Republic of Marshall Islands Maritime Investment Project

Gender and Human Trafficking Report

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CEDAW | Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women  |
| DIDA | Ministry of Finance Division of International Development Assistance |
| HT | Human Trafficking  |
| IMO | International Maritime Organization  |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration  |
| MOHHS | Ministry of Health and Human Services |
| NGMP | National Gender Mainstreaming Policy |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PMU  | Project Management Unit |
| PPA | Project Preparation Advance |
| RMI | Republic of Marshall Islands |
| RMIMIP | Republic of Marshall Islands Maritime Investment Project |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| STDs | Sexually Transmitted Diseases |
| NTHT | National Taskforce against Human Trafficking |
| WB | World Bank |
| WUTMI | Women United Together Marshall Islands |

# Introduction

## 1.1 Background and context

The Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) has received a Project Preparation Advance (PPA) from the World Bank to assist in the preparation of the proposed RMI Maritime Investment Project (RMIMIP). The PPA will be used to fund the preparation of the necessary technical, economic, design, environmental and social studies for the projects, as well as establishing the operational framework within which the projects will be implemented.

Imported and transient workforces such as the fishing industry and construction industry are known to contribute to issues of human trafficking, prostitution, harassment and violence [[1]](#footnote-1). Insuring that this project does not exacerbate any of these issues, and where deemed appropriate, provides education and awareness on the issues, will therefore be an integral part of the project implementation. Principles of gender mainstreaming will also be followed.

## 1.2 Project description

The RMI is located approximately midway between Hawaii and the Philippines and consists of 29 atolls, 5 islands and numerous small islets. The country covers an area of 1.9 million km2; but has just 181 km2 in land area. The overall population is about 55,000, but 75 percent live in Majuro (the capital) and Ebeye. RMI has a young population, majority of which is under the age of 15. The population is sparsely distributed, but there is growing in-migration from the outer islands due, primarily, to a lack of employment opportunities and increased reliance on the cash economy, as compared to a subsistence lifestyle. At the same time, lower incomes and a rising cost of living is causing Marshallese residents to leave the country for better jobs and educational opportunities abroad, mainly in Hawaii, the United States mainland, and Guam.

Given the country’s geographic characteristics and distant outer islands, the provision of efficient, reliable and affordable sea transport services is considered essential for the country’s basic economic and social functions, and to achieving RMI’s national development plans. Therefore, ports at Ebeye, Wotje and Jaluit Atolls are proposed to be included in this project. The main national port of Majuro is regularly served by international cargo services from the United States, Asia and Australia. It is also the largest regional tuna transhipment port and transhipped 600,000 metric tons of tuna in 2016. Fishing vessels make-up as much as 75 percent of vessel traffic calling at Majuro. There are two principal docks (ports) at Majuro: (i) Delap Dock for international cargo; and (ii) Uliga Dock for domestic passengers and cargo, and tenders from international vessels.

## 1.3 Potential for gendered impacts and human trafficking considerations

Given the nature of the project activities, which essentially consist of maintenance and upgrades to existing port infrastructure, there are unlikely to be significant environmental and social impacts1. However, influx of foreign workforce during the implementation phase; and the potential increase in visiting fishing fleets during post-implementation, have a potential to cause harm or harassment to host communities, including incidents of human trafficking.

## 1.4 Gathering information of relevance to this report

Information summarized in this report was gathered during the scoping field visit to RMI in February 2019, and as a desk-top activity between December and February 2019.

Consultations were held with the relevant stakeholders and special interest groups at each port location except Wotje. A comprehensive record of all meetings and interviews held can be found in RMIMIP Stakeholder Engagement Plan Update 1.0 of February 2019 (Annex G Consultation records). Organizations consulted include:

* IOM - International Office for Migrations
* NTHT – National Taskforce against Human Trafficking
* Ministry of Justice, Immigration and Labor, Division of Immigration
* MOHHS – Ministry of Health and Human Services
* WUTMI - Women United Together Marshall Islands
* WIJ Chapters
* School counsellors / Secretaries

Available policy and operational documents relevant to both gender and human trafficking (HT) were reviewed for the purpose of this report and the review summaries are presented in the next section.

# Policy environment

Gender

## 2.1. National Gender Mainstreaming Policy of the Republic of the Marshall Island

The RMI has committed to achieve gender equality through international and regional conventions and instruments, which include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Millennium Development Goals and Pacific Plan, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Revised Pacific Platform for Action for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality, and the 2012 Forum Leaders Gender Equality Declaration.

The operating principles, which form the foundation of the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy (NGMP), are defined as follows:

* Gender equality is enshrined and included in traditional and cultural practices of the Marshallese people.
* Understanding and acknowledging basic human rights is the primary guiding principle for the NGMP.
* Women and men are equal partners in all development areas of our country and therefore gender equality and the participation of women at all levels and in all sectors is fundamental to the progress and advancement of RMI.
* Women in the outer islands need to be given special consideration in all Policy outcomes and actions.
* Policy-makers and managers need to develop their capacity to mainstream gender equality and address women’s human rights into their sectoral programs and services and establish an accountability mechanism for monitoring progress within their sector.
* Strong partnerships and coordination mechanisms need to be in place between all line and sectoral ministries, outer islands governance mechanisms, and civil society organizations.

|  |
| --- |
| The goal of the National Gender Mainstreaming Policy is ‘To progress gender equality and the empowerment of women in the RMI with the meaningful involvement and contributions of all development sectors and civil society, and women and men from all spheres, and at all levels of development and decision-making, from the Council of Iroij, the Nitijela, and in local governments in the outer islands.’ |

The NGMP aims at addressing gender inequality for the overall population and to benefit all women living in RMI, however, it also acknowledges inter-sectionalities of vulnerability, such as women facing additional disadvantages due to their physical and mental conditions (women living with disabilities), their location (women living in remote areas), their age (adolescents and elderly), or their limited assets (unemployed women and heads of household); and prioritizes the needs of women facing greater disadvantages.

NGMP sets out five priority outcomes:

1. Strengthened capacity across government to deliver gender-responsive programs and services.

2. Secure family wellbeing.

3. Elimination of gender-based violence and protection and care of survivors.

4. Enabling environment for equitable participation in, and benefit from, economic development.

5. Equitable participation of women and men in decision-making.

Priority outcomes 1 and 5 are deemed applicable to this project, with the priority outcome 3 applicable in its reference to the human trafficking and priority outcome 4 relevant to a limited extent.

**Priority Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity across the government to deliver gender responsive programs and services**

The Policy indicates that gender issues are rarely mentioned in high-level discussions; very few sectors use sex-disaggregated data; gender analysis is not used in the policy and program development process; and the technical capacity, accountability, reporting and resources to conduct gender analysis and support the gender mainstreaming approach are limited. Therefore, the enabling environment for mainstreaming gender in both central and local level government, including increase in capacity and improved coordination across all sectors, was identified as the key to effective delivery of gender-responsive programs and services.

**Priority Outcome 3: Elimination of gender-based violence and protection and care of survivors**

Gender-based violence is a challenge in RMI. Although this project does not specifically deal with the violence prevention aspects, the principle of ‘do no harm’ – ensuring that project activities do not have a potential to precipitate or potentiate domestic violence - will be adhered to in all project activities.

Further, this Priority Outcome makes a reference to human trafficking and states that

*“(the Government) also acknowledge the growing global trends around trafficking and the risk to RMI and will put in place mechanisms to monitor the situation and adopt measures for the protection of women and girls who are being trafficked on our territory.”*

**Priority Outcome 4: Enabling environment for equitable participation in, and benefit from, economic development**

The Policy acknowledges that women’s economic empowerment remains a key challenge, as women continue to face limited job opportunities and remain under-represented in management positions. The Policy also calls for an enabling environment for an equitable participation in and benefit from economic development thought equal employment opportunities, improving working conditions, creating a good balance between family and work-related responsibilities for both women and men, increased access to education, etc; but stops short of promoting measures that would increase women’s vertical progressions into executive and positions of power within businesses and organizations outside of the political representation (addressed to limited extent in outcome 5).

**Priority Outcome 5: Equitable participation of women and men in decision-making**

Participation of women at the national decision-making level remains limited, with women being under-represented in the legislative and executive branches of government and the leadership still thought of as men’s role. The Policy acknowledges that participation of women alongside man in decision-making creates a stronger platform to address a broader range of concerns and needs. To support the equitable participation of women and men in decision-making, the Policy proposes to undertake more civic education, encourage political leaders to be more supportive of female candidates, further develop women’s leadership and communication skills, build the capacity of the media to promote a positive image of female leaders, discuss the adoption of temporary special measures, and – as a final recommendation - promote more women in decision-making and senior management positions in both the public and private sectors.

Further, the Policy specifies five strategic areas (identified by RMI’s National Strategic Plan 2015–2017) to be coordinated and to work in synergy with NGMP to achieve the Priority Outcomes. Infrastructure developments (transportation) is one of the strategic areas identified. The official gender focal point of the government is the Gender and Development Office, under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

## 2.2 The World Bank Group Gender Strategy

At the center of the World Bank (WB) agenda on gender equality, poverty reduction and inclusive growth is the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The WB Strategy[[2]](#footnote-2) focuses on four objectives:

1. Improving human endowments - health, education and social protection
2. Removing constraints for more and better jobs
3. Removing barriers to women’s ownership of and control over assets
4. Enhancing women’s voice and agency and engaging men and boys

This Project is well placed to provide support for improvements under Objective 2, which is similar in nature to the RMI Priority Outcome 4 of increasing women’s benefits from economic development; and the Objectives 4, similar in nature to the Priority Outcome 5: Equitable participation of women and men in decision-making.

Given that WB Group gives strong emphasis on strengthening country-driven approaches, Objectives of the World Bank Group Gender Strategy will be addressed in this document as they relate to RMI NGMP Priority Outcomes.

## 2.3 International Maritime Organization (IMO)

IMO is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented. IMO has in 2019 launched a new campaign for its Women in Maritime program as a part of its mission to support Sustainable Development Goal number 5.

Human Trafficking

## 2.4 RMI Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons Act 2017

The purpose of the Act is stated as the prevention and combat of trafficking in persons in the RMI; protection and assistance to victims; ensuring just and effective investigation and prosecution; and promoting and facilitating national and international cooperation in order to meet these objectives. “Child” is defined as any person under the age of 18; and the definitions of the forced labor, debt bondage; prostitution and sexual exploitation, are also provided in the Act.

Of relevance here is Paragraph 104 (b) of the Act, specifying that the Act shall apply to any offense committed on board a vessel or aircraft that is registered under the laws of the RMI at the time the offence is committed.

The law proceeds to set maximum jail sentences and penalties for associated crimes and the victim protection provisions.

## 2.5 The World Bank Group Social Development Note on Human Trafficking

Social Development Note 122 from 2009[[3]](#footnote-3) provides an overview of the World Bank approach to human trafficking, based on the principles of prevention. The following specific actions are listed as the key to preventing human trafficking:

* Social protection: Enhancing a safety net system to target those who are vulnerable to trafficking in the project area.
* Employment: Providing job training and creating more jobs in the community at risk of trafficking so that vulnerable populations do not necessarily need to go to the city or abroad to obtain a job.
* Labor safeguards: Ensuring labor safeguards that include an anti-trafficking component in development projects for the following sectors that are particularly common for labor trafficking – mining, fisheries, agriculture, logging, and construction.
* Education: Incorporating information on human trafficking, child labor, migration, and skill development into school curricula and training programs to educate children and young adults about the danger of human trafficking and their human/labor rights, and also to develop useful skills to have sustainable employment.
* Health: Improving access to healthcare for vulnerable groups of human trafficking (such as sex workers and illegal migrant workers) and educating on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.
* Migration: Raising awareness about human trafficking and informing about the risks and consequences of work abroad and their labor rights.
* Access to law and justice: The Access to Justice for the Poor strategies empowers the vulnerable people to assert, enforce and access their individual and property rights. Most trafficking victims are not aware of their rights, and even if they know their rights, they are afraid of testifying against traffickers who might threaten and harass them and their family. The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) points out two important components of access to justice for trafficked victims: the right to information and victim protection.

## 2.6 International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The IOM is an intergovernmental organization that provides services and advice concerning migration to governments and migrants, including internally displaced persons, refugees, and migrant workers. In September 2016, it became a related organization of the United Nations. IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society, and acts with its partners in the international community to:

* Assist in meeting the growing operational challenges of migration management.
* Advance understanding of migration issues.
* Encourage social and economic development through migration.
* Uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

United Nationals Office for drugs and crimes (UNODC)[[4]](#footnote-4) differentiates three types of human trafficking activities as occurring in the Pacific:

**Sexual exploitation:** There are indications that trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation possibly occurs in parts of the Pacific region, including in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Such activities reportedly have close links to local and regional commercial and extractive industries, including fishing, logging and mining. According to reports, trafficking for sexual exploitation is prevalent in key port cities, where crews from foreign fishing vessels allegedly exploit both local and girls and women from East Asia (Chinese, Pilipino and more recently, Thai).

**Labor exploitation:** There have been reports of widespread labor exploitation of individuals from the Pacific region by distant water operators licensed to fish within the Pacific waters. Such activities possibly have links to human trafficking in and through the Pacific. In addition to workers from the Pacific region, there are reports of fishermen from Asian countries including China, Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam being exploited in the Pacific region on fishing vessels originating from East Asia.

**Migrant smuggling:** Most recorded cases of migrant smuggling in the Pacific have been large numbers of people travelling via boat, with individuals from South and East Asia paying for transit to the United States.

This differentiation was used when discussing human trafficking with the stakeholders.

# Findings of the primary and secondary data collection

## 3.1 Gender

The Family Health and Safety Study[[5]](#footnote-5), conducted in 2013/14, reveals that 48% of ever-partnered women reported having experienced physical violence in their lifetime, and 21% had experienced at least one act of sexual violence in their lifetime. Furthermore, the issue of teenage pregnancies is significant, at the rate of over 20 percent of total live births and is higher than in most other Pacific Island countries[[6]](#footnote-6). In other words, 8.5% of all girls under age of 19 give birth[[7]](#footnote-7).

Stakeholders reported that Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Act 2012 is not being implemented. Victim protection facilities are non-existent and protection processes are unclear. Also commonly reported during consultations was issue of teenage pregnancies and the age consent issue, as age of consent regulations are not enforced. The youngest person to give birth in the last year, in the villages consulted for the purpose of this project, was 12 years of age (legal age for consensual sex is 15, and ‘child’ for purpose of human trafficking act is under 18).

High incidence of gender based violence combine with and exacerbate conditions of gender inequality and mean that women are severely constrained in their ability to negotiate a life free of coercion. Many women live under the threat of violence and this restricts their ability to move freely in the community or to access health and education services. The normalisation of violence has specific implications for women’s trafficking risk: with limited sexual agency and high dependency on families, young women are acutely vulnerable to sexual coercion and trafficking.

Sexual awareness is reported as very low or nonexistent, and the need for general sexual education and awareness, including awareness of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), is perceived to be of high importance. “Culture” was often stated as a reason why gender and sexual exploitation issues are not talked about, however, when the potential benefits are well explained to traditional leaders and they support them, that support is very important as traditional leaders are highly influential in the communities. This is an important consideration for any project proposing to commence work in this space.

Women’s economic empowerment remains a key challenge, as women continue to face limited job opportunities and remain underrepresented in management positions. Women in the workplace also face weak protection mechanisms and laws, particularly in the private sector6. The reported rate of men to women in labor force was 54% to 30% in 2011[[8]](#footnote-8). However, the key issue in terms of employment appears to be very low total labor participation rates, mainly due to high unemployment of youth. It is therefore youth unemployment (of both sexes) and not women’s lack of employment opportunities that is the key issue in RMI - a very common occurrence in the Pacific, indeed. With 43% of population aged under 15 in 2010, the youth unemployment trend is unfortunately likely to persist. The resulting national total dependency was reported at 82, indicating that a high proportion of the population is dependent on a much smaller proportion of working-age people (who may or may not be employed).[[9]](#footnote-9)

Although numbers of women in the public service are growing, men dominate most senior positions. In addition, the situation in private business sector is unclear as most of the reporting and policy instruments are related to the public sector employment and statistics. Importantly, legislative mechanisms to protect the employment and labor rights of workers do not appear to be established, such as anti-discrimination provisions, sexual harassment protections, maternity leave provisions, and protections for dismissal because of pregnancy6.

The Port Authority Human Resources documents and employment policy were not available for review. However, the maritime sector is traditionally a male dominated sector and improvement of image and ‘visibility’ of women working in the sector might be beneficial. Ensuring inclusion of provisions for equal employment opportunities or similar in nature; and a commitment to employment and career progression based on merit, is essential. In addition, provisions for maternity leave and continuation of employment after the maternity leave and the protection from sexual harassment, should also be promoted by this project in all policy, sectoral and planning documents.

The highest level of concern voiced by stakeholders was in relation to implementation/construction phase workforce. Stakeholders suggested that project provides preference for local companies and local labor to be engaged during the implantation and in construction activities, or alternatively providing strong measures to mitigate potential negative impacts of foreign workforce. Benefits of preferential local employment/tendering of local firms is perceived as twofold, (a) providing an employment but also skills development opportunity to high numbers of local unemployed youth; and (b) minimizing social impacts likely to result from the influx of foreign workforce, including introduction of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), harassment and potential increase in disorderly behaviors. The issue was most strongly voiced on Ebeye, where negative social impacts of the contractor workforce in the US Base are already felt. In addition, there are several upcoming construction projects proposed for Ebeye, thus potential magnifying the issue and warranting a Cumulative Impact Assessment of the Foreign Workforce Impacts in Ebeye.

## 3.2 Human Trafficking

Consultations with relevant stakeholders confirmed presence or anecdotal presence of sexual exploitation and labor exploitation, both of the foreigners and of RMI nationals. The presence of migrant smuggling was not evident, however, cannot be excluded.

The issues related to maritime industry are strongest felt in Majuro[[10]](#footnote-10). Majuro port is the largest regional tuna transhipment port and fishing vessels make-up as much as 75 percent of vessel traffic. Involvement in sex trade related to tuna industry, and resulting exposure to abuse and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), have been previously reported[[11]](#footnote-11).. Stakeholders reported current social impacts from shipping including prostitutions, border control not enforced properly, and poor enforcement of existing laws and policies in general. For example, there is a 10pm curfew for seafarers in Majuro, but there is no control over compliance. Implementing ‘safety station’ at Uliga dock and providing immigration/police presence is strongly supported as this is seen as an important safety issue, one that would also raise public confidence.

Stakeholders also voiced the opinion that a lot of new learning related to human trafficking (HT) has occurred over the last few years, so instead of conducting HT assessment project should move towards implementation (of capacity building and awareness campaigns). If a HT assessment is to be done, it should be conducted by local organizations – provide training to local staff on islands on how to do it and have it as a long-term activity. Maybe also conduct a training needs assessment for agencies: not just of immigration and police but also health, education etc.

Youth, and in particular boarding school students, were identified as very vulnerable with the need to raise their awareness. For this there is a need to go through Ministry of Education to provide awareness campaigns in boarding schools on outer islands. Training of officers (immigration and police) on victim identification; procedures and mechanisms in place; also, capacity building in associated agencies such as health and education, is also important, as well as work with taxi drivers who are sometimes facilitators. It was suggested that the project could assist with lobbing for inclusion of HIV/STD testing as a part of hiring process for maritime workers, increasing corporate social responsibility of vessel owners, and raising awareness of mariners/ship workers. It was further suggested to develop materials as hand-outs to the ships – so mariners are aware of laws, rights and responsibilities in general and while in RMI; but also, about their rights as workers and rights to complain in cases or labor exploitation or processes to be followed. Potential use of Fishing Registry for rising of awareness of HT issues for all RMI registered vessels was also discussed - as mentioned previously, there is a provision in Human Trafficking Act (Paragraph 104b) that specifies Act shall apply to any offense committed on board a vessel or aircraft that is registered under the laws of the RMI at the time the offence is committed.

Further, stakeholders pointed that there is never any resistance to capacity building so this is a good avenue for furthering gender and HT discussions. Need for any training to be continuous and to use training and materials that exists rather than creating new modules was indicated. Also, the need for resources, assets and people for monitoring of mariner’s behavior was discussed.

# Recommendations for project engagement

Potential areas, in terms of policy, legal reform, or program interventions in the maritime transport sector to address the gaps identified during the gender and human trafficking scoping analysis are discussed below. The measures proposed were identified based on consultation with government authorities and local stakeholders and are prioritized based on[[12]](#footnote-12):

a) where interventions can be most strategic, considering level of impacts in terms or number of people reached;

b) where there is interest and ownership from the government side to bring about change; and

c) where there is capacity and resources to bring about change.

Indicators that could be used to monitor progress of potential activities addressing the gender gaps and HT issues identified, are also proposed. Final set of indicators selected for the project (once all the interventions are agreed upon) will need to show clear results’ chain between analysis, action and evaluation; in other words, for all actions selected to be implemented, an indicator to monitor the results of the action in terms of addressing the gap should be set. Indicators can be at the process, output or outcome levels and baseline data should be collected and indicator target agreed with government counterpart. Indicators should be developed through consultations with local and national stakeholders, who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the project.

## 4.1 Gender

**Recommendation G1: Preferential employment of local labor and contracting of local and national firms for project implementation**

Preference for local companies and local labor to be engaged during the implantation, to minimize potential social impacts, was voiced by stakeholders during the consultation. In addition to the provision of much needed employment and skills development for local youth; preferential treatment was also seen as a mitigation measure for potentially negative social impacts of foreign workforce. Presence of foreign workforce would disproportionally negatively impact on women, in terms of harassment and the introduction of STDs. It would also have a potential to increase sexual exploitation.

Community concerns about labour influx and a possible rise in harassment and STDs require dedicated response in Control Activities, including comprehensive training of key staff and contractors, regarding the likelihood, significance and management of these and other influx-related issues, and regular monitoring.

Contributing to RMI National Gender Mainstreaming Policy:

Priority Outcome 3. Elimination of gender-based violence and protection and care of survivors

(also contributing to HT Action Area Labor Safeguard)

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms of number of people reached;

b) there is interest and ownership from the government side and the communities;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are most likely available; however, special provision would need to be included in the contract bidding process.

Potential indicator: number/% of local/national companies contracted; number/% of local/national workforce; numbers disintegrated by sex.

**Recommendation G2: Incorporate ‘equal employment opportunity’ and in particular ’equal career progression’ statements in sectoral strategies and policies.**

It is strongly recommended that such provisions be promoted for strategic documents of all project partners, not only government ones (for example, for Port Authorities, port users, and constructions firms engaged for implementation). In addition, promotion of implementation and enforcement of such policies should be an integral part of the capacity building with the partners, as well as an integral principle of the Master Plans.

Contributing to RMI National Gender Mainstreaming Policy:

Priority Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity across government to deliver gender-responsive programs and services

Priority Outcome 4: Enabling environment for equitable participation in, and benefit from, economic development

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potential for a transformational change;

b) there is interest from the government side to bring about change; need to rise ownership of private firms;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are available.

Potential indicator: number of strategic documents that include statements; percentage increase to baseline.

**Recommendation G3: Rise the profile and visibility of women employed in maritime sector.**

There is a number of women already employed in various agencies related to maritime sector in RMI, as well as at the Port Authority. However, perceptions of maritime sector remain as of ‘male dominated’ sector. It is therefore important to work with the agencies and businesses involved to increase the awareness of women already working in the sector; the careers they have in the sectors; and the openness of the sector to engage women in new careers in the future. This could be initiated in collaboration with the ‘Women in Maritime’ initiative of the UN IMO. The use of media to promote women role models within RMI will be essential.

Contributing to RMI National Gender Mainstreaming Policy:

Priority Outcome 1: Strengthened capacity across government to deliver gender-responsive programs and services

Priority Outcome 4. Enabling environment for equitable participation in, and benefit from, economic development

Priority Outcome 5. Equitable participation of women and men in decision-making

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms or number of people reached;

b) there is interest and ownership from the government side to bring about change; need to rise ownership of private firms;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are available.

Potential indicator: number of campaigns to raise visibility of women in maritime conducted; number to baseline of 0.

**Recommendation G4. Increase numbers of women in decision making positions within the maritime sector and related government agencies**

This recommendation deals with the opportunities for vertical progression of women in their chosen careers within the maritime sector or related agencies. There is a need to challenge situation in which women mainly occupy lower administrative positions and to work with the agencies and businesses involved to broaden the acceptance of ‘employment based on merit’ to also include higher positions (such as Board membership) and executive and decision-making positions. This recommendation could also include setting of firm targets for women at different technical and management levels. Recommendations could be initiated in collaboration with the National Gender Office to conduct a workshop on Strengthening Women’s access to employment and skills in Non-Traditional Areas, or similar; and with the ‘Women in Maritime’ initiative of the UN IMO. The key target audience for creation of this transformative change are males in high level positions.

Contributing to RMI National Gender Mainstreaming Policy:

Priority Outcome 5: Equitable participation of women and men in decision-making

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, and potentially transformative;

b) there is interest and ownership from the government side to bring about change; need to rise ownership of private firms;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are available.

Potential indicator: number of women in high level or executive positions; % increase to baseline or related to target set.

Workshop on Strengthening Women’s access to employment and skills in Non-Traditional Areas, or similar, conmpleted.

## 4.2 Human trafficking

**Recommendation HT1: Ensure there are Immigration/Customs/Police facilities and presence at main Ports and I/C/P can patrol anchorage areas. Provide fencing and adequate lighting at the ports.**

Facilities for immigration/customs officers and the police are essential in particular at Uliga Dock. During the discussions it was recommended that port upgrades should include a provision of an office for the Immigration/Customs/Police officers. It was also recommended by stakeholders that Port Authority should have a boat and trained personnel (or involved Immigration and Police officers) to conduct inspections at the anchorage area. Fencing and provision of adequate lighting at the ports were highly commended as both deterrents but also having a role in raising community perception of safety.

Contribution to Action Area:

* + Social protection.
	+ Access to law and justice.

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms of number of people reached as it raises confidence of community members;

b) there is interest and strong ownership from the government side and the communities;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are available**.**

Potential indicators: I/C/P infrastructure and presence provided at Majuro Ports; numbers compared to baseline. Fencing and lighting provided in each project Port; numbers compared to baseline.

**Recommendation HT2: Raise HT awareness in the communities**

Possible mitigation of issues related to human trafficking (HT) and gender in general are seen mainly through awareness and education of the general population and at schools - the largest population group in the country is 14-21 years of age. Any successful community awareness campaign must be culturally sensitive and presented not as punishment but as protection measure for youth and children. Use of culturally appropriate methods as well as context is crucial (cultural literacy). Work in communities also needs to be done through culturally appropriate channels, and preferably should start by popularizing cases of local people exploited by ‘outside world’. This would get everyone on board, and once the subject is socialized and talked about, it can be broadened to include exploitation of locals by other locals/ RMI nationals.

Awareness work with schools would need to be done through Department of Education, and a possible approach is to provide training and a range of materials to a number of educators (several from each target atoll), who then return to their schools with the resource kits (campaign materials) and roll out programs. This is a particularly good approach in terms of sustainability of it, where each new generation of students coming through school go through awareness campaign. Providing unified training, campaign materials and resource kits also ensures that a unified message is delivered throughout the country. Boarding school students are perceived as particularly at risk and the programs could start with the outer islands boarding schools.

The project should also include resourcing for relevant national actions (eg., service support under the National Task Force) as well as commitment to coordinate RMIMIP actions and policy with IOM, MOCIA and DoJ.

Contribution to Action Area:

* + Education.
	+ Migration.
	+ Access to law and justice.

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms of number of people;

b) there is very high interest and strong ownership from the government and the communities;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change are available**.**

Potential indicators: number of training/capacity building session provided; numbers of people attending; numbers disintegrated by sex.

**Recommendation HT3: Raise the capacity of agencies to deal with the HT issues and to collaborate**

The capacity or relevant agencies would also need to rise. Immigration officers at Ports and Airports receive training on the procedural requirements in dealing with illegal matters, however, it was suggested that such training should be in a form of a regular capacity building, and more comprehensive in content. Furthermore, it was noted that the training needs to be provided not just to enforcement agencies, but also to staff from health and education, as they are the ones at the frontlines of the issues.

Weak collaboration of relevant agencies was noted in Majuro, and hence the project should include funding for avenues and the systems for improving collaboration between immigration, police, government agencies and other organizations dealing with the subject, such as IMO and the Taskforce. Any such collaboration should also include departments of health and education.

Contribution to Action Area:

* + Social protection.
	+ Education.
	+ Migration.
	+ Health.
	+ Access to law and justice.

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms of number of people reached in both agencies and the communities;

b) there is interest and strong ownership from the government and the communities;

c) capacity and resources to bring about change can be available and can be combined with other activities**.**

Potential indicators: number of training/capacity building sessions provided; numbers of people attending; numbers disintegrated by sex.

**Recommendation HT4: Raise the awareness of mariners and build capacity of vessel owners on issues related to human trafficking.**

The need to work with the vessels, both the mariners and vessel owners, was also discussed with the stakeholders. Vessel Registry was seen as one potential avenue, as the registry could potentiate legal issues of trafficking and provide an overview of other legal frameworks in RMI (i.e. in relation to legal consent age and prostitution). Similar information could be provided as leaflets/booklets that could be distributed to visiting mariners in order to raise their awareness about (a) their rights as laborer and (b) their obligations towards the communities they visit. Any such activity should be developed in collaboration with both IOM and IMO.

Contribution to Action Area:

* + Social protection.
	+ Labor safeguards.
	+ Education.
	+ Migration.
	+ Access to law and justice.

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is strategic, with potentially high-level impact in terms of number of people reached in both maritime industry and the host communities;

b) there is interest and strong ownership from the government side and the communities, and the willingness of vessel owners to engage; willingness of vessel owners to engage and modes of engagement would need to be further explored.

c) capacity and resources to contribute to change together with other initiatives are available**.**

Potential indicators: number of vessel owners agreeing on the initiative; numbers compared to baseline.

**Recommendation HT5: Set up processes and train potential enumerators for the ongoing Human Trafficking Assessment**

Participants were of opinion that conducting a Human Trafficking Assessment is not a priority activity. However, should it be initiated, it would need to be done by local entities, such as Taskforce members in cooperation with women’s and youth organizations or similar. This would both build local capacity, but also ensure that all contacts and explorations are done in culturally sensitive way and over a longer period of time (3-6months), so that trust can be established.

Action Area:

* + Work on establishing baseline.

Prioritization based on:

a) intervention is important as it informs human trafficking baseline across RMI;

b) some interest from the government;

c) capacity and resources to initiate an assessment / train the enumerators might be available.

Potential indicator: number of enumerators trained; numbers disintegrated by sex; numbers of cases recorded; numbers compared to baseline.

1. World Bank: Project Information Document/Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS) Concept Stage Document of February 12, 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. World Bank Group Gender Strategy 2016-2023: Gender equality, poverty reduction and inclusive growth [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Makisaka, Megumi. 2009. Human trafficking: a brief overview. Social Development Notes; no. 122. Conflict, crime and violence. Washington, DC: World Bank [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Transnational Organised Crime in the Pacific: A Threat Assessment from September 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Republic of the Marshall Islands. Ministry of Internal Affairs. 2014. Family Health and Safety Survey. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Republic of the Marshall Islands. 2014. Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Republic of Marshall Islands. National Review [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Asian Development Bank ADB 2016. Gender Statistics: The Pacific and Timor-Leste [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. RMI Census of Population and Housing 2011 Summary Report (Numbers derived from pie charts in Figure 2.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Braun, T (Ed): Stocktake of the gender mainstreaming capacity of Pacific island governments: Republic of the Marshall Islands, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) 2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Ebeye was reported as high however it was not linked by stakeholders to maritime sector but to contractors from the US Base. There is a reported good collaboration between immigration, police, government agencies and other organisations dealing with the subject on the island, and the development of “Ebeye Pass” (for the staff from the base) was discussed. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Demmke, P.T. Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji: Forum Fisheries Agency and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. FSM and RMI Maritime Investment Project Request for Proposals (RFP) of 12 October 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)