

Scaling Up Pacific Adaptation (GCCA+ SUPA)

Lifestyle Changes and Climate Resilience in the Marshall Islands



Parents of children with special needs participating in a nutritional workshop in Majuro



Project focus: Health sector



Project timeframe: 1 January 2019- 30 June 2023



Project site: Majuro and Jaluit Atolls



National implementing agencies:

Ministry of Health and Human Services, Ministry of Natural Resources and Commerce, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Culture, Canvasback Wellness Center



Beneficiaries

Direct benefit: **17,274 persons**

Indirect benefit: **41,139 persons**

Project synopsis

The GCCA+ SUPA 'Lifestyle Changes and Climate Resilience' project in the Marshall Islands scaled up an existing Community Lifestyle Program by adding atoll agriculture, growing of local crops, nutritional training and regular exercise regimes to the existing community health checks. The geographical scope of the project was expanded to the Delap-Uliga- Darrit communities in Majuro and to the communities in Jaluit Atoll.

How did this project address climate change adaptation in the Marshall Islands?

- Given the low elevation of its coral atolls, the Marshall Islands is especially vulnerable to the effects of rising sea levels, which include loss of land, flooding, and saltwater intrusion of underground water lenses. Added to this, rising temperatures, an increase in extreme temperature and rainfall events, and changes in humidity are all having an adverse impact on the growth of crops and trees and increasing the prevalence of water, food, and vector-borne diseases.
- Focusing on the people living in the Delap-Uliga-Darrit communities in Majuro and in the communities in Jaluit, the project adapted a people-centred approach that addressed the vulnerabilities, and the rights of all residents. Skills in climate resilience was enhanced particularly for community members, youth, Island Council members and community leaders.
- Food security measures focused on increasing the availability of local food crops with home, school and community gardens, pruning of fruit crops, training in cooking and nutrition.
- Health measures included setting up exercise clubs with targeted activities for different groups and the regular monitoring of basic health indicators.
- These community activities were supported at a national level through the development of Climate Change Health Policy and Revised Action Plan (NCCHP v2).

How did this project scale up climate change adaptation in the Marshall Islands?

- Scaling up previous measures that had elements of sustainability:** Scaling up was achieved by expanding the Community Lifestyle Program, which had been operational since 2016, to include agriculture; and the EU – North Pacific Readiness for El Niño project which had expanded the Community Lifestyle Program to Ailuk Atoll.
- Link to national priorities:** The project was linked to the 2012 National Climate Change and Health Action Plan (NCCHAP), Strategic Development Plan Framework (2003-2018), Climate Change Policy Framework 2011, RMI Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation & Disaster Risk Management 2014-2018 and National Gender Mainstreaming Policy with a Policy Strategic Plan of Action (2015-2019).
- Socio-economic benefits for communities and the most vulnerable groups:** The project adopted a people centred approach and prioritised the needs of the most vulnerable groups, including those with non-communicable diseases and children with special needs.
- Maintenance of the newly scaled up measures:** The new greenhouse in Jaluit Atoll will be maintained by the community and the recipients of the home gardens are responsible for their maintenance.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN MARSHALL ISLANDS



The project conducted regular health checks and expanded the availability of food crops in selected communities in the Marshall Islands.

Key Project Highlights

Enhancing food security

- Conducting community consultations and agricultural needs assessments to design agricultural measures in Jaluit and in Majuro Atolls.
- Increasing the availability of food crops by expanding community nurseries and establishing 147 home gardens and providing the community with agricultural tools and equipment.
- Replacing senile food bearing trees including breadfruit, banana and coconut trees and introducing new trees and crops.
- Training in compost making, pest control, planting, and plant care; and supplying seeds and seedlings.
- Training in preparation and cooking of local climate and climate resilient crops as well as in food preservation techniques.
- Establishing a greenhouse in Jaluit Atoll and building capacity of men, women and youth in the selection and transplanting of seedlings, preparation of compost, improvement of soil, planting procedures, seedling care and handling.

Promoting health and wellness

- Establishing new exercise/walking clubs in Jaluit and Majuro, identifying local champions and providing incentives to encourage community participation.
- Building health worker capacity to conduct regular health checks and provision of health screening equipment.
- Motivating youth through high school sports competitions; and holding village cleanliness competitions.

- Conducting targeted wellness and exercise activities for men, recognising from past projects a reluctance by some men to join exercise groups.
- Supporting annual climate change and health awareness week activities for youth.

Strategic planning

- Preparation of the NCCHP v2 and particularly the Action Plan provided a schedule of targeted and costed activities for a 5-year period and the agency responsible for implementation.
- Publication of Lifestyle changes and climate resilience in RMI and a video on Healthy lifestyles in a changing climate.
- Compiling health check data to analyse the impact (if any) of changing lifestyles.
- Supporting the external evaluation of the GCCA+ SUPA Lifestyle Changes and Climate Resilience project.

Activities meet the following SDGs:



About the GCCA+ SUPA project

The Global Climate Change Alliance Plus Scaling up Pacific Adaptation (GCCA+ SUPA) project is about scaling up climate change adaptation measures in specific sectors supported by knowledge management and capacity building. The 4.5 -year project (2019- June 2023) is funded with €14.89 million from the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC) in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and The University of the South Pacific (USP), in collaboration with the governments and peoples of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu.

The **Overall Objective** of the GCCA+ SUPA project is to enhance climate change adaptation and resilience within ten Pacific island countries.

The **Specific Objective** is to strengthen the implementation of sector-based, but integrated, climate change and disaster risk management strategies and plans.