**REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS FOOD SECURITY PROFILE**

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

- **Population (2020):** 54,590
- **75% Urban population**
- **Other rural:** 18%
- **Ebon:** 2%
- **Aur:** 3%
- **Arno:** 2%
- **Majuro:** 56%
- **Kwajalein:** 19%

**Life expectancy**

- **71.2**
- **75.7**

**Crude birth rate:** 24.4 (2017)

**Under 5-years-old mortality rate:** 31.0 per 1,000 live births (2019)

**Increased access of households to basic drinking water service**

- **2001:** 76.9%
- **2017:** 88.5%

**83.5% of households are using at least basic sanitation services (2017)**

**ACCESS TO ENOUGH FOOD IN QUANTITY AND QUALITY REMAINS AN ISSUE IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

- **Around 5% of people are undernourished**
- **7.2% of people are living below the basic needs poverty line**
- **1 in 3 households experience moderate or severe levels of food insecurity**

Source: The Pacific Community (SPC) for population, EPPSO 2017 statistical yearbook for life expectancy and crude birth rate, UNICEF for under five mortality rate, HIES 2019/20 for population structure, poverty estimate, prevalence of undernourishment and percentage of moderate or severe food insecure households, FAOSTAT 2020 for access to safe source of drinking water and sanitation.
CHILD MALNUTRITION AND ADULT OBESITY ARE THE MAIN ISSUES IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Children under 5-years-old (2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WASTING (Low weight for height)</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUNTING (Low height for age)</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERWEIGHT (Low weight for age)</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Integrated child health and nutrition survey 2017. RMI 2017/18 Hybrid survey for prevalence of obesity

ANALYSIS OF FOOD CONSUMPTION PATTERNS IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Average national dietary energy consumption is around 2 860 kcal/capita/day with important disparities within the population

- Lowest expenditure tercile: 2 200 kcal/capita/day
- Second expenditure tercile: 3 060 kcal/capita/day
- Third expenditure tercile: 4 200 kcal/capita/day

Average cost to acquire 1 000 kcal
- A Marshallese spends on average USD 1.9 to acquire 1 000 kcal
  - Lowest tercile: USD 1.4
  - Second tercile: USD 1.8
  - Third tercile: USD 2.5

The wealthier the household, the more expensive the calories consumed

Food consumed away from home alone brings more than 400 kcal/capita/day

- Fish and fruits contribute to 57% of the dietary energy from own production
- Cereals contribute to 56% of the dietary energy purchased
- 56% of dietary energy consumed away from home is coming from lunch

Around one kcal in two consumed in rural areas is own produced or received for free (%)

- Urban: 75%
- Rural: 43%

1 Based on the analysis of the food data collected in the 2019/20 RMI Household Income and Expenditure survey. The analysis was performed by FAO and SPC in collaboration with EPPSO. SPC was funded by the Australian Government through Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research projects FIS/2016/300 and FIS/2018/155.
2 Statistics refer to apparent consumption and are based on food quantities (edible amounts) available for consumption by the household, not on actual intake of the individuals.
Inadequate consumption of fruits and vegetables

**CONSUMED IN MARSHALL ISLANDS**

146 grams per capita per day

**RECOMMENDED BY WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION FOR A HEALTHY DIET**

400 grams per capita per day

**FOODS TO LIMIT OR AVOID CONTRIBUTE TO MORE THAN**

60% OF THE DIETARY ENERGY CONSUMED

1 Edible quantity
Nutritional adequacy

Diet rich in vitamin B12 and poor in calcium

Vitamin A (RE) 106
Vitamin B1 124
Vitamin B2 117
Vitamin B12 345
Vitamin C 125
Calcium 45

Some of the most consumed foods

White rice is the most consumed food in urban and rural areas, but there are disparities between areas in accessing some food products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White rice</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noodles</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg, chicken, fresh</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch away from home</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish, canned in oil</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw sugar</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cola flavour soft drink eg. Coca cola</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna, not further specified</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana, common e.g. cavendish</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breadfruit</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish, reef</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nutritional adequacy

Diet rich in vitamin B12 and poor in calcium

49% of the protein consumed is from animal origin

Less than one household in three has access to a balanced diet

30% Edible quantity

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