The site was selected in coordination with the Climate Change Directorate, the RMI government body in charge of addressing climate change. Including the perspective of communities displaced by nuclear testing has been a decisive element in the selection criteria. An effort was made to avoid consultation fatigue and duplicate information already collected through recent consultation processes by selecting communities that have not been engaged recently. The selected communities are hard to reach, as they cannot rely on airports, docks, regular flights and boat schedules.

**Location**

Mejatto Island, part of Kwajalein Atoll, has a population of 352 who are community members displaced from Rongelap Atoll. On 1 March 1954, the United States detonated the hydrogen bomb Bravo on Bikini. Fallout from Bravo reached the nearby atoll of Rongelap where the community members were living. Suffering from acute radiation syndrome, the people of Rongelap were evacuated to Kwajalein Atoll before settling on Mejatto in 1985.

**Consultation process**

After inclusive consultation sessions with members of the Mejatto Community, the idea of the vertical aeroponic gardens was endorsed. Being a displaced community hoping to return to its homeland, the initiative was welcomed not only to improve food security, but also in consideration of its easy portability if the opportunity to return home ever arises.

**Solar-run vertical aeroponic towers**

**Pilot Project description**

Implemented on Mejatto’s communal garden land, the climate-smart agriculture technologies will allow the community to grow short-term crops using solar-run vertical aeroponic gardens. Aeroponic gardens have proven to increase crop yields while mitigating against the climate risks associated with soil-based farming, such as erratic rainfall and salt-water inundation during climate-related disasters.

The advantage of the solar energy component is critical not only because renewable energy is the only source of energy on Mejatto but also because the women of the community have previously been trained in basic solar engineering skills.

**Criteria**

- The site was selected in coordination with the Climate Change Directorate, the RMI government body in charge of addressing climate change.
- Including the perspective of communities displaced by nuclear testing has been a decisive element in the selection criteria.
- An effort was made to avoid consultation fatigue and duplicate information already collected through recent consultation processes by selecting communities that have not been engaged recently.
- The selected communities are hard to reach, as they cannot rely on airports, docks, regular flights and boat schedules.
Ensuring a climate-secure future

Mejatto island, located on the northern tip of Kwajalein Atoll, faces annual dry seasons, frequent drought and consequent threats to the food and water security of its people. The Mejatto community, through the Women’s group Leddik Ro Ion Ro, has for several years actively been engaged in community-led activities to ensure a sustainable future for its people. In addition to the physical intervention of the solar-run vertical aeroponic towers, Mejatto community will participate in Social and Emotional Learning sessions specifically designed to provide tools to community members to identify potential conflict related to climate change impacts. The initiative aims at supporting committed local groups, which can collaborate to establish community development strategies and enhance resilience to climate change and security.

The initiative, easily replicable in more island communities, will prove that different needs can be addressed through a climate smart agriculture approach, which is economically viable and environmentally friendly.

The produced agriculture products will not only improve food security, but also prevent conflicts within the community linked to the scarcity of food due to the adverse impacts of climate change, such as erratic rainfalls and saltwater intrusion.

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