chinese-flagged longliners from a base close to MIFV. The company has an air export packing facility and freezers, but relies on MIFV for ice. About 45 people are employed on the five vessels, but this does not include any Marshallese. The 20 people employed onshore include some locals. Tuna is also landed by small-scale fishermen, but data on these landings are not available.

4.4 Loining factory

At the time of this study the loining factory, the PM&O Processing plant, had been in operation for four years. It had employed 580 employees, 85 per cent of whom were women. Similar to other line factory work, women stand in lines and handle fish for loining. The factory closed in 2004, after this study was conducted.

4.5 Transshipment

Foreign fleets currently operating within the EEZ of the RMI are from Japan, Taiwan/ROC, South Korea, China and the USA. Although licence access fees and transshipment fees are a source of revenue for the country, there have been minimal employment opportunities or benefits to the local population. Very few local businesses have developed in response to the transshipment or other related activities of the tuna industry.

An impact assessment and cost–benefit analysis of the tuna transshipment in Majuro port was carried out in 2002, in response to community concerns on benefits and possible negative environmental and social impacts from this activity. The survey found current transshipment activities to be approximately 300 transshipments per year. Using this figure, total expenditure in Majuro from the purse-seine transshipment activity would be around US\$5–10 million. The local expenditure is heavily weighted towards fuel purchase and government fees and charges. A large proportion of the remainder is represented by crew spending onshore, much of which is on imported items, and often purchased in premises owned and operated by foreign owners. Fuel sales by the government-owned Marshalls Energy Company generate profits, which indirectly benefit consumers through electricity subsidies offered by government.

Transshipment activity continues to increase, with a total of 425 vessels showing up in Majuro for transshipment in 2002. The proximity of the fishing grounds to Majuro makes it economical for the vessels to call into port for provisioning, crew rest and exchange and, to some extent, leisure activities.

Costs of transshipment include social, environmental and economic impacts. Environmental costs include the dumping of by-catch, rubbish and sewage disposal, spillage from fuelling, ballast water and other such activities. Large tuna transshipment operations are sometimes associated with social issues such as prostitution, smuggling, drug use and trafficking. An influx of foreign crew into traditional social set-ups also occurs and people are sometimes not fully prepared to cope with all the changes that may occur. When in port, crew members who have been at sea for months go ashore to drink and socialise and, because they do not belong to the country, they tend to abuse alcohol and women for the short time they are onshore. These problems could worsen if not properly addressed.

In some cases, crew do not go ashore, but there remains the potential for illegal entry, especially at night when the customs and security gates are not manned. In some cases, crew from some of the purse seiners stay for a few days in transit and fly onward to their destination. Indonesians, who are usually on Japanese purse seiners, come off the boat and stay for one to three nights in motels, waiting for the plane to take them home. The Japanese

prefer the Indonesian crew because they do not take alcohol and they accept strict policies like receiving money when they get home. This means that the crew have just sufficient money for their night stays and food. In such cases, social problems associated with transshipment are not a major problem.

4.6 Regulations already in existence

MIMRA already has in place policies and regulations that specifically relate to transshipment and the tuna industry. These are printed and distributed to all vessels that come into port, including to ship masters arriving in Majuro for fish transshipment, provisioning and other related purposes. The circular reminds the ship masters of the conditions attached to licences that they have and the reminder states the following:

“It is prohibited to dump raw or treated sewage, discard fish, by-catch, rubbish, garbage, fuel water, bilge water, ballast water and brine while you are within 12 miles of land or inside Majuro Lagoon. Non-compliance with this will result in fines up to \$US 250,000.00.”

The circular also prohibits transfer of bunkers, helicopter fuel and lube oil from one ship to another unless specific permission is obtained. There is also to be no discharge of fish or by-catch to any persons or entities onshore unless prior authorisation is sought. This is to protect the livelihoods of local fishermen. The circular also specifically states that “unauthorized persons or persons not authorized by MIMRA or any other appropriate authorities are not allowed aboard vessels while in Majuro”. This is because of the community’s concern with health and social risks associated with prostitution. In this respect, the Uliga dock is designated as the only loading or unloading, drop-off or pick-up area. With permission, the Robert Reimers dock can also be used.

The biggest challenge will be the monitoring and enforcement of existing regulations. The vessels are many, and MIMRA and the customs authority lack the capacity to monitor every incoming boat, so monitoring activities of incoming vessels will be a problem. A lot depends on the crews of vessels complying with the regulations. Much of the responsibility for the regulatory measures already in place can be taken over by the public if they have an understanding of the policies and regulations that exist. MIMRA has already started the process of using the public to help in enforcement by offering rewards to those reporting any sightings of dumping or other illegal activities. So far, two people have been rewarded for reporting waste dumping. There is need for more awareness and public education on issues relating to transshipment. Everyone needs to be informed of what transshipment is, the benefits to the country and likely implications of the activities. People also need to know of and be familiar with regulations, and to know about the circulars that are sent out to vessels, so they can become more informed and hopefully become watchdogs for MIMRA and the government. Marshalllese are seafaring people and are usually out fishing, so they may see some of these activities. If they are familiar with the regulations and steps to take, they could help in curbing illegal activities.

5 OTHER SECTORS

5.1 Private sector

The future of the RMI depends heavily on investment and the development of the private sector. There is, however, a need for policies that are conducive to investment and private sector improvement. The influx of entrepreneurs from Asian countries has been good for the economy, but this has at the same time brought tension between the local population and new migrants, with associated accusations of evasions of tax and regulations. At present, there is a need for effective regulations that would enhance private sector development in the RMI. Existing legal and financial institutions do not provide needed infrastructure to allow for private sector growth. Transaction costs are high and there are many barriers to the entry of small businesses into the private sector.

5.2 Customs and immigration offices

Regulations and policies are already in place to address vessels that come into port and, according to officers interviewed at the customs and immigration office, these are similar to checks on those coming in through the airport. The officers interviewed admitted, however, that surveillance and guarding of ports was not throughout 24 hours, and there may be contraventions of existing regulations when the port customs office is not manned. Customs and security officers are not at work from midnight to 0700. The office pointed out the need to work with coastguards of larger countries, especially Hawaii or the USA, in the monitoring of transshipment activities. This would minimise scope for smuggling and other illegal practices. The suggestion was to have coastguards transfer goods and people from the vessels to shore. These proposals are still being discussed.

5.3 Police Department

The police force plays a major role in monitoring and enforcement of existing laws and regulations that relate to transshipment activities. In discussions with representatives of the police force, they explained that they were aware of activities related to transshipment, and were concerned that smuggling could be conducted through these activities. Products not coming through customs have in the past appeared on shelves on shops in Majuro. The police also had records of women apprehended within the docks and in boats, and some of these women had been charged with prostitution.

5.4 National taskforce

A national taskforce that includes personnel from the sea patrol unit, immigration, customs authority, police department, health authority, education authorities, environmental agency, the tourism department, the municipal authorities and other groups has been set up to look into transshipment activities. The taskforce was set up to look at ways of addressing problems such as illegal activities and suspected smuggling and drug use. One of the major jobs of the taskforce is to identify ways of monitoring and enforcing existing legislation. So far, the taskforce is looking at ways of educating the general public on issues relating to

transshipment. The taskforce needs to include fishermen and those directly involved with transshipment.

5.5 Council of NGOs

The RMI Council of NGOs is looking at providing alternative training and assistance to unemployed youth, in craft training, canoe building and other similar activities. Other vocational alternatives are being explored by the association to try and train and skill young men and women.

6 BENEFITS AND IMPLICATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDUSTRY

6.1 Benefits

There are direct and indirect benefits from the tuna industry and its planned development, and some of these are listed below.

- Opportunities for employment, especially with such a youthful population and the projected youth and employment needs that the country will face in the immediate future. These jobs could be in the harvest sector (as crew members in domestic fleets), or through more involvement in transshipment activities. Development into value-added tuna ventures and the post-harvest sector in general would create employment for both men and women.
- There could be increased potential for business in both the service and entertainment sectors.
- Opportunities for partnerships for the local people. The development of the domestic tuna industry as planned and attempts to include local investment or partnerships will ensure that locals can invest and participate in the tuna industry.
- Opportunities for further development of small-scale tuna fishing activities for local fishermen. This is a major part of the current tuna management and development plan.
- A more mobilised and trained workforce. Training of young men and women to find work in the tuna industry will result in more people being mobilised for the workforce.
- Development of infrastructure and social services to support the industry will also help the development of infrastructure in general.
- Opportunity for both income and food source through the implementation of the fish aggregating device (FAD) programme.
- Multiplier effect of the development to the economy in general. This means other sectors of the community, such as transportation, tourism, youth development, and the agriculture sector will get indirect benefits from the industry.
- Proposed development of wharfs, port facilities and new sites for the tuna facility may result in general development of other related areas. The country will also have more say

in the development of the industry and the management of resource, once the domestic industry is developed.

- Maximising foreign earning through current transshipment activities and licensing fees.

6.2 Implications

During discussions, the lack of awareness about the tuna industry and the transshipment activities was obvious. As a result, people had a lot of assumptions and suspicions of the vessels, transshipment activities and environmental and social issues. This suspicion has, in some cases, translated to concern on the increasing presence of foreigners in the country and their involvement in various businesses in town. Most of these businesses cater exclusively for Asian crew members, creating gaps in social relations with the local population.

Any major industrial development as in the case of the development of the tuna industry will have economic, social, cultural and environmental implications. Social implications are sometimes inevitable and at times underestimated and not properly addressed.

Imposition on local environments and culture

Increased involvement in the tuna industry into the future will mean more people using Majuro as a transit point. There will be an influx of foreigners to the RMI shores, bringing with them new cultures, new problems and other lifestyle changes.

Unwelcome and illegal social impacts will increase because of increasing transshipment activities and the consequence of the interaction between foreign crew and locals. These problems seem relatively well contained at present, largely as a result of the informal segregation of much of the crews' activities in premises established for their use. Most people are caught between traditional perceptions and ways of life, and adapting to modern lifestyles to which they have been exposed through interactions with an international community (seafarers). Seafarers also have little understanding of local culture and traditional expectations, and thus are unaware of the impacts of their involvement with local people.

Seafarers' lifestyle

Crew members of fishing vessels work in enclosed environments and are at sea for long periods of time. This is an international occupation where men of different backgrounds meet and work together, and travel to many foreign ports. For these men, being onshore is seen mainly as an opportunity to socialise, drink and relax. Very few think of practising safe sex when in port; therefore very few take precautions. Abuse of alcohol was stated by some as contributing to a relaxed attitude towards HIV/AIDS and STDs.

Sex workers

Sex workers usually thrive in areas where there is high interaction between foreigners and locals in the tuna industry, and the regular arrival of foreign vessels. This has been documented for Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Palau, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and other

ports in the Pacific. Sex workers boarding boats and crew members coming onshore and engaging with sex workers has been a common problem, and authorities in different countries have tried to put in place measures to curb these activities. In the case of the RMI there are specific policies enabling prosecution of sex workers. There is a designated area where all incoming vessels can offload, and customs and other authorities are located at this point. Enforcement of existing policies, however, remains a problem given limitations in human resources capacity. The concern has been voiced that the sex trade could be associated with other illegal activities, such as drug trafficking and smuggling of illegal goods into the country.

Because these activities are usually are “out of sight” for the general public, there is not much pressure on government to take measures to address issues. At the moment, NGOs and churches are trying to address these activities but these can only have influence with the support of the government sectors.

Vulnerability to organised prostitution

People are also aware of organised prostitution by certain ethnic groups among the foreigners. These activities are not easy to track down, but there are evidently bars and other entertainment areas that cater exclusively for boat crew. An informal discussion with one of the senior officers of a vessel that was in port disclosed that his preference was for local girls and not for the more experienced foreigners, a point that reflected there being two different avenues where crew could access women. In the period 1999 to early 2001, figures from the Division of Vice of the police force on Majuro recorded and listed those accused of prostitution. Those prosecuted from mid-1999 to the first few months of 2001 totalled 88 (this figure does not include those accused but not prosecuted). Age ranges for those involved were from 17 to 22 years of age. As stated earlier, the obvious lack of monitoring of the exclusive clubs and bars that exist in Majuro may result in organised prostitution not being dealt with at all.

These figures, however, show the involvement of women in the industry and at the same time show positive work by the police force in apprehending and prosecuting those involved. Those on record were either apprehended at Majuro Lagoon (location not specifically stated), Delap Lagoon, Pre-dock, Majuro, Uliga Dock, Fishing Boats Majuro Lagoon, Fish Base Dock, Papala Restaurant, Uliga Main Road, RRE Hotel, Majuro or RRE Dock. Most were recorded as having been apprehended at Delap Dock, Majuro Lagoon (fishing vessels) and Uliga Dock. This indicates that police are able to prosecute, but it may not show where other such activities may be occurring in Majuro, as checks have been at certain marked sites or areas that are known to police.

Activities of middle persons

The problem of middle persons, commonly known as pimps, exists and has become quite sophisticated with the presence of organised foreign sex workers. Pimps set up women or market them to men and arrange meeting places and other such arrangements. Control of the sex industry could involve expanding laws to include the prosecution of pimps and those in the business of marketing those involved in the sex trade. Activities within exclusive bars and

dance places should also be monitored and the type of licences currently granted scrutinised and modified to take into account other social concerns.

Most men interviewed on this subject were reluctant to talk, but emphasised the point that prostitution was against traditional and customary beliefs and principles. It will continue to be a major problem, and needs more concerted and combined efforts by government, NGOs, local authorities and traditional organisations to determine ways to lessen the involvement of young women in the trade.

Lack of alternatives

Women who visit the foreign boats or spend time with men who come off boats are part of a steadily thriving trade in the RMI and in other countries of the Pacific. These activities are usually conducted discreetly because of traditional social perceptions. Most of the women questioned about their involvement in the activities had little option for employment and liked the easy life the crew members offered them. They did not see anything wrong with being engaged in the sex trade. Most of the girls do not have proper medical checks for HIV or STDs, nor were there any medical requirements for women arrested on boats. The Police Department had records of all those women that had been apprehended and prosecuted, and conduct stringent checks on port areas known to be frequented by sex workers. This may be a reason the activities in the trade are not very apparent to the general public. In a discussion with the women's group and church members, it was clear that the presence of sex workers was a widely known and discussed issue.

The lack of employment for young women and limited recreational activities onboard for crew members are situations that provide the opportunity for increased involvement in the sex trade. The concern is the likelihood that more women will become involved, given the current dropout rate from schools, the high concentration of population in Majuro and the lack of job opportunities. Prostitution may, as a result, get out of hand if not addressed.

Alcohol abuse

An associated problem is alcohol abuse by young people. Alcohol is readily bought in most shops and is easily available to both men and women. High alcohol consumption results in social problems such as domestic violence, breakdown in families, teenage pregnancies and loss of employment. There is a set of guidelines for drinking age and opening hours of bars and nightclubs, but these regulations are not stringently enforced.

Emerging lifestyles

When women become involved in the processing sector, they adopt lifestyles that suit employment, and move away from traditionally defined roles. On the other hand, women can be subjected to dual or triple programmes of work in a day where they hold paid employment but still have to attend to traditional domestic chores. As time progresses, there will be situations where both parents work and changes to traditional roles will be more pronounced than what is now the case.

Illegal activities

In discussions with the general public and later with the police force, suspected illegal activities such as smuggling through transshipment activities were mentioned. Some goods being sold in shops do not come in through customs authorities, but there is not enough monitoring and surveillance capacity to properly monitor or track such activities. There is suspected use and distribution of drugs through vessels, with crew members also being target clients for dealers.

Population concentration

Population concentration and the continuing rural to urban drift of people has created housing and sanitary problems on Majuro and Ebeye. In Majuro, overcrowding has become a major problem. Exacerbating this is the problem of high school dropouts and high unemployment. Most of these unemployed youths lack basic qualifications and do not have the job training and skills to take up available jobs. High unemployment is also associated with high levels of alcohol abuse, often resulting in increased domestic violence, especially in urban areas.

Little understanding of the industry

Social problems also arise because of people's lack of knowledge of the industry. Thus people rely on sometimes misperceived perceptions on activities of the industry. As a result there is little understanding of the social impacts of the industry. Another problem is that the local authorities and the health authorities that bear the costs for trying to curb prostitution do not benefit from transshipment activities.

Seafarers of the Pacific region

Seafarers and the associated prevalence of HIV and other STDs are among the most important gender-related factors in tuna-fishery development in the Pacific region. There appears to be widespread HIV infection among the seafaring community throughout the region, usually through young women working as casual sex workers to earn money. Despite recent concerns about maritime and fisheries institutes failing to meet international standards, it is clear that Pacific Island countries will continue to support the tuna industry, due to its large contribution to national economies. In recent years, HIV infection among Pacific Island seafarers has become a major concern. The rates of infection among seafarers are high. Although men in the RMI do not go out as crews on fishing vessels overseas, a large seafaring population is regularly in RMI ports. In Kiribati, seafarers and their wives make up more than 50 per cent of the country's 38 cases of HIV/AIDS, and in Tuvalu, recent national HIV tests have revealed a further 7 cases, 4 of these being seafarers.

HIV/AIDS and STDs

HIV/AIDS and STDs are diseases closely linked to seafarers all over the Pacific region, and transshipment activities, which allow a high degree of interaction with foreign crew, are a major contributing factor. The RMI has few reported cases, but the lack of HIV-testing

equipment to determine HIV incidence locally could mean HIV figures could be higher than officially reported.

Lack of medical screening

There is no system in place to screen men that come off boats or women who are arrested on boats or on the dock. The health authorities felt there was need for more collaboration between MIMRA and the health department, to try to screen men that come off boats, but this approach has not worked in some places because of the concern for contravention of the rights of individuals under international human rights conventions. There were suggestions for voluntary check systems, where people's identities are not known or needed. Another referral facility, where identities could be kept confidential, or a more private arrangement, could encourage women and men to come for checks.

Working conditions of women and men

Work in the processing plant was similar to that in factories in other countries. Poor working conditions and wages characterise such forms of employment. However, because of limited opportunities, lack of skills and minimal education, women take advantage of such jobs.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

The scale and intensity of transshipment activities in Majuro suggest that adverse environmental impacts are occurring, and that the Majuro marine environment is being degraded to a certain extent. As highlighted in the study conducted on the transshipment activities in Majuro, the concern is not about what has been witnessed or known, but about people's suspicion that environmental impacts may be occurring, unknown to the community. Thus, lack of information on these activities is in itself a cause of major concern for environmental costs of transshipment. The lack of information also makes it difficult to formulate concrete actions to be taken. MIMRA reported that two cases of dumping had been reported in the past six months, where the informants had been rewarded and the vessel masters prosecuted.

There are shortcomings in environmental monitoring and surveillance of transshipment activities by the responsible RMI authorities. The Environment Agency is responsible for factory outlets in the lagoon, illegal material coming in through vessels, ballast water, water quality, discarding of by-catch and rubbish within the lagoon area, fuel discharge or accidental spillages. Many people interviewed on the viability of the transshipment activities also stated their concerns about the above problems, and about the efficiency of the monitoring and enforcement systems in place.

8 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND BENEFITS

8.1 Potential positive gains

Of major benefit to RMI is the monetary contribution to national income through licensing fees and transshipment, refuelling and other activities.

There would be opportunities for employment in the different sectors of the industry, especially if the industry is domesticated, or policies put in place to employ Marshallese in the different areas of work. Development into value-added tuna ventures and the post-harvest sector in general could provide employment for both men and women.

Development of the tuna industry would bring increased business for the entertainment and service industries. Opportunities for investment and partnerships for the local population could arise. Other potential benefits include the following.

- A more mobilised and trained workforce. Training of young men and women to find work in the tuna industry will result in a more mobilised workforce.
- Development of infrastructure and social services to support the industry will also support the development of infrastructure in general.
- Opportunity for both income and food source through the implementation of the FAD programme.
- Multiplier effect of the industry could result in benefits to other sectors such as transportation, tourism, youth development and agriculture.
- Maximising foreign earnings through current transshipment activities and licensing fees.

8.2 Potential impacts

With increased involvement in the tuna industry more vessels will use Majuro as a transit point. There will be an influx of foreigners to RMI's shores, bringing with them new cultures, lifestyle and challenges. There could be unwelcome social impacts and the consequences of foreign crews' interaction with locals. At present, these problems seem relatively well contained, largely as a result of the informal segregation of much of the crews' activities in premises established for their use.

There is likely to be an increase in the commercial sex trade. With many young, unemployed women with minimal education and skills or training, more will turn to the trade. This in turn could lead to more risk of HIV/AIDS and other STDs. Young girls from outer islands staying with relatives in Majuro are usually the most vulnerable. People are aware of the organised sex trade by foreigners, but these activities are not easy to monitor. The obvious lack of monitoring of exclusive clubs and bars that exist in Majuro may result in organised prostitution not being dealt with at all.

An associated problem is alcohol abuse by the young people. Alcohol is sold in most shops and is easily available to both men and women. High alcohol consumption results in social

problems such as domestic violence, family breakdown, teenage pregnancies and loss of employment. The costs of curbing these activities are usually borne by sectors (health, social welfare, and women) that do not benefit from the transshipment activities.

There is also realisation of increased drug availability, and smuggling of other items. Because of the lack of human resources to enable 24-hour customs and monitoring work, there are still gaps in enforcement mechanisms.

With women becoming involved in the processing sector, they will start to adopt lifestyles that suit employment and will move away from traditional roles. Often, women can be subjected to dual or triple burdens of work, where they are engaged in paid employment and still have to attend to traditional domestic chores. As time progresses, there will be more families where both parents work, and thus new coping strategies will evolve in households and communities.

Because of population concentration and the continuing rural to urban drift of people, there is potential for increased social and economic-related problems on Majuro and Ebeye.

Because of the scale and intensity of transshipment activities in Majuro, it is highly likely that adverse environmental impacts are occurring, and that the Majuro marine environment is being degraded to a certain extent. There are shortcomings in environmental monitoring and surveillance of activities by the responsible RMI authorities.

9 KEY GENDER ISSUES

1. *The intrusion of foreign cultures into local situations.* This will have tremendous impact on local women, who are usually the most affected in such situations.
2. *Enforcement and policing of the sex trade.* Strategies to curb prostitution and the sex trade should target not only women but also men involved in the industry. Men are usually involved in marketing women in the trade.
3. *HIV/AIDS and STDs* to be seen as problems directly related to the fisheries sector.
4. *Other social impacts* such as smuggling, drug use and high alcohol abuse should be addressed and mechanisms put in place to control the activities.
5. *Inventorying and monitoring of exclusive bars and entertainment places in Majuro* will assist in the monitoring of illegal activities relating to transshipment, prostitution and other related activities.
6. *Economic benefits of the tuna industry and real benefits to the local population* in terms of how men and women benefit from transshipment and other tuna industry-related activities should be priority issues.
7. *Gender equity* in the employment sector and in the tuna industry should be a priority.

8. *Appropriate work and wage guidelines to protect workers involved in the industry.* The rights of men and women as workers should be recognised whether the development of the tuna industry is by the government or the private sector.
9. *Environmental impacts* and how these may affect marine life, and subsequently the livelihoods of both men and women, need to be monitored more effectively and environmental protection policies and regulations more stringently enforced.
10. *Closing the business development gaps between locals and foreigners* in the RMI is important to ensure stability and to instil confidence in the local population.
11. *Empowering women through education, awareness and advocacy* to assist in their participation in the tuna industry.
12. *Capacity building and maximising of income-generating opportunities* within the tuna industry, to address high unemployment in the RMI.
13. *Training courses and opportunities* that include both men and women should be introduced as a part of the tuna development initiative.
14. *Traditional and social considerations* need to be taken into account in determining employment opportunities, as discussed above.
15. *Occupational health and safety procedures* must be adhered to, to ensure the safety of both men and women in the industry.

10 PROPOSED STRATEGIES TO OFFSET NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TUNA INDUSTRY

Awareness and education on the tuna industry, transshipment activities and benefits and implications, to be spearheaded by MIMRA and assisted by other government sectors, private sector, NGOs, churches and other groups.

- It is important that people of a country where there is intense transshipment activity be informed of what the activity is, how it benefits them, what sorts of businesses can be developed, and the existence of the regulations and laws that are in place.
- Policies and regulations relating to transshipment activities to be translated into the vernacular and distributed widely to all sectors of the community.
- MIMRA to take the lead in extending education and awareness on transshipment activities to other sectors of the public service and the private sector.

Capacity building in port work and work on board vessels, in customs and immigration, and other related work, to assist the local population to feel ownership of the industry and to be more involved in the industry.

- Training and attachment work on data analysis, planning, information gathering and database work and other such areas to be done.

Unemployment to be seen as a national concern, and a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach to be taken to determine ways to provide training, skills and employment opportunities.

- Vocational institutions to actively take up training of both men and women to be involved in the tuna industry.
- The public and private sector should see unemployment as a major problem and strategies should be put in place to create employment opportunities.
- Introduce policies where certain job areas and employment openings are kept for the local people only.
- National council of NGOs to be assisted in its attempts at trying to provide alternatives for the unemployed.
- Secondary schools to try and implement strategies that will keep students in school. Alternative skills training courses to be introduced at an early age.

The sex trade to be addressed as a component of the national plan. Policies are in place to control access to boats, and more work on this, and strengthening of monitoring and enforcement capacity, could assist.

- Related problems of alcohol abuse, drug peddling and smuggling should be collectively addressed with the work targeting sex workers.
- Policies to also include those involved in marketing the sex trade and other people involved in illegal activities associated with the trade.
- More concerted effort at inventorying exclusive and other entertainment areas and associated activities to gather some concrete data on prostitution. Stricter guidelines to be put in place regarding such places.
- Sex work to be seen as an industry that needs to be curbed, and practical systems and strategies to be put in place.

HIV awareness and education a necessary component of the development plans of the tuna industry.

- Ongoing awareness campaigns should be conducted at the community level, in the media and in churches to educate people on HIV/AIDS and its impacts.
- Young people and existing youth groups can be mobilised to undertake awareness activities through rallies and educational visits and learning workshops.
- Production of pamphlets in the vernacular and the use of the print media for awareness and education purposes.

- Education and awareness visits to the ports, to where the young women operate, to seek their views, assist them with their problems and provide necessary education. These can be conducted by the youth groups and church groups.

Specific enforcement and monitoring tasks be devolved and decentralised to community and organisation level.

Training of seafarers to closely follow the new SPC modules, where social factors are taken into consideration.

All proposed training activities under the development plan to incorporate gender considerations. This could be implemented by:

- Including women in training programmes.
- All content to take account of women's issues and how they are affected by the industry development.
- Gender consideration to be part of recruitment both in training and in employment openings.

All environmental concerns to be centralised and a more proactive approach to be taken to address environmental concerns.

- Policies regarding these to be centralised (environmental agency).
- Incorporation of general environmental awareness into all development of the industry.

Setting up of proper wage guidelines and working conditions in the processing sector.

- Wages to be in line with national minimum wage.

Need for better surveillance and monitoring programme.

- Because of the lack of personnel, MIMRA has adopted a system where informants are rewarded. With increased transshipment activities in the future, there is need for a better, more effective surveillance and monitoring system. This will also ensure that deliberate discard of fish and accidental fuel spillage or loss of fish can be tracked.
- Regular media broadcasts and awareness programmes to be drawn up to assist in monitoring.
- Fines and prosecution to be effectively monitored in cases of infringement of laws or regulation.

Impact mitigation:

Environmental assessment of the Majuro port.

- Assistance to be sought from the Marine Pollution section of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to conduct a proper assessment of environmental impacts in Majuro harbour, before protection or mitigation measures can be taken.

Monitoring and data on social effects.

- Monitoring of direct and indirect benefits of the transshipment activities to be monitored.

11 CONCLUSION

There is a need to strengthen both women's and men's roles in the tuna industry. Because of the need for gender equity in employment, women need to be singled out for more training and skills-based exposure, so that they can be usefully employed in any development in the tuna industry. In theory, equal opportunities exist for all sectors of the community, but these opportunities can only be fully exploited by positive discrimination for women and by practical exercises to ensure employment and participation. Traditional roles always need to be considered fully in tuna development and management plans. Identified social problems of prostitution, HIV/AIDS, and alcohol abuse cut across gender barriers and are therefore a societal problem. To address these problems, there is need for concerted efforts to work together with all sectors of the community.

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Mark Serge, General Manager, Marshall Islands Visitors Authority

Alson Kelen, Programme Manager, Waan aelon in Majel canoe building project

Representatives of the different churches

Women's groups representatives

National Women's Office

WATUMI—National NGO on women's affairs

National youth training group

Flame Tree manager

Bar owners

Two sex workers

Foreign workers (teachers and nurses)

Catholic Church pastors and other church representatives

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