

THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

COUNTRY FACTSHEET: SEPTEMBER 2025

Factsheet on the situation of children in the Marshall Islands

Data Brief: September 2025

This country factsheet provides a snapshot of the situation of children, adolescents, and youth in the Marshall Islands focusing on UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific regional accelerators.

The factsheet gives an overview of the most recent child-related statistics, drawing on internationally comparable indicators available through global databases. Indicators have been chosen based on the availability of historical data and geographic coverage, with priority to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators.

Highlights

The Marshall Islands is an upper-middle income economy. Economic growth declined by 4.0% in 2023 before rebounding by 3.0% in 2024. The economy is forecasted to continue growing by 3.0% in 2025.

Children represent 42% of the projected 36,300 population in 2025. Children between the ages of 0 to 4 years represent 10% of the population.

There are opportunities to improve general maternal and child health through more antenatal and postnatal care visits.

Vaccination with two doses against Measles is low at 61%. Vaccination for DTP is 85%.

The country has one the highest rates of under-5 underweight (12%) and stunting (30%) in the Pacific. About one in every third child suffers from stunting.

School net attendance is high at 95% in both primary and secondary education, but children from poorer households are less likely to attend. In 2021, only 40% of Grade 5 students met minimum reading standards

The factsheet contains six sections:

- 1) Demographic and Economic Overview
- 2) Primary Health Care
- 3) Adolescent girls' and boys' skills, learning, and employability
- 4) Violence against children
- 5) National Social Protection Systems
- 6) Water, disaster, and climate vulnerability

and 58% met numeracy benchmarks, with comparable patterns at Grade 7 (51% reading; 57% numeracy).

About 26% of women (1 in 4) between the ages of 20 to 24 were married before they turned 18 years old. This is one of the highest in the Pacific and above the global prevalence rate of 21%.

There is insufficient information and statistics concerning public expenditure on social services including education and social protection. However public spending on Health is 7% of total national budget.

Around 25% of the population is covered by at least one social protection benefit. While specific coverage of children is essentially absent.

Further progress to improve access to drinking water (67%), basic sanitation (78%), and hygiene services (70%), in schools would be beneficial.

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Children in the Marshall Islands

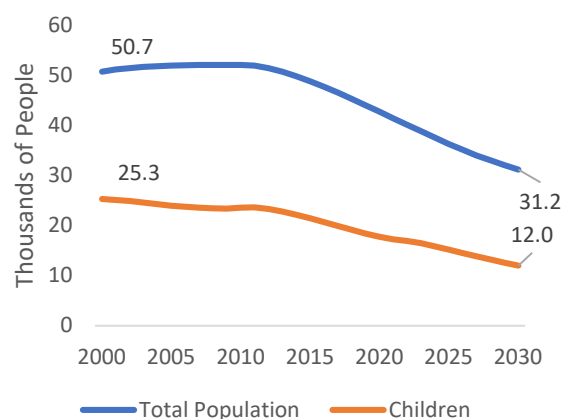


Demographic and Economic Overview

Demography¹

	Value	Year
Total Population (in thousands)	36.3	2025
% of Total population		
Children 0-4	10	2025
Children 0-17	42	2025
Children and Adolescents 0-19	47	2025
Number of births (in thousands)	0.7	2025
Population growth rate (% annual change)	-3.5	2025
Urban population (%)	79	2024
Rural population (%)	21	2024

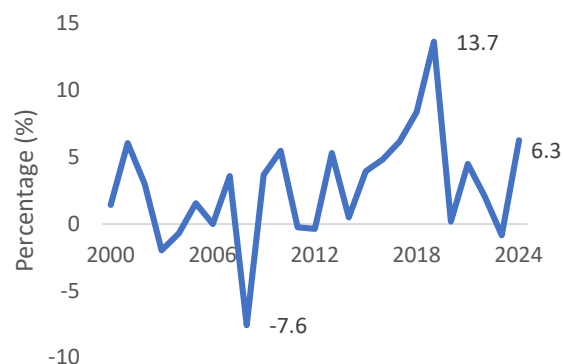
Population Trends and Projections (2000-2030)



Economy²

	Value	Year
Classification of the economy by income	Upper-Middle-Income Economy	2025
GDP per capita nominal (in USD)	7,466.7	2024
Inflation (%)	5.7	2024

GDP Per Capita Growth (2000-2024)



Children in the Marshall Islands

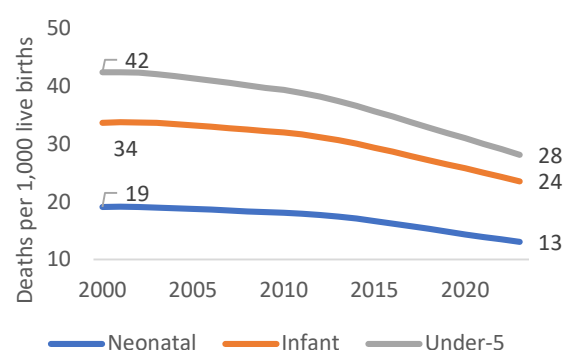


Primary Health Care and Nutrition

Mortality³

	Value	Year
Mortality rates (per 1,000 live births)		
Neonatal	13	2023
Infant	24	2023
Under-5	28	2023
Under-5 deaths		
	25	2023
Crude suicide rate per 100,000 population, among adolescents 15-s19 years		
Total	Data Not Available	
Female	Data Not Available	
Male	Data Not Available	

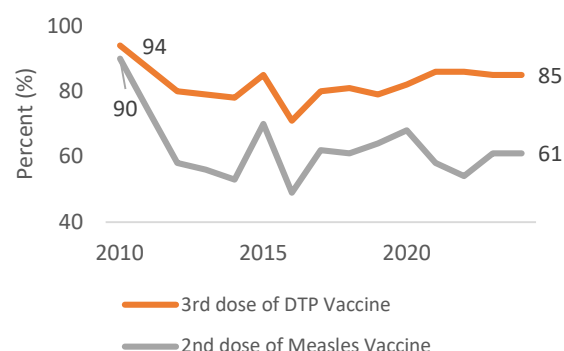
Trends in Mortality Rates



Maternal and Child Health⁴

	Value	Year
% of Women (15-49 years with a live birth in the last 2 years)		
(4+) Antenatal care visits	77	2007
Skilled attendant at birth	92	2017
Deliveries in health facilities	85	2007
% of Children (0-2 years)		
received 3 doses of DTP vaccine	85	2024
Received 2 doses of measles vaccine	61	2024

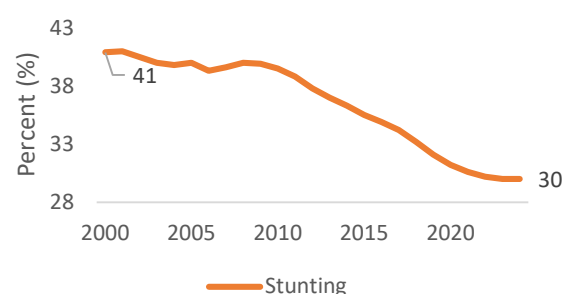
Trends in Immunization, by Vaccine



Nutrition⁴

	Value	Year
% of Children (under 5 years)		
Stunting	30	2024
Wasting	4	2017
Underweight	12	2017
Overweight	5	2024
Minimum dietary diversity (6-23 months)		
	34	2017
Exclusive Breastfeeding (first 6 months)		
	43	2017

Trends in Nutrition



Children in the Marshall Islands

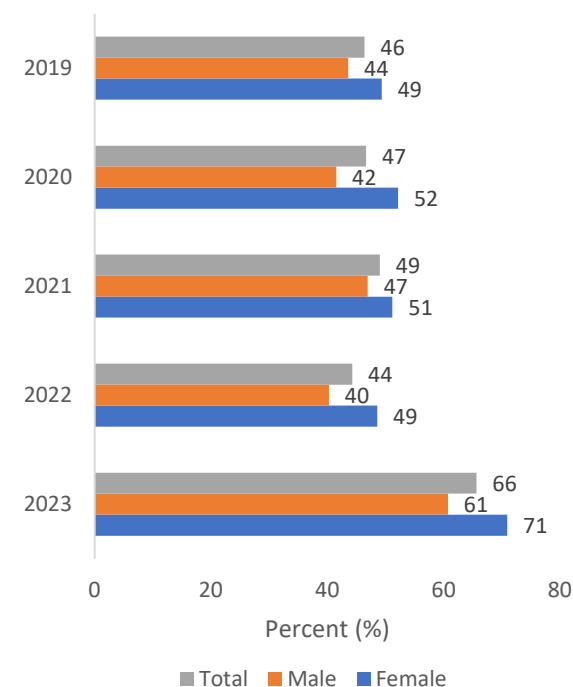


Learning, Skills, and Employability

Learning⁵

	Value	Year
School net attendance (% of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Pre-Primary	Data Not Available	
Primary	95	2021
Secondary	95	2021
School completion (% of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Primary	100	2023
Lower Secondary	99	2023
Upper Secondary	66	2023
Out-of-school children (number of children of the relevant age groups for the education level)		
Pre-Primary (ECE)	915	2023
Primary	390	2023
Secondary	1,763	2023
Educational Attainment (% of students who are meeting the minimum expected standard)		
Grade 5 Numeracy	58	2021
Grade 5 Reading	40	2021
Grade 7 Numeracy	57	2021
Grade 7 Reading	51	2021

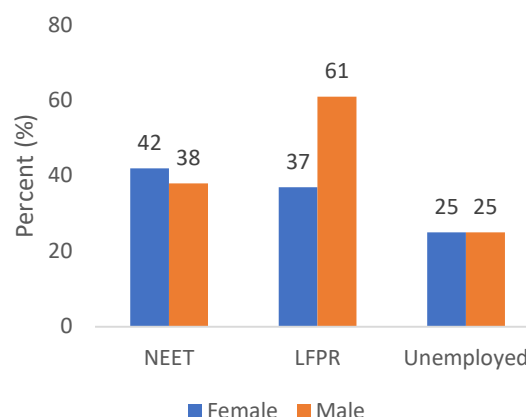
Upper Secondary School Completion Rates



Employment, Education and Training⁶

	Value	Year
Not in education, employment, or training (NEET) (15-19 years)		
	40	2021
Female	42	2021
Male	38	2021
Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) (15+)		
	50	2021
Female	37	2021
Male	61	2021
Youth Unemployment rate (15-24 years)		
	25	2021
Female	25	2021
Male	25	2021

NEET, LFPR, and Youth Unemployment



Children in the Marshall Islands



Violence Against Children

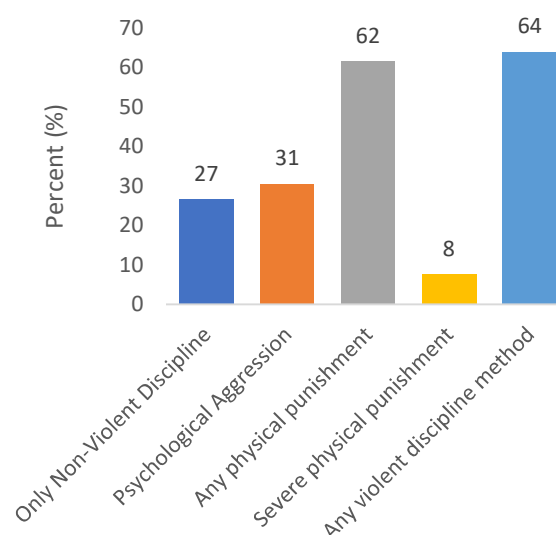
Violence⁷

	Value	Year
Violent child discipline (% of Children aged 1-4)		
Any form of violent discipline	64	2017
Female	64	2017
Male	64	2017

Child marriage (% of women and men aged 20-24)		
Women –		
Married before 18	26	2007
Married before 15	6	2007
Men –		
Married before 18	12	2007

Child labour (% of Children aged 5-14)		
Total	Data Not Available	
Female	Data Not Available	
Male	Data Not Available	

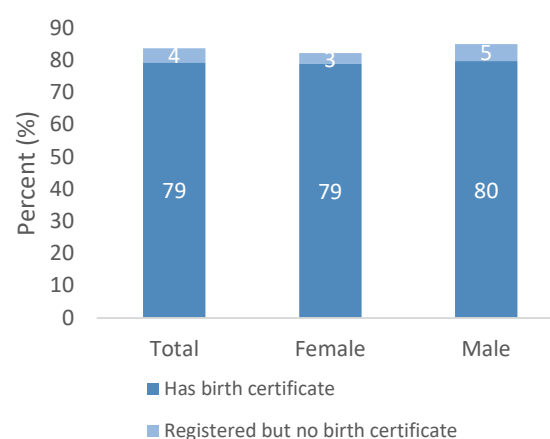
Child Discipline



Birth Registration⁷

	Value	Year
Birth registration (% of Children under 5 years)		
Total	84	2021
Female	82	2021
Male	85	2021

Birth Registration by Gender



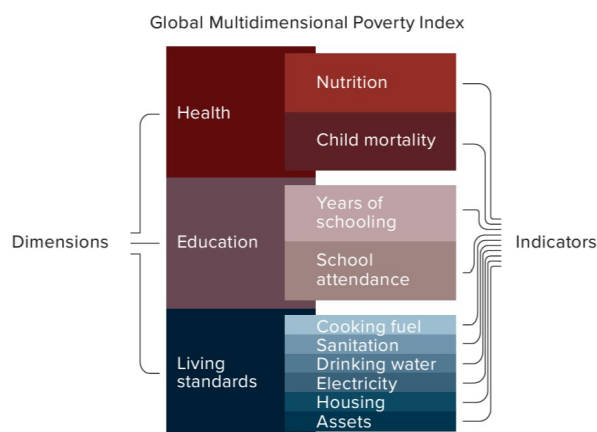
Children in the Marshall Islands



Social Protection Systems

Poverty⁸

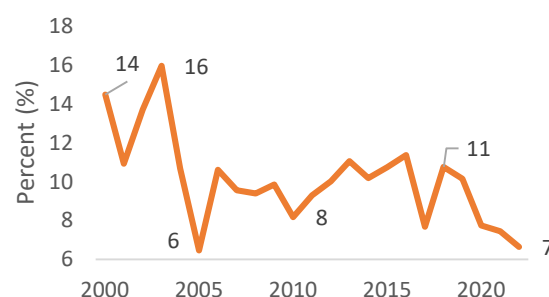
	Value	Year
Monetary Poverty		
International extreme poverty line \$3.00/day	2.1	2019
National Poverty Rate		
	7.2	2019
Global Multidimensional Poverty Index		
	Data Not Available	
Population in multidimensional poverty (%)	Data Not Available	



Public Expenditure on Essential Services⁹

	Value	Year
Public Expenditure as % of GDP		
Education	Data Not Available	
Health	4	2022
Social Protection	Data Not Available	

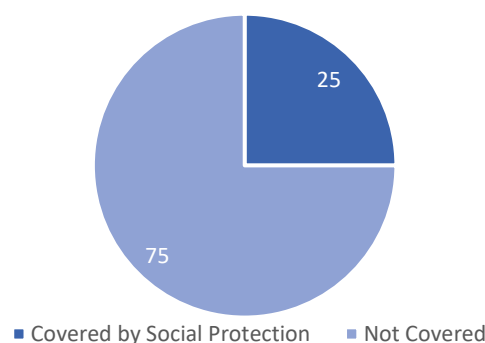
Health as Percent of Expenditure



Social Protection Coverage⁹

	Value	Year
% Coverage		
Population covered by at least one benefit (A)	25	2020
Proportion of children covered by social protection (B)	0	2023
Mothers with newborns receiving cash benefit (C)	Data Not Available	
Children/HHs receiving Child/Family cash benefits (D)	0	2022
Proportion of Poor Population receiving Social Assistance Cash Benefit (E)	Data Not Available	
Persons with severe disabilities receiving benefits (F)	Data Not Available	

Population Covered by Social Protection (%)



Children in the Marshall Islands

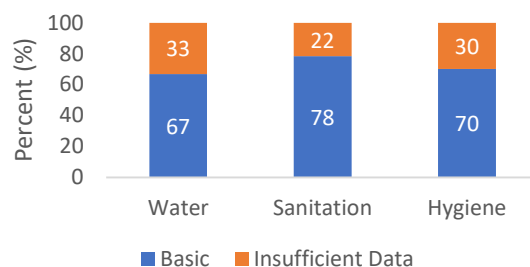


Water Security and Climate

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene¹⁰

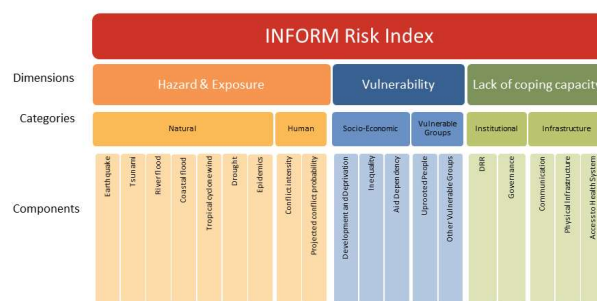
	Value	Year
Household Coverage (%)		
Basic drinking water	87	2024
Basic sanitation	79	2024
Basic hygiene	85	2015
School Coverage (%)		
Basic drinking water	67	2023
Basic sanitation	78	2023
Basic hygiene	70	2023

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene School Coverage



Disaster and Climate Vulnerability¹¹

	Value	Year
INFORM Risk Index*		
Risk Class	Medium	2025
Country Rank	75 th	2025
Children's Climate Risk Index (CCRI)**	Data Not Available	



Child-sensitive climate policies

- 1) 2050 Climate Strategy: Lighting the Way
- 2) National Climate Change and Health Policy and Revised Action Plan 2022
- 3) Republic of the Marshall Islands National Climate Change Policy Framework 2011

*The INFORM Risk Index identifies countries that are at a high risk of humanitarian crisis and therefore more likely to require international assistance. Released in 2024. **The CCRI ranks countries based on children's exposure to climate and environmental shocks.

Data Sources

- 1 Demography Data: UN Population Div, World Bank Data 2025
- 2 Economic Data: ADB Outlook September 2025, World Bank Data, and Brief 2025
- 3 Mortality Data: UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, and WHO Data 2025
- 4 Maternal, Child Health, & Nutrition Data: UNICEF Data 2025
- 5 Learning/ Education Data: Ministry of Education, Public School System (Marshall Islands) - Education Statistics 2023
- 6 Employment Data: ILO Country Profile for Marshall Islands, and World Bank Data 2025

- 7 VAC Data: Marshall Islands Integrated Child Health and Nutrition Survey 2017 Report, and UNICEF Data 2025
- 8 Poverty Data: UNDP Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, World Bank Data, and ADB Data 2025
- 9 Essential Services and Social Protection Coverage Data: World Bank, ADB Key Indicators, and UNICEF Data 2025
- 10 Water, and Sanitation Data: WHO/UNICEF JMP Data 2025
- 11 Climate Vulnerability: Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC), UNICEF Data, and National Sources 2025

For more information please visit

UNICEF data (data.unicef.org) or contact:

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