

Sharing knowledge and experience to end violence against women

Republic Of The Marshall Islands Ending Violence Against Women

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Daniya Note from WUTMI with Case Worker Sarah Riordan from the Domestic Violence Action Centre. Photo: WUTMI

Study tours are an effective way for people from countries with similar contexts to expand their knowledge on development issues. Funded under the Australian aid program's [Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development](#) initiative, the staff from Women United Together in Marshall Islands (WUTMI) travelled to Hawaii to share experiences and ideas with Hawaiian counterparts on approaches to ending violence against women.

The study tour focused on services, programs and tools used in Hawaii. It was an opportunity for WUTMI staff to hear how service providers in Hawaii operate and to consider if those approaches could be adapted to their work in RMI.

Tanya Terry is a caseworker at WUTMI and participated in the study tour. She says there were many approaches used in Hawaii that she could see benefitting clients in RMI.

‘The safety planning policy, I really like that. It must be done with every survivor each and every time you speak with her. They have guidelines they have to follow. We are not doing the safety policy yet, but it is part of the thing we are thinking of doing. I think it will be important for our clients here.’

Highlights of the study tour were a half day training on safety planning provided by the Domestic Violence Action Centre, a court visit with the Domestic Violence Action Centre court support worker and a site visit to the Ohia Domestic Violence Shelter operated by Parents and Children Together Hawaii. There were also opportunities to exchange with representatives from the Oahu Family Peace Center, the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii and the Keiki O Ka ‘Āina Family Learning Centers’ Healthy Marriages Program. Both Marshallese and Hawaiian participants appreciated the chance to build relationships with each other.

The group also had the opportunity to conduct community education workshops with the Marshallese community living in Hawaii. WUTMI staff agree there is value in continuing their partnership with the Hawaiian services for survivors of violence, including helping the expatriate Marshall Islanders know where they can go for help in Honolulu.

Back home, changes have already started to take place at WUTMI as a result of the study tour. Staff now greet clients to the service in a comfortable and welcoming client room. The after-hours emergency packages now include a welcome note with a quote about being a survivor. These actions are signs of bigger changes still to come.

** This Story of Change was originally published in the [Pacific Women Annual Progress Report 2016 – 2017](#). All values are consistent with that reporting period. For the most up-to-date value of activities, visit our [interactive map](#).*