

AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE SUPPORTS RMI OUTER ISLAND SCHOOLS 2012-2016

CADRE EDUCATION COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING REVERSE OSMOSIS HAND-OVER CEREMONY

Four Years of Partnership: DFAT, IOM, PSS and RMI Leadership

Since early 2012, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been working closely with the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), particularly the Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS), National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster and Public School System (PSS) to implement disaster preparedness and response activities, with funding provided by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

IOM began implementing the Climate Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Education (CADRE) Program in 15 high schools and school communities in the Marshall Islands. The Jaluit High School and community was one of those selected. The 9th grade students received two weeks of curriculum in their science classes on climate change, schools and communities participated in Hazard Vulnerability Capacity Mapping, and assistance was provided to school administration to produce School Emergency Management Plans (SEMPs).

During the 2016 El Niño Induced Drought Response, Australian DFAT provided emergency response funding to support WASH promotion across the affected areas, and the procurement of reverse osmosis (RO) units to produce up to 800 gallons of safe drinking water per day for three outer island schools: Jaluit, Wotje and Kwajalein.

On October 22, a delegation from Majuro was hosted in Jaluit High School (Jabwor, Jaluit) to formally handover the RO units. Those in attendance included Hon. Senator Nemra, Chief Secretary Langidrik, Nitijela Clerk, Postmaster General, PSS Associate Commissioner Paul, IOM, Ministry of Public Works, media representatives, Jaluit High School, and the greater Jaluit community.

During the visit, it was evident that the assistance provided by DFAT had a lasting affect—school emergency plans were posted and CADRE education materials were visible, as pictured below. The Jaluit community, traditional leadership and Government leadership have a strong desire to prepare for and mitigate the risks of national disasters and climate change.



RO handover ceremony with Jaluit High School and Community © IOM Marshall Islands

The handover event included the signing of a Deed of Donation between DFAT's implementing partner, IOM, and the Office of the Chief Secretary, officially donating all three units to the GoRMI. The ceremony also included the ratification of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Office of the Chief Secretary and the Public School System, establishing PSS ownership and responsibility for the use, care, and maintenance of the three RO units.

"We, the leadership, people of Jaluit and high school students, are very grateful for this generous gift from the people and Government of Australia in close partnership with IOM and RMI. To show our deep appreciation, it is incumbent upon us now to ensure this RO machine is well utilized and maintained properly for many years to come."

- Senator Casten Nemra

Of note during the event was the lively attendance of Jaluit community members— particularly, representatives from the student government body of Jaluit High School. Special note was made of the continued support of the Government of RMI, IOM and government partners like DFAT in the promotion of safe WASH practices within outer island communities and schools.

Donations from DFAT also included key tools and spare parts that will support maintenance for 18 months. The units will be powered from petrol-run pumps that already exist on the island and which are operated by Majuro Electrical Company (MEC). To complement the donation of the RO units, IOM, FCI Water Makers, and the New Zealand Red Cross facilitated a series of trainings on the set-up, operation and maintenance of 800 gallon per-day RO units in June of 2016. Participants included staff from Majuro Water and Sewer Company (MWSC), and most importantly, school and power plant representatives from the respective islands receiving RO units in order to ensure the continued and efficient maintenance of the RO units.



CADRE materials in Jaluit High School © IOM Marshall Islands

