

Social and economic baseline survey:
Jenrok Village, Majuro
[Republic of Marshall Islands]

By Ben Chutaro

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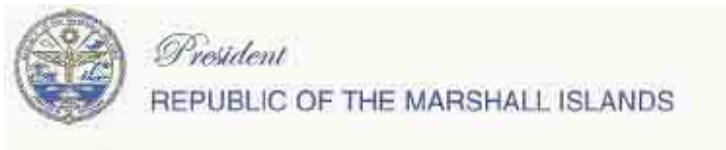
Ph: (685) 21929 Fax: (685) 20231

Email: sprep@sprep.org.ws

Website: www.sprep.org.ws/iwp

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Foreword

Achieving the objectives of our own sustainable development is one of the greatest challenges facing our Islands today. In pursuit of our own sustainable development, our Government continuously seeks to take responsibility in managing the environment and the social welfare of our people and find solutions to identified problems. Yet, to be able to better serve our people, we need to better understand the root causes of hardships in our Islands.

With this in mind, the recently completed Socio-economic Report of Jenrok is the first survey-study detailing the root causes of poverty, waste management issues, governance and social difficulties in a community in the Marshall Islands. The report is based on a 100% households surveyed rather than sample surveyed households which makes the findings all the more crucial. The Government considers these findings of vital importance to assisting our Islands address these root causes of hardships.

I am pleased that the current report will also be used as guide to undergo a similar survey in the wider context in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) in the near future to help our Government identify and deal with hardships in our communities.

To this end, I would like to thank all those involved in the preparation of the report, including the Author for his good work, our government and NGO partners, and regional and international partners - namely the International Waters Project (IWP) for the financial as well as planning support provided. Special thanks to the people of Jenrok for the opportunity they gave to carry out the necessary work. Their cooperation, and support with the socio-economic survey activities and their kind assistance have given the Government a way to identifying problems and finding solutions to hardships in our Islands.

Our Government is committed to addressing the priorities of our people as stipulated in our Vision 2018 and will continue to do so. Therefore, I would like to present this document as one of the major steps the RMI undertakes to assist its people address a way forward to an improved life, both social and environmental.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kessai H. Note", is written over a light yellow background. Below the signature, the text "H.E. Kessai H. Note" and "President" is printed in a small, black, sans-serif font.

H.E. Kessai H. Note
President



Remarks from the Director

Iokwe! As a brief background, the Socio-Economic Study for RMI was commissioned through IWP. IWP is a 6 year Project focusing on waste reduction, promoting community based activities by addressing sustainable development issues of a community. Pilot projects based on these activities were implemented by 14 Pacific Islands and Territories (PICTs) in the region, including the RMI. The pilot site for the Project is based at Jenrok Village.

The IWP was originally being implemented nationally through the RMI Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and later transferred to the Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination (OEPPC) mid April 2004. Through the IWP, the Socio- Economic Study was commissioned through its predecessor and continued onwards until its recent completion under the direction of OEPPC. The Socio-Economic Report could not have been done without the support and participation of partners, both nationally and regionally.

Therefore, I would like to thank all those who assisted and took part in the Socioeconomic survey; especially the people of Jenrok for their kind cooperation and active participation in helping the survey team gather crucial information to compile this report. Special thanks also to the survey team and Government partners who took the time and effort to assist with research and interviews. Much appreciation and thanks to B.C.I for the great work in not only leading the work of the Socioeconomic study, but the cooperation and respect received by OEPPC through active consultation with our Office including the timely production of the final Report. Special thanks to the Minister in Assistance to the President and the Cabinet of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the opportunity to present to them the findings of the report. With great respect, I thank the President of the Republic for the final endorsement of this Report.

Finally, I would like to recognize the IWP National Task Force/RMI for the continuous support and effective consultation of project objectives.



Kupijol tata

Ms. Yumi Crisostomo, MLS
Director for OEPPC

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This survey involved a series of consultations from various service providers, namely the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Environment Protection Authority, Youth to Youth in Health (NGO), and Women United Together in the Marshall Islands (NGO). Also involved was a series of consultations with the Office of the President namely the Economic Planning, Policy and Statistics Office (EPPSO) and the Office of Environment Planning & Policy Coordination (OEPPC). EPPSO provided many hours of advice and logistical support. EPPSO allowed me to use their equipment, supplies and staff. I could not have done this survey without the help of many people, especially the Jenrok Survey Team. I am honored to have worked with these fine people who have exhibited a great degree of professionalism and dedication and have shown great interest in doing the right thing for the people of Jenrok Village. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the following people:

Jenrok Survey Team

1. Carolyn Neamon – EPPSO
2. Hemline Ysawa – EPPSO
3. Ester Jekkein - OEPPC
4. Mineko Melon – Ministry of Health, Jenrok Nurse
5. Marin Lang – Ministry of Health, Jenrok Nurse
6. Omita Jorlang – Youth to Youth in Health, Health Services Coordinator
7. Lanus Maun, - Youth to Youth in Health, Peer Educator
8. Yumi Lakjohn – Youth to Youth in Health, Peer Educator
9. Agnes Jebke – WUTMI, Counselor
10. Suzanne Murphy – Marshall Islands Journal, Journalist/Photographer

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3. Yumi Chrisotomo – Director OEPPC
4. John Bungatik – Director EPA
5. Debora Barker – Biodiversity Officer EPA
6. Abraham Hicking – Water Quality EPA
7. Terry Lani, EPA/IWP National Coordinator
8. Emi Chutaro – Ministry of Education/Volunteer Youth to Youth in Health
9. Marie Maddision – WUTMI
10. Jojo Mellan – EPPSO

And a very special thanks to the community of Jenrok for contributing their time and knowledge to the survey team. Without their inputs, this survey would not have been possible.

Ben Chutaro

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CMI	College of the Marshall Islands
CPH	Census Population and Households
CWCC	Community Waste Coordinating Committee
D.U.D.	Darit, Uliga and Delap Villages
EPA	Environmental Protection Authority
EPPSO	Economic Policy, Planning and Statistics Office
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GRMI	Government of the Marshall Islands
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
IWP	International Waters Program
MALGOV	Majuro Atoll Local Government
MEC	Marshalls Energy Company
MIVA	Marshall Islands Visitors Authority
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MWSC	Majuro Water & Sewer Company
NGO	Non-government Organization
NTF	National Task Force
OEPPC	Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
SOE	State Owned Enterprises
SPREP	South Pacific Environmental Program
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States (America)
WHO	World Health Organization
WUTMI Y	Women United Together in the Marshall Islands
YYIH	Youth to Youth in Health

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Profile of Jenrok Village

Jenrok Village is part of Darit, Uliga and Delap (D.U.D.) district of Majuro Atoll, the capital of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). Jenrok is located between Rita and Delap Villages. The total land area of Jenrok Village is .0251 square miles with residential homes occupying 95% of the land.

There are 5 separate *weto's* or land parcels, which are owned by four separate traditional landowners or *Alaps* who directly report to one *Iroij* (Chief). A councilman also represents the Jenrok on Majuro Atoll Local Government Council who is elected every 4 year.

There are a total of 215 households identified in Jenrok. The survey team was able to survey 195 households which accounts for a total of 90%. The average household size is 9.47 people.

1.2 Population and Migration

It appears that Jenrok has the highest population density in the RMI: 87,952 persons per square mile. The estimated population of Jenrok Village is 1,847 persons with a very young population profile. 65% of this youthful population under the age of 25. Jenrok represents 8% of Majuro's total population and 3% of the total population in the RMI.

81% of Jenrok's population comes from mostly Mili and Arno atolls. Also during the 12 months of 2003, 190 people migrated to the United States under the free immigration provisions of the US/RMI Compact Agreement.

1.3 House Structures and Amenities

Most of the homes are built with imported timber and concrete with roofs made out of corrugated tin. Most of the homes are of basic design with an average 2.2 rooms. Majority of the homes surveyed appeared to be in very poor condition. About half the households have common household appliances, such as fans, refrigerators, kerosene stoves and radios, but it is not indicative of affluence. Many still continue to cook outdoors using fire pits and wash clothes in basins.

Many of the homes are not hooked up to public utilities: electricity, water, sewer and telephone. Jenrok has the lowest coverage as percentage of subscribers to public utilities on all of Majuro Atoll.

There are only 121 households with 56% are hooked up to electricity. Of that 56%, about two-thirds of the households are 90 days behind on their bill payment. Although, the coverage is very low, many of the households without electricity often tap their neighbor's electrical meter for power.

Water coverage is even lower. Less than half of the households are hooked up to the city water. About two-thirds of the households are 90 days behind on their bills. Therefore there is a heavy

reliance on well and water caught from rain using the roof to catch the rainwater. About 59% of the homes have some form of water storage tank ranging in size, but the average size of the tank is 750 gallons. Also it is not uncommon to see 55-gallon fuel drums being used for water storage.

About 75% of the households have toilets, but 67% are connected to underground septic system, which are not design to be drained but rather the waste seeps into the ground table. Only 5 households in the survey were hooked up to the city sewer system.

1.4 Economic Well-being

There is evidence to support that most families in Jenrok cannot meet their daily basic needs. The increased demands of large households have put considerable stress on those working. The number of persons per households could swell to 20 persons at any given time and especially during the summer months when inter island travel is high ¹. The average number of persons working per household is 1.8 persons. The survey showed an average wage of \$2.57 an hour. The current minimum wage allowed by law is \$2.00 an hour.

To help pay for their basic needs and other obligations, many families are increasingly taking out loans.² About 53% of the households in Jenrok have a loan or credit account with one of the stores or banks on Majuro. 65% pay their credit accounts or loans by using the allotment system.³

Debt to Income ratios in Jenrok is estimated to be around 38%. The average monthly debt repayment per household is \$315.00. The number of loan defaults from Jenrok residents as reported by the Bank of Marshall Islands is one of the highest in the RMI.

The unemployment rate is estimated to be at 47% (national average 31.1% ⁴). Unemployment is particularly high, especially among males between 20-35. Unemployment among youth is staggeringly high at 79%.

The creation of jobs would help improve economic well-being of the people of Jenrok, but the future job market looks bleak. Nearly three quarters of the 50 companies surveyed in the capital have no plans for new hires. Many of the companies doubt the new Compact will improve the economy in the long-term.

The survey showed that women are now the breadwinners for many of the households in Jenrok. Approximately 64% of the Jenrok workforce is comprised of women. Most women work in the fish processing plants and food service industry earning mostly minimum wages.

¹ Many households play host to their outer island families throughout the year

² Loans taken out with Bank of Marshall Islands and Bank of Guam pay on average 18-21% APR and amortized for no more than two years. Average loans taken is \$3,500.00

³ Allotment system started with the government in the late 1980's as a way to guarantee payments to creditors from their employees. Now it is a widely accepted system accepted by both government and private employers.

⁴ Based on the 1999 Census

1.5 Quality of Life

People in Jenrok do not have access to clean and drinkable water. About half of the homes are hooked up to city water or less than three percent of the total coverage in Majuro. Therefore many have to rely on community wells and rainwater stored in tanks. All of the wells tested by the RMI Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) were severely contaminated. Due to the lack of membranes at EPA lab to test the quality of water in the storage tanks, tanks were inspected visually. The inspection by the EPA team, although not conclusive, showed the appearance of highly contaminated drinking water in the storage tanks. Lastly, EPA coastal water quality tests revealed that Jenrok Village has the highest E.coli counts on all shorelines of Majuro Atoll.

This high level of contamination might explain the high incidences of water-borne diseases such as typhoid and diarrhoea in Jenrok. Fortunately, there have been no reported cases of cholera. However, Jenrok is at risk for cholera outbreaks, especially since the RMI often experiences frequent droughts.

The lack of properly managed solid waste disposal in Jenrok has led to an unhealthy, dirty and unsightly environment in Jenrok. The Majuro Atoll Local Government (MALGOV) is responsible for the pick of garbage on Majuro Atoll. Often trash is not picked up in a timely and orderly manner and often trash bins overflow with garbage. There are only three bins designated for Jenrok and all are located on the lagoon side of the community making it very difficult for people on the Oceanside to dispose their garbage. The survey revealed that the community feels that there are not enough trash bins in Jenrok.

Due to the infrequency of trash pick up, there is an increased risk of the spread of diseases, especially diseases that can be easily spread by rats. The consultant noticed during the survey a large number of big rats in and around the garbage bins. Most people throw their food scraps into the bins.

Also the overcrowded living conditions in Jenrok have led to unhealthy and unsafe environments. Many complain of the lack of space to extend their homes. Also many complain of the lack of space for recreational facilities such as basketball courts.

1.6 Poor Social Development in Jenrok

Many women in Jenrok are experiencing hardships that are increasingly being more economic in nature, especially since almost 70% of the Jenrok laborforce are now women.

One indication of the hardships women face is the number of adoptions in Jenrok. Jenrok appears to have the highest number of adoptions in the RMI. There were a total of 19 adoptions in 2003 as revealed in the survey. Court documents also revealed that there were a total of 97 legal adoptions in 2003.⁵ Most of the adoptions were to perspective parents from the United States.⁶ However, data on adoptions in the RMI must be viewed with some caution due to the nature of disclosure and reporting. The Central Adoption Agency created in 2003 is an attempt to address this issue. But there is some anecdotal evidence that illegal adoptions still continue and much appears to be coming out of Jenrok.

Compounding these hardships is the deteriorating health and violence experienced by many

women in Jenrok. The survey revealed that they are more women with diabetes than men. Also the survey revealed that many women from Jenrok were involved in some form of domestic violence, including rape and assaults. Also court records show that Jenrok has one of the highest numbers of violence related cases on Majuro.

But the most vulnerable and the most affected by poor social development in Jenrok are children and youth. The survey and interviews clearly show many children and youths are not receiving a proper education. Although not part of the survey, the Jenrok nurses did observe while conducting the household survey that people were suffering from malnutrition, especially young children.⁷ Also the consultant review data collected by the Jenrok nurses over the years revealed that children are suffering from some form of nutrition deficiency.

The survey revealed a high number of young children not attending school. As children grow older, the number not attending school increases exponentially after 8th grade. Students applying for high school must take the high entrance exam with a passing grade of 43%.⁸ Of new applicants from Jenrok that took last month's exam less than a third managed to pass. However, passing the exam does not guarantee you a space at the public high school because there is limited space available. In the case of the Marshall Islands High School, there are only 600 available spaces. The average number of high school applications per year is around 1,600 students. Those who cannot get into public high school apply at the private schools. The Jenrok survey showed only 12 were attending private schools. This suggests that many youths in Jenrok are not attending high school.

The consultant was not able to obtain statistics from the Ministry of Education that would show the number of youths not attending school and therefore unable to cross check the findings of the survey. Therefore, there was a heavy reliance on past documentation on school attendance.

Once in high school, many continue to drop out rates because of poor grades. By the time the freshman class graduates four years later only fifty percent make it to the next level. The consultant spoke to several volunteers from Dartmouth College and World Teach and they say many of their students don't have the basics in math, science and English. The volunteers believe their students are at least four grades behind. Students not performing well in high schools suggest that they are not receiving a proper education in the primary school system, especially public schools.

Also a contributing factor to high drop out rates in high school is the number of teenage pregnancies. The survey revealed that many in Jenrok do not use contraception regularly. Sadly another cause of dropping out of school was suicides and there were 10 incidence of this at the public high school alone in 2003. The survey showed 57 attempted and 20 completed suicide cases. If these figures are correct, then Jenrok has the highest suicide rates in the entire Marshall

⁵ The survey did not ask whether the adoptions were legal. There are reported cases by the new government adoption agency of large number of illegal adoptions in the RMI to US adopting parents.

⁶ The US/RMI Compact provisions allow free access of RMI citizens to the US. Many adopting agencies in the US would pay for the birth mother to come to the US and give birth making it lot less difficult for the adoptive parents to adopt a child that is not from the US.

⁷ The RMI Public Health System employs a system called "Zonal Nurses" because there are no street addresses in all of the islands. Public Health Nurses are assigned a to a certain community or zone. Doctors would alert the nurses of their patients for follow-ups and health problems diagnosed. Nurses in turn alert public health officials of potential health problems in the community.

⁸ Figures represent 2003 & 2002

Islands. The Bureau of Health Planning & Statistics did show an alarming increase of suicides in 2003 of 65% over the previous year. Surprisingly, the bureau did not list any attempted and committed suicides in Jenrok for 2003.

There could be several reasons for this huge discrepancy. One is the method of reporting and coordination between the police and the Ministry of Health. There appears to be no formal reporting mechanisms between the Police and the Ministry of Health, and therefore are not often reported.

The other reason, families in Jenrok do not report the suicide to the authorities. The survey revealed that funerals are a major financial burden on the families in Jenrok. It was discovered that many families in Jenrok will bury their dead that same day or next to avoid the huge expense. There is no incentive to report either. Many of the people in Jenrok that committed suicide often are young and had no prior employment and therefore would not have social security benefits.

National statistics have shown a steady increase in crimes, especially the rise of violent crimes. The surveys revealed almost all of the respondents complained about the frequent fights and that there is nothing for young people to do.

Several members of the survey team are trained counselors and during the course of conducting the household survey, they noticed that many people showed signs of depression and anxiety. This is not surprising given the lack of jobs, crowded living conditions, polluted environments, run down homes, poor access to social services, no recreational facilities and so forth. Alcohol abuse has always been a problem in the Marshall Islands and the problem has dramatically increased in recent years. Jenrok's poor socio-economic situation lends to alcohol abuse, especially by young people. Many in the survey believed alcohol is the main contributing factor to the high crime and suicide incidences. Many want to ban the sale of alcohol in their community and create recreational facilities to keep youths from drinking alcohol. Currently, there are no basketball courts or public recreational facilities in Jenrok.

1.7 Vulnerability Issues

Historically Jenrok has experienced frequent high wave action, especially during winter months when the easterly winds are at its strongest. In November 1979, 80 % of the homes were destroyed by waves. Coastal erosion on the Oceanside of Jenrok is clearly visible. Currently, half of the village cemetery has been completely eroded and now many of the graves are completely exposed.

There are no building codes in the RMI or environmental impact assessments (EIAs) when people build seawalls. The construction of many of the houses in Jenrok would not meet building codes if there were one. Almost all of the homes lack a fire extinguisher and a smoke detecting device. Most of the homes are built too close to one another, which poses a serious fire hazard. In the event of a fire, it would be difficult for a fire truck to reach most of the homes given the close quarters. Also all of the fire hydrants are located on the lagoon side of Jenrok, which would make it extremely difficult to reach homes on the Oceanside. Also all appear inoperable due to excessive rust damage.

1.8 Proposed Dumpsite in Jenrok

Jenrok was identified as the next possible long-term dumpsite for Majuro Atoll. Currently there are several proposals pending, but the Cabinet and the Mayor of Majuro have yet to endorse any of them.

The different government agencies have asked Japan, Taiwan and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to help develop a solid waste plan and to provide funding for new capital equipment. All of the donors have responded to the RMI's request, but all appear to be approaching the request on different tracks and are at the risk of duplicating efforts. However, it will take at least several years for the donors and the government to mobilize a plan of action for organizing the new dumpsite in Jenrok.

1.9 IWP Pilot Project in Jenrok

The IWP pilot project in Jenrok have given people an opportunity to clean up their community and possibly earn some income that could be used towards improving their living conditions.

The proposed dumpsite is a large capital project covering parts of Uliga, all of Jenrok and Utirikan, and parts of the high school. The main reason for the site is to create a barrier against strong waves, create space for homes and public land to build a school and recreational facilities. In order to proceed with this new dumpsite it would require extensive preparation that could take a year or more.

The main implication to the IWP pilot project is if people feel it would be easier to use the new dump than use the collection points. However, it is very unlikely the new dumpsite will have adverse affects to the project. The approach to the new dumpsite is unlike what the government has done in the past, where all types of solid waste was put directly into dump without any type of sorting. Now there is realization that using dumpsites alone is not the best approach to managing solid waste on Majuro. There is simply not enough land or reefs that are suitable for a dumpsite. There is an understanding that in order to extend the life of the dumpsite, it would be necessary to recycle, compost and incinerate waste to decrease what goes into the site. Holding the project is the 10 to 15 million dollars required to build the new site.

However, the main implication of the new dumpsite is the threat of contamination of the water lenses in Jenrok. Other implications for the IWP Pilot Project in Jenrok are the level of community involvement and participation. The recycling pilot program appears to be going through teething problems mainly due to poor execution and low awareness within Jenrok. The survey showed 90% of the community did not use the recycling collection stations.

The consultant recommends the following:

- Get the message out to community more frequently. A recent visit by the IWP Community Communications Specialist working with the IWP National Coordinator called for a long-term awareness program for in Jenrok.
- Increase the number of collection points, especially adding more on the ocean side of Jenrok.

- Improve the design both in presentation and in construction. Most of the collection stations lack a professional appearance. The prints on the boards have completely faded making it difficult for people to read the disposal instructions. The signs should also be in Marshallese for those who do not speak English. Lastly, the materials used for the collections stations cannot withstand the harsh elements in Jenrok. The National Task Force (NTF) & Community Waste Coordinating Committee (CWCC) might consider building the collection points out of concrete.
- Pick up collection appears to be infrequent. This is mainly due to lack of equipment. A truck has been purchased for the project and one of the uses is for collection, but this implies additional cost to the project. A no cost solution would be to involve the private sector in the project. A local company has started collecting aluminum cans in Majuro and is exporting them to Hong Kong for recycling. The manager of the company has offered to collect aluminum cans in Jenrok at no cost to the project.
- Revisit the current incentive system in Jenrok and the role of the CWCC. Jenrok faces many social problems, one of the biggest being rampant alcohol abuse by teens. Nearly 95% in the survey complained about the lack of playgrounds or community programs to address and combat the alcohol problem in Jenrok. Many in the survey suggested constructing playgrounds and a basketball court. Almost all felt it would help reduce social problems in Jenrok. This could be a real good incentive for people and proceeds could go towards this initiative.

1.10 Establishing Monitoring Activities in Jenrok

To monitor the progress of the IWP activities in Jenrok it is necessary to establish a set of indicators. The consultant is currently working with the IWP National Coordinator in developing some of these indicators. A more comprehensive set of indicators should be developed once the Jenrok Solid Waste Stream Analysis is completed.

During the course of conducting the Jenrok Socio-Economic Survey, the consultant ran into numerous difficulties in obtaining basic and key statistics from the various government ministries and agencies. The institutions that could provide the necessary data simply lack the technical capabilities and manpower. For example, MALGOV does not maintain any type of data on solid waste.

Therefore the indicators should be simple and easy to administer by the IWP National Coordinator. The initial set of indicators that were recommended include the following:

- Track the volume of material being collected at the collection points and track the volume of waste being delivered to the landfill and compare and contrast the difference of waste volume in order to gauge progress;
- Track Revenues generated from recycling;
- Develop a simple survey for Jenrok that asks the community a set of straightforward questions on how the project is affecting their lives;
- Collect monthly test results of wells, water, coastal shores of Jenrok from EPA; and
- Collect monthly survey results from the Jenrok Nurses on diseases found in Jenrok, in particular water-borne related diseases and diseases spread by rats.

2 Background

The RMI EPA with the assistance of the IWP commissioned this Socio-Economic Baseline Survey of Jenrok Village. The oversight of the project later transferred to Office of Environmental Planning & Policy Coordination (OEPPC), Office of the President. The purpose of this survey is to assess the viability of low cost/no cost alternatives to solid waste programs that can be implemented at the community level with the aim of minimizing waste streams within the Jenrok community.

2.1 Terms of Reference

2.1.1 Introduction

The IWP is implementing the Strategic Action Program (SAP) for the International Waters of the Pacific Small Islands Developing States. Activities in the Marshall Islands, which is one 14 Pacific Islands countries participating in the Project, is focused on piloting activities to address waste management concerns at the community level. Jenrok community has been selected to host these activities.

One of the first steps in the process of establishing pilot activities for community based waste at Jenrok will be a socio-economic baseline assessment. To achieve this, the following activities are to be carried out under the direction of the Consultant and in close cooperation with OEPPC, IWP national staff, the Solid Waste Group, the CWCC, South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) PCU, and other stakeholders.

2.1.2 Aims and Objectives of the Baseline Phase

The objectives of this phase of the project are:

- to describe the social baseline situation in Jenrok Village;
- to describe the economic baseline situation in Jenrok Village;
- to design a Monitoring Plan for key social and economic indicators for Jenrok Village and;
- to produce a Baseline Report.

The aim of the baseline program includes:

- to review published and unpublished social and economic information for Jenrok Village and/or similar communities on Majuro;
- to profile the social structure and arrangements at the Jenrok Community including a description of the social obligations and systems of governance;
- to profile economic situation at the Jenrok Community by describing the components and relative significance, of economic factors (including income sources and amounts and principle expense items);
- to include a capacity building component into the baseline work to ensure that village volunteers and national staff are capable of conducting future monitoring in relation to social and economic components of the Jenrok Community; and
- draft a simple Monitoring Plan, including identification of permanent indicators; which

over time, may be monitored to demonstrate the impact of the Project at Jenrok. The Monitoring Plan will also make best efforts to describe a role for Jenrok Community members in its execution.

2.1.3 Outputs

Outputs from the baseline activities will be one Baseline Phase Socio-Economic Report that will include the following sections:

- A review of current information on the social and economic factors in communities on Majuro Atoll;
- A profile of the social structure and arrangements at the Jenrok Community;
- An economic profile for the Jenrok Community; and
- A Monitoring Plan for several key social and economic indicators at the Jenrok Community – including a description of possible roles in implementing the Plan.

2.1.4 Schedule of Events

Conducting the socio-economic survey took approximately 34 days to complete starting on January 16th running through to May 4th, 2004. The consultant submitted to the NTF the draft report on May 18th, 2004 for review and comment.

3 The Research Process

3.1 Designing the Survey

In January 2004, the consultant visited the IWP National Coordinator at the RMI EPA to begin the process of developing survey tools for Jenrok. The process involved wide consultation with key stakeholders of Jenrok, namely IWP Jenrok Steering Committee, government ministries, authorities and NGO's to identify the issues and pertinent reports and literature that would assist in designing the surveys for Jenrok.

There are many reports on the Marshall Islands, especially reports from the ADB and the various United Nations (UN) programs. Some of the data are fairly recent and gave a good insight on the socio economic conditions of the RMI. But many were limited in scope, in particular, in reference to the Jenrok community. Additionally, the statistical capabilities, therefore limited data, of the government and some of the more organized non governmental organisations (NGOs) do not necessarily offer the specific answers to the questions sought. The consultant had difficulties obtaining specific statistics from various ministries. Often data was not as forthcoming and timely. Therefore, there was a heavy reliance on interviews, surveys and observations of the conditions of the Jenrok community.

A series of surveys were developed, a household questionnaire, a labor force questionnaire, and a retail price survey. Three supplemental questionnaires were also developed, which focused on women, youth and men from Jenrok, that were conducted in a group setting. Lastly, the consultant also conducted five separate walkthrough of Jenrok.

3.2 Household Questionnaire Survey

This survey was administered with the assistance from the Economic, Planning, Policy, and Statistics Office (EPPSO) under the Office of the President. The number of households identified was 215, but only 195 were surveyed or 90% of the households. The number of households to be

covered was calculated by using satellite imagery of Majuro Atoll focusing on the Jenrok community area.

The survey was based on 100% of the households, which encompasses the five main *wetos* (land parcels) in Jenrok, rather than on a sample of households across the village.

3.3 Defining Households

The definition of household characteristics in Jenrok was not straightforward nor was it clear. Some households were clearly defined as individual households. But often the case was most households were in clusters or groupings. Care was needed to define what was an individual family or separate family unit.

For example, it is not uncommon in Jenrok to have 27 persons per household. They are part of the extended family, which included families of the sons and daughters with their children and the parents. Since land is very limited in Jenrok, often the main house grew to include subsidiary rooms or small dwelling that shared the cost of electricity, water and had common use cooking, bath, toilet, and water storage facilities.

On the other hand, some dwellings shared the same characteristics as the above, but the occupants were clearly from different families. The cluster of dwellings had about 50 people living in them and collectively they shared the cost of electricity, water and had common use cooking, bath, toilets and water storage facilities.

Therefore, it was difficult to design a household definition at the outset, but rather had to adjust the definition when on site to better reflect the household characteristics.

3.4 Supplementary Questionnaires for Women, Youth and Men

Three separate questionnaires were developed and completed by the men, women and the youth of Jenrok through a series of meetings of each group. Questions were asked about social conditions of Jenrok and to what extent each group was affected by those conditions.

3.5 Fact Sheet

The local consultant compiled a fact sheet of the pertinent data required for the survey, especially statistical data from health and education. This information was supplemented by information obtained through the local consultant's own observations on the conditions of Jenrok. The process involved five separate walkthrough of Jenrok through interviews, observation of sites and events and picture taking.

3.6 Selection and Training of Researchers

The local consultant selected surveyors that were either from the Jenrok community or professionals that were regularly performing service delivery in the community. The local consultant selected surveyors from Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI)⁹ Youth

to Youth in Health¹⁰, Jenrok designated nurses from the Ministry of Health, two staff from EPPSO and EPA. All attended a training course at EPPSO on how to carry out the research required. The training was provided by the local consultant and supervised by the EPPSO director, Mr. Carl Hacker. All of the selected surveyors had previous experience in conducting household surveys in the Marshall Islands.

As part of the training, the group reviewed the questionnaires to ensure that everyone knew and agreed on the questions asked and that surveyors had a clear understanding of the questions and how to record the questions. Also, the local consultant conducted several training sessions with people from Jenrok.

3.7 Carrying out the Research

The Jenrok Survey Team conducted their household surveys from March 24 to March 26, 2004. The team was separated into pairs of five groups. The group would then meet once for lunch and once after the end of the day to compare their findings and compare notes as to reduce the likelihood that completed questionnaires would be lost or inaccurately completed and the local consultant to collect the questionnaires and check them for accuracy.

3.8 Data Analysis

In mid April, the local consultant began the process of analyzing the data collected by the Jenrok Survey Team. The figures in the tables and graphs in this report should be treated with some caution. While we can be reasonably confident about the accuracy of the data provided by the ministries and the survey, one should bear in mind that some of the data represents estimates. Therefore in these cases, what is important is the relative order of data responses rather than precise data.

3.9 The Report

The information collected and analyzed provides a picture of the conditions of the Jenrok Community in terms of their socio-economic status as compared to the rest of the country. It provides information on household composition, employment, their income and possessions, status of health and education and the way people dispose of waste.

This information is intended to be use by the IWP of the South Pacific and the RMI as a reference on the conditions of the Jenrok Community as a whole. Since, two of the major NGOs in the Marshall Islands assisted in the survey, the information contained in this report will help them understand and better assist them in identifying women and children at risk in the Jenrok Community.

4 Results

4.1 Population

Table 1 shows the population of Jenrok. The largest portion of the population is under the age of 15 years old and more than 65% is under 25 years old.

Table 1.	<i>Jenrok Population.</i>						
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	0-15	16-25	26-35	36-50	51 plus	Total	Majuro	Outer Is.
Male	317	284	117	125	75	918	-	-
Female	328	288	133	129	51	929	-	-
Total	645	572	250	254	126	1,847	343	1,505
% Total	35%	31%	13%	3%	107%	100%	19%	81%

4.2 Migration

The survey showed there were 190 people who immigrated to the United States in the last 12 months from Jenrok. There continues to be a large influx of outer-island migrants into Jenrok. Majority of the outer islanders living in Jenrok come from Mili and Arno Atolls. The current traditional chief of Jenrok Village is also one of the major traditional chiefs of Mili and Arno Atolls. It is not uncommon for people from Mili and Arno to ask 20 55-gallon fuel drum used as a water tank permission from the chief to live in Jenrok since they might not know anyone else on Majuro. In some aspects, it strengthens the bond of the chief with their constituents in Mili and Arno.

The survey did not look into the number of people that came from the outer islands and for what purpose their visits to their relatives in Jenrok. It would be difficult to quantify. But it is not uncommon for families in Jenrok to host relatives visiting from the outer islands, especially during the summer months when peak travel between the atolls is at its highest. Many of the main churches on Majuro conduct their church activities during the summer months, many from the outer islands come in for these conferences. It is also an opportunity to seek services not readily available in the outer islands.

From anecdotal evidence many of the households in Jenrok often host two to three outer island families at a time. Even some household reported that they would host different outer island families throughout the year.

Although, outer islanders bring in local foods and some cash earned from copra, many do not have the incomes to sustain themselves in the urban centers for any length of time and most often depend on their urban relatives to help support them.

The average household size of the immediate family members based on the Jenrok Household Survey is around 9.5 persons per household. But when including visiting relatives from the outer islands, the average household size could substantially increase to 16 or more persons per household.

9 Women United Together in the Marshall Islands, NGO dealing in women issues, especially abuse

10 YTYIH, NGO dealing in youth issues, especially suicide prevention programs for youths.

4.3 House Facilities and Structure



55-gallon fuel drum used as a water tank

Many of the homes in Jenrok are poorly constructed and in need of serious repair, especially the homes built from wood and plywood. Majuro Water and Sewer Company (MWSC) reported there were 211 watermetered customers in Jenrok, but 102 customers were recently disconnected due to non-payment. Of the 109 remaining customers, two-thirds are 60 days behind in paying the bills. Only about half of the households in Jenrok have access to city water.

MWSC also reported that only 5 households are hooked up to the main sewer line. The sewer line does not cover all parts of Jenrok. Majority of homes or 67% have their own septic tanks.


Marshall Energy Company (MEC) reported there were 178 electric-metered customers in Jenrok, but 58 customers were recently disconnected due to non-payment. Of the 121 remaining customers, more than two thirds are 60 days behind in their bill payment. About 56% have access to meter electricity.

Most of the water tanks in Jenrok are made of elite plastic or fiberglass and the average tank size is 750 gallon. However, many households use steel 55-gallon fuel drums to store water. Many use well water to wash and bath and about 10% use their own well water for drinking¹¹.



Typical House in Jenrok

MWSC also reported that only 5 households are hooked up to the main sewer line. The sewer line does not cover all parts of Jenrok. Majority of homes or 67% have their own septic tanks.

Table 2. Household Characteristics.			
		%	
Est. number of Houses	215		
Total Houses Surveyed	194	91%	
Wood Construction	99	51%	
Concrete Construction	95	49%	
Electricity– Metered	122	56%	
Water – Metered	109	51%	
Water – Storage Tanks	127	59%	
Average tank size	750	Gallons	
Homes with Toilets	161	75%	
Homes hooked to Sewer Line	5	02%	
Septic Tanks	144	67%	
Average Household Size	9.5		
Average number of rooms per house	2.2		
Average number of people per bedroom	5.3		

4.4 Household Purchases

Not surprisingly 100% of the households buy rice. After rice every household had different priorities in the types of food bought, but food items in Table 3 were mentioned consistently.	Table 3. Top 5 Purchases in Jenrok.
	Rice
	Flour
	Chicken Leg-Qtr
	Ramen
	Canned Meats

4.5 Land Tenure

About 80% of the people of Jenrok do not have land rights and 98% do not have a formal lease. If this is the case, many cannot apply for a development bank loan where a mortgage deed is required to secure the loan.

Table 4 – Jenrok Land Tenure			
	Yes	No	Other
Households with Land Rights	44	150	0
%	20%	80%	
Households with a Lease	5	189	0
%	02%	98%	
Difficulty Obtaining Permission to from Landowners	28	158	8
%	14%	81%	04%

¹¹ Three to four households usually share a well, which collectively have dug, so they are not community wells in the traditional sense. But many share regardless of who owns the wells.

4.6 Sources of Income

84% of the households surveyed received their cash from salaries & wages earned in the workplace. 3% of the households get their cash from pension benefits. Another 3% get their income from lease payments. The balance is self-employed income, mainly in handicraft and homemaking activities.



4.7 Employment

The Majuro laborforce based on the 1999 Census is 7,196 of which 4,980 are employed. Jenrok's estimated laborforce is 659 or 9% of total laborforce. Total unemployment in Majuro is 2,216 with an unemployment rate of 30.8% slightly below the national average of 30.9%. Jenrok estimated unemployment rate is 47%. The vast majority of Jenrok's laborforce work in the service and construction sectors earning just above minimum wages. Those working in the fisheries sectors, in particular the fish base earn \$1.50 an hour \$0.50 below the minimum wage allowed by law.¹²

Estimated Jenrok Laborforce	659	%
Estimated Employed	351	53%
Estimated Unemployment	308	47%
Estimated Male Unemployment	?	75%
National Unemployment Average 1999 Census		31%
Average number of workers per households	1.81	
Employed in Government	28	08%
Employed in Private Sector	323	92%
Employed in Service Sector		75%
Total Women Employed	226	64%
Average Hourly Wage	\$2.57	

4.8 Future Employment Prospects

Nearly three quarters of the 50 companies surveyed in Majuro do not plan to hire more people despite the economic provisions of the new compact treaty being extended with the United States. Many in the business community, especially the services sector, feel that the economy will not improve citing the costly business environment and government slowness in mobilizing policies that would help improve the business environment.

However, the construction sector is anticipating new infrastructure funding for education and health in the tune of \$15 million a year for the next 20 years, which they say will boost employment and all expect to hire once projects are put out to bid. But, business sentiment is tempered partly due the poor performance of the economy in the last decade.

	No	Yes
Companies planning to hire	36	14
%	72%	25%

4.9 Finances

More than half of the households have debts with a debt to income ratios more than a third of income. Nearly a quarter of the households have store credit accounts. Two quarters of the households pay their debts by allotments deducted from their paychecks.

Number of Households with Loans	114
% Households	53%
Number of Households with Store Credit	48
% of Households with Credit	23%
Average Monthly	\$315.47
Number with Allotments	75
% Allotments	65%
Debt to Income Ratio Average ¹³	38%

Purpose of Loan		% of total Loans
Basic Needs	22	19%
Funerals	19	17%
House Improvements	18	16%
Education	17	15%
Birthday Parties	12	11%
Build House	8	07%
Christmas	4	03%
Travel	4	03%
Appliances	3	02%
Other	7	06%

4.10 School Attendance

Overall there are more boys than girls attending school in Jenrok. By the time many reach high school, enrollment drops. By the time of graduation, approximately half graduates.

	Boys	Girls	Total	%
Primary	168	136	304	42%
Middle School	83	86	169	23%
High School	130	127	257	35%
CMI & USP	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	381	349	730	
%	52%	47%		

4.11 Non-Attendance

There were 136 students not attending school 2003. This does not include those who are registered to go to school. There were 43 students or 9% not attending primary school. There were 93 students or 36% not attending high school. The number attending school is roughly the same between girls and boys. The main cause for not attending school was expulsion due to poor grades.

4.12 High School Entrance Exam Results

There were 353 students that took the Marshall Islands High School entrance exam. However, it is difficult to know who was from Jenrok. It is also possible that many students from Jenrok did not take the test or applied to the one of the private schools. Based on previous years, it is

estimated there were 63 students who took the exam. It is unknown how many were actually accepted. The cut off score for the 2004 high school exam was lowered to 36% from 43%.

4.13 Number of Admissions at Majuro Hospital

During the period between January 2003 and December 2003, 254 people received some form of medical treatment at the Majuro Hospital. Nearly half of the admissions to the hospital from Jenrok were baby deliveries. Diabetes and respiratory related diseases followed as the next largest category.

There are 2 designated nurses assigned to the Jenrok community and both nurses see an average of 120 patients per month. They mostly follow up on prenatal and family planning cases, but also deal with other medical issues when the doctors bring it to their attention.

Table 10 - Admission by types at Majuro Hospital from Jenrok Village	
Amebiasis, unspecified	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis, unspecified	1
Other (Tuberculosis of intestines, peritoneum, and mesenteric glands)	1
Varicella without mention of complication	2
Postmeasles pneumonia	1
Measles without mention of complication	2
Unspecified viral infection	1
Cervix uteri, unspecified	2
Malignant neoplasm of prostate	1
Diabetes Mellitus without mention of complication	7
Diabetes with renal manifestations	3

Diabetes with peripheral circulatory disorders	4
Diabetes with peripheral circulatory disorders	1
Diabetes with unspecified complication	1
Hypoglycemia, unspecified	1
Iron deficiency anemia, unspecified	1
Meningitis due to unspecified bacterium	1
Abscess of eyelid	1
Acute Rheumatic heart disease, unspecified	5
Unspecified hypertension	2
Acute, but ill-defined, cerebrovascular disease	1
Acute URI NOS	10
Chronic tonsillitis	10
Broncho Pneumonia, organism unspecified	7
Pneumonia, organism unspecified	1
Unspecified chronic bronchitis	2
Diseases of lips	7
Dyspepsia and other specified disorders of function of stomach	7
Acute appendicitis without mention of peritonitis	2
Other and unspecified non-infectious gastroenteritis and colitis	13
Intestinal or peritoneal adhesions with obstruction	1
Diverticulosis of colon	1
Abscess of anal and rectal regions	1
Hemorrhage of rectum & Anus	1
Calculus of gallbladder with other cholecystitis	1
Acute cholecystitis	1
Hemorrhage of gastrointestinal track, unspecified	1
Chronic renal failure	1
Other specified disorders of kidney and ureter	1
Cystitis, unspecified	1
Urinary Tract Infection, site not specified	2
Inflammatory disease of breast	1
Unspecified inflammatory disease of female pelvic organs and tissues	4
Cervicitis and endocervicitis	1
Unspecified non-inflammatory disorder of ovary, fallopian tube & broad ligament	3
Other disorders of menstruation and other abnormal bleeding from female genital tract	6
Threatened abortion	2
Mild hyperemesis gravidarum	1
Threatened premature labor	4
Delivery in a complete normal case	56
Cesarean delivery, without mention of indication	7
Finger (Cellulitis and abscess)	1
Toe (Cellulitis and abscess)	1
Neck (Other cellulitis and abscess)	1
Leg, except foot (Other cellulitis and abscess)	2
Pyoderma	1
Osteoarthritis, unspecified whether generalized or localized	1
Articular cartilage disorder	1
Pain in joint, pelvic region and thigh	1
Myalgia and myositis, unspecified	2
Convulsions	1
Chest pain, unspecified	1
Ascites	2
Motor Vehicle traffic accident of unspecified nature	1
Other fall from one level to another	2
Other and unspecified fall	1
Accidents cause by machinery	1
Accident caused by cutting and piercing instruments	2
Foundling (Health supervision of infant or child)	1
Single liveborn, born in hospital	54
Colostomy (Artificial opening status)	1
Aftercare involving removal of fracture plate or other internal fixation device	2
Total	254

12 The fish plant sought and received an exemption to the minimum wage law by Cabinet Women going house to house selling Donuts

13 Ratio is an estimate and based on the average monthly income of \$2.57an hour x two persons working per household divided by the average monthly household debt of \$325.47.

4.14 Diabetes

Jenrok women were found to have a higher incidence of diabetes than men and most are middle aged.

	Men	Women
Reported Cases	50	68
%	42%	58%

4.15 Water Quality

The quality of water from both wells and water tanks is poor. Most of the well water is not suitable for drinking. Water stored in tanks also appear to be contaminated. Also, the coastal waters of Jenrok show the highest counts of coliform in all of Majuro Atoll. People continue to swim and bath in the lagoon waters, especially youths during the hot afternoons.

Site	pH	Turbity	Conductivity	TDS	Salinity	Chloride	Nitrates
Well #1	8.1	1.89	2007	1042	1.1	520	>10
Well #2	7.7	.42	2030	1161	1.2	405	>10
Well #3	8.1	4.29	1995	1002	1.0	400	>10
Well #4	7.7	27.8	10330	5065	5.8	700	>10
Well #5	8.0	1.9	9260	5020	5.2	590	>10
Well #6	8.3	.3	1424	706	.7	280	>10
Well #7	8.2	.5	4900	2570	2.6	310	>10
Well #8	7.9	1.5	7870	4220	4.3	470	>10
Well #9	8.3	1.3	1505	748	.8	265	>10
Well#10	8.2	.7	227	1146	1.2	490	9
Well#11	8.1	2.4	2020	1014	1.	355	>10

The World Health Organization (WHO) standard for potable water from wells fit for drinking is <250mg/L TDS. None of the wells tested met this WHO standard.

	Hrs.	Temp	Salinity	Coliforms	
				Total	E.Coli
Jenrok I – May	24	90	35	1880	3606
Jenrok I – June	24	38	35	10200	4600
Jenrok II - May	24	90	35	5360	1200
Jenrok II - June	24	30	35	1092	852
Jenrok III - May	24	88	35	1360	324
Jenrok III – June	24	29	35	724	653

The Survey Team and EPA were not able to test the water storage tanks in Jenrok due to the lack of membranes for the water testing equipment at EPA. However, the team conducted a visual survey of the water tanks and found debris and decomposing organic matter such as leaves, which gives an indication of contamination. Many of the tanks had some appearance of contamination. Putting chlorine tablets in the water tanks would easily rid the contamination.

4.16 Other Illnesses

There was a high incidence of diseases that could be attributed to contaminated water with the majority being diarrhoea cases.

Diarrhea	Typhoid	Amebic Dysentery
59 Households	20 Households	17 Households

4.17 Contraception

The survey showed 58 women using contraception. The survey did not ask what type of contraception was used, but many of the women respondents say they often use Norplant.

The figures in Table 15 do not indicate the number of women using contraception. Family planning indicated that more than half of the visits were prenatal visits. They also indicated that conception use is on the rise, but this cannot be verified.

Table 15 -
Family Planning Visit by Age Group for Jenrok

	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	Total
Dec-03	0	6	14	12	5	1	2	40
Nov-03	0	9	10	6	5	6	0	36
Oct-03	0	9	24	4	6	1	1	45
Sep-03	0	6	13	15	9	0	3	46
Aug-03	0	1	21	19	3	0	2	46
Jul-03	0	8	30	16	5	2	0	61
Jun-03	0	11	21	16	4	1	1	54
May-03	0	10	17	13	2	0	0	42
Apr-03	0	6	34	17	10	0	0	67
Mar-03	0	8	20	14	4	3	2	51
Feb-03	1	8	24	13	5	2	0	52
Jan-03	0	6	15	13	7	2	0	43
	1	88	243	158	65	18	11	583
	0%	15%	42%	27%	11%	3%	2%	

4.18 Depression and Mental Health

The household survey did not address the mental health of the people of Jenrok. There was a consensus among the survey team that many of the people in Jenrok suffered from some form of depression and anxiety. Several members of the survey team are trained counselors and were able to observe people and determine if members of each household showed signs of depression.

4.19 Suicide Incidence

Suicide incidences as shown in Table 16 are astonishingly high and could be one of the highest rates of suicide in the Marshall Islands. The Bureau of Health Planning & Statistics, Ministry of Health reported a 65% increase in attempted and completed suicides throughout 2003 for the entire Marshall Islands.

Most of the suicide incidences in Jenrok and, for that matter, the rest of the Marshall Islands are between the ages of 15-29.

	Number	%	Alcohol Related
Attempted	57	74%	46 cases
Completed	20	26%	20 cases
Total	77		66 cases

4.20 Violence

Information recently obtained from Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI) shows high prevalence of violence against women in the Marshall Islands.

The Jenrok survey showed 53 cases of violence with the vast majority being assaults mostly against women.

Assault	34	64%
Spousal	8	15%
Child	7	13%
Sexual	4	07%
Total Cases	53	100%

According to WUTMI, 84% of the assaults involve alcohol and less than 16% are reported to the police and less than 1% seeks medical attention or counseling. Many of the women reported repeated assaults of more than 10 times a year.

Court records also show that Jenrok has one of the highest numbers of assault convictions on Majuro, most of the cases involving violent crimes involving alcohol.

Many of the households report rampant fights in the Jenrok area and again many blame alcohol. The survey team observed a brawl on the main street of Jenrok during the afternoon rush hour traffic as shown in the photo on the right. The result of the fight was one guy with head injuries and a taxi with broken lights and windshield when one of the teen threw rocks.



4.21 Alcohol Abuse

Nearly all of the households complained about the rampant alcohol problem in Jenrok. Many blame the high incidence of suicide and violence on alcohol. Many also feel that alcohol is widely available in the community and many feel that alcohol should not be sold in Jenrok. The average cost of a pint of Vodka in Jenrok cost \$3.99.

	Yes	No
Alcohol a Problem in Jenrok	186	8
%	96%	04%
Alcohol Widely Accessible in Jenrok	185	9
%	95%	05%

Many of the respondents felt that there is not enough for youths to do and the lack of sporting facilities and activities in Jenrok gives youths a reason to drink alcohol.

4.22 Adoptions

Over the last three years there has been a surge in adoptions in the Marshall Islands, especially from adopting parents from the United States. No one really knows how many adoptions have taken place. In response, the Nitijela¹⁴ passed a law banning adoptions done through agents and lawyers, but now they must go through the newly formed government adoption agency that monitors and regulates adoptions. The agency is new and does not have current figures for adoptions, but court documents reveal that 97 adoptions were processed legally in 2003. There were 19 adoptions from Jenrok representing 20% of the total adoptions in the RMI. If these figures are correct, then Jenrok has the highest number of adoptions in the Marshall Islands. 47% of those who gave up their children for adoption cite economic hardships.

Total Adoptions from Jenrok	19	
Economic	9	47%
Better Education	4	21%
Unable to Care	3	16%
Other	3	16%

4.23 Social and Traditional Obligations

The traditional customs and obligations continue to play a major role in people lives in the Marshall Islands and the community of Jenrok. Many of the households felt that church obligations were causing hardship to their families followed by funerals. 11% of the respondents say they were unable to meet basic needs.

	Number of Households	%
Church	61	31%
Funerals	31	16%
Birthday Parties (Kemems)	26	13%
Meeting Basic Needs	22	11%
Traditional ¹⁵	20	10%
Paying for Education	6	03%
Health Care	1	Less 1%
Don't Know	2	01%
Other	25	13%
Total	194	

14 National Parliament

15 Traditional obligations are tributes to the Iroj or traditional chief of Jenrok and senior landowners of the Jenrok. Marshallese called it “aujik” or tribute.

4.24 Burial Practices

60% of the households say it is difficult to find a place to bury the dead and increasingly many now bury the dead next to their homes.

Wooden Caskets	112	57%
Steel Caskets	66	34%
Cremate	2	02%
Other	14	07%
Difficulty Finding a Place to Bury	117	60%



4 graves next to house (notice the two baby graves)

4.25 Solid Waste

The majority of the households surveyed say solid waste is a problem in Jenrok. 98% of the households use the trash bins, but 79% of them feel there are not enough bins in Jenrok. 55% of the households say MALGOV is the main government authority responsible for solid waste management in Jenrok.

Based on observations, many are indifferent towards the solid waste problem in Jenrok. There is a prevailing feeling among the community that the municipal government is responsible for managing the waste problem in Jenrok, especially since many pay taxes for solid waste management services.



Truck used as a trash bin

Table 22 – Recycling in Jenrok	Yes	No
Use of IWP Recycling Stations	21	173
%	10%	90%
Use MALGOV trash bins to Dispose of household garbage	192	3
%	21%	79%

Table 23 – Jenrok Bins		
Number of times bins are picked up		%
Once a Week	0	0%
Twice a Week	39	21%
3 Times a Week	21	10%
Once every 2 Weeks	49	25%
Once a Month	49	25%
Don't Know	36	19%
Responsible for Solid Waste in Jenrok		%
MALGOV	108	55%
Landowners	45	23%
Individuals	38	19%
EPA/GRMI/Other	3	1%



IWP Jenrok Recycling Station

4.26 High Wave Action

In 1979, Jenrok saw several week worth of very high wave action that destroyed 80% of the homes in Jenrok, not an uncommon recurring event. In the last four years, Jenrok has experienced consistent high wave action. Many of the residents living on the ocean side now say the high waves are occurring more frequently.

4.27 Coastal Erosion

There is clear evidence of coastal erosion in Jenrok were especially on the ocean side. Several homes are in danger of being destroyed and the Jenrok cemetery is already partially destroyed.

17% or 37 of the total households located on the ocean side of Jenrok were exposed to the harsh elements of the ocean side and strong waves. All of these homes show visible signs of damage.

All of the homes are particularly vulnerable during the winter months when the winds and waves are strongest. It is common now to have waves wash up on the road bringing with garbage that was thrown onto the ocean side.

It is difficult to know whether the erosion is caused by sea-level rise or because the of the connecting causeways that were built by U.S. Navy during the Second World War or the combination of both.



Trash washed up by high wave action



Trash washed up on road



Incoming waves under house (bathroom already collansed)



Damaged graves due to erosion



House at low tide



Cemetery at low tide

5 Views of Youth

On March 19, 2004 the local consultant conducted a youth focus group at the Youth to Youth in Health (YTYIH) Center. Key persons present were Omita Jorlang, Health Services Coordinator YTYIH, and Emi Chutaro, Advisor/volunteer YTYIH, Marin Lang, Jenrok Nurse Supervisor. There were a total of 15 youths present during the focus group and 7 were from Jenrok.

The group discussed a wide range of topics from alcohol abuse to education and health. Many of the youths had a clear understanding of the issues discussed, but in some cases were reluctant to talk openly about them, especially abuse.

The majority of the group felt that abuse in Jenrok has lead to high incidences of suicide, drunken youths, fights and stealing. The group says increasingly girls are drinking and many are getting pregnant. Also the group says many don't use contraception and their knowledge of family planning methods is limited because the subject is taboo in their homes.

The group felt that many youths in Jenrok have nothing to do and don't have jobs and therefore drink alcohol to pass the time. Also many believe that a number of the youths suffer from depression.

The group also believes government does not pay enough attention to youth issues in the Marshall Islands. The group believes the way to combat the problem is to build sporting facilities and supporting NGO's programs in Jenrok. Creating youth activities will help keep youths from engaging in risky activities.



Kid playing in Street and jumping on Taxis



Kids cooling off in lagoon in the afternoon



Youth Focus Group

6 Views of Women

On March 27, 2004 the consultant and with the assistance of Agnes Jeibke a counselor from Women United Together Marshall Islands organized a group of women from Jenrok to discuss issues affecting them in their community.

The women in the group were concerned about increased crime in Jenrok and the lack of opportunities, in particular lack of jobs. Many believe the future does not look good, despite the new Compact. Many say they have lost faith in the public service, in particular the police.

The discussions within the group confirm that women are now the main bread winners for their families in Jenrok. Most say their husbands are unemployed and can't find work. Many say in order to earn income many women in Jenrok are engaging more in making handicrafts and as a last resort work at the fish base, which many say they didn't like the pay and the long hours. They acknowledge the economic difficulties have led to frustration and tension within their families.

Many felt that alcohol abuse is the biggest problem in Jenrok. They felt that alcohol use is the root cause of spousal abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, suicides and gang fights. Many believe the sale of alcohol in Jenrok should be completely banned. Many fear their husbands and sons will drink alcohol and commit suicide. Several of the women in the group had sons that committed suicide and it involved alcohol use.

Aside from creating job opportunities for people in Jenrok, all of the women say there is a need for creating more living space and areas designated for recreational facilities to keep the youths out of trouble and drinking.

7 Views of Men

On March 20, 2004 the local consultant conducted the men's focus group at Mr. Maun's house in Jenrok where about 12 men were present between the ages of 17 to 38. The group discussed their roles in the community and their family responsibilities.

- Majority of the men complain about the lack of jobs.
- Majority of the men say do not care for the children, but help out with chores.
- Majority of the men say Jenrok needs sporting facilities such as basketball courts to help get kids off the roads.
- Most feel that MALGOV should take an active role in Jenrok from law enforcement, solid waste collection and sports facilities.
- Most acknowledge that there is an alcohol problem in Jenrok, but say there are opportunities for men, the problem will continue and probably worsen.
- Some of the men say the development bank must give micro loans to people in Jenrok to improve their homes, especially the purchasing of larger water catchments.

8 Discussion of Findings & Results

8.1 Discussion of Findings

Clearly people from Jenrok are experiencing hardship and declining living standards. Many in the community cannot meet their daily basic needs. The majority of Jenrok residents are migrants from the outer-islands who have no traditional land rights on the land they live on. Therefore they have no rights to cultivate the land or adjacent waters. Many often crowd into small, dilapidated homes, which are dangerously close to one another posing a serious fire hazard. About 2,000 people live in an area of not more than .021 square miles making it the most densely populated urban area in the entire Marshall Islands.

Most households do not have access to many of the basic services, despite that these services are widely available to Majuro residents. More than half of the households are without access to clean and potable water. Although most homes have some kind of household appliance(s), it does not however give you an indication that the household is well off, especially since many of the homes have disconnected power due to non-payment of utility bills. Solid waste continues to be a growing problem despite new trash bins being introduced several years ago. Many in Jenrok feel that the municipal government collects the garbage bins infrequently on average every two weeks. Many in Jenrok also feel it is the municipal government responsibility to take care of solid waste in Jenrok.

Unemployment is high and Jenrok appears to have the highest unemployment rate in the Marshall Islands, especially with men ages between 19 and 35. Most job seekers from Jenrok bring with them poor human skills effectively excluding their participation in a very contracted and competitive labor market exacerbated by the growing dependence on skill foreign workers.

The result of high unemployment is idleness, especially among young men. There are no recreational facilities in Jenrok, except for one pool hall and a make shift basketball court at the edge of the village serving thousands of youths. Depression appears to be common and alcohol abuse is clearly widespread.

Recent studies show that distressed neighborhoods have an effect and above that of individual or family socio-economic status. Jenrok displays all the characteristics of a deeply distressed neighborhood. The long-term affects on individual well-being in Jenrok are not known since there are no current efforts to track it by the Marshall Islands government.

There are very little documented cases of suicides in Jenrok, but anecdotal evidence suggests that suicide is high and not all suicide incidences are reported to the appropriate officials. Spousal abuse is not as clearly documented, but many in Jenrok have reported its prevalence in the community, especially those committed by the husbands. Also child abuse appears to be just as widespread in terms of physical pain, 36 and verbal abuse. It is difficult to document child abuse since many in the community interpret differently what constitutes child abuse.

Many women from Jenrok are facing hardships. Today, hundreds of women need to find work to support their families and in many cases work at very low wage jobs in the service and fisheries sectors. This has forced many mothers to leave their children unattended or child rearing left to a close family member to care for their children. For some unknown reason, men from Jenrok do not take part in the daily care of their children. Often this task falls onto the grandparents, especially grandmothers or other female members of the extended family.

There appears to be a lot of adoptions coming out of Jenrok Village. As a consequence many mothers are working and don't have time to care for newborns, opt to give up their newborns for adoption. Adoption is a normal and common cultural practice, but the influx of prospective American adoptive parents has changed the adoption culture and dynamics. Today, many Marshallese mothers see adoption as a way of reducing the economic burden of supporting a family especially one that is already too large.

Jenrok has the second highest number of hospital visits on Majuro and with half of those visits for baby deliveries followed by diabetes. Many of the households surveyed indicate a large number of old age women and men with diabetes. Those grandmothers or women with diabetic complications find themselves too weak to care for their children. It is not uncommon to find large hoards of kids roaming around the neighborhoods playing unsupervised with many playing in the open roads, especially on the ocean side.

Preliminary data obtained from the Ministry of Education shows a high number of school aged children not attending school. The large number of children and youth not attending school is very troubling both at the primary and secondary level. The education of children shapes their own personal development and life chances, as well as the economic and social prospects of the community. Completion rates for high school and college indicate the extent to which students have attained a basic education and are prepared for full participation in the workforce and contribute to advancing economic and social development of the community. By contrast, the indicator of youth not enrolled in school shows the extent to which youth are at risk of limiting their future prospects at a critical stage in their lives. The high unemployment rate in Jenrok is a reflection of this trend and limited skills therefore limits the future employment prospects of the community.

Although, the quality of education, especially at the primary level is the main indicator on how one does well later in high school, the degree of malnourishment may be a determining factor. Many children in Jenrok appear to be suffering from some form of nutrition deficiency.

8.2 Emergence of Poverty in the Marshall Islands and Jenrok

There are few opportunities available to the people of Jenrok, not only in terms of jobs, but also access to key essential services, that are directly linked to the declining living standards in Jenrok. The continuing deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the Marshall Islands is also leading to increased poverty among its population.

Contributing to this negative development are unresponsive government policies, a weak private sector, the lack of a production and export base (capable of earning foreign exchange). The high rate of unemployment (expected to increase made worse by a younger population entering the labor force in the coming years), the continued incidence of disease, (particularly lifestyle diseases of which the health system mostly focuses on curative rather than preventative services), and the low level of education output (has lead to an unskilled workforce) has resulted in a weak and stagnate economy.

In the past, traditional practices provided a safety net to the extended family. Today rather than providing a safety net, it has become a burden. In a recent ADB poverty report¹⁶, many families blame large extended families with only one or two wage earners providing most of their basic needs. This has caused serious tension among family members, especially in the urban centers, especially Jenrok.

8.3 Defining Poverty

Poverty has different meanings and definitions, especially poverty perceptions in the Pacific and in the Marshall Islands. Probably the best way to describe poverty in the Marshall Islands is the inadequate access to basic social services and job opportunities.

The rural outer-islands face a different kind of poverty and are much more acute in some areas. Although the cash economy has gained significant importance over the years, outer-islanders continue to rely on its land and marine resources to sustain their families. The subsistence sector remains the main economic component in the outer island communities. Often, outer-islanders lack adequate education and health services, but most acutely the lack a cost-effective transportation and trip frequency, which underpin social and economic development in their communities. As a consequence, this has encouraged many in the outer islands to migrate to the urban centers seeking better social services and jobs; this is the case in Jenrok.

In the urban centers, it is the lack of economic and employment opportunities. The low quality of life indicators are inadequate garbage collection, low access to clean water and sanitation, the lack of youth facilities, such as basketball courts and playgrounds for children (In Jenrok’s case, they don’t exist).

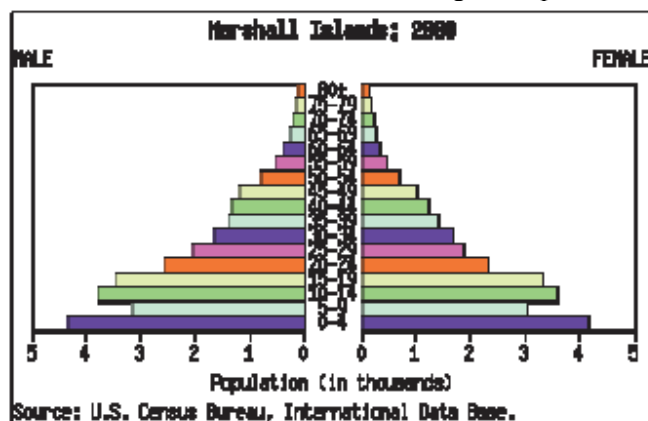
8.4 Rapid Population Growth

Undermining economic well-being is rapid population growth in the Marshall Islands. Although the fertility rates have dropped in recent years, it is still one of the highest in the world.

The population of the Marshall Islands is estimated at 50,840 based on the 1999 CPH, with a young population profile. The annual growth rate is estimated at 1.5%, with a fertility rate of 5.71.¹⁷ The median age is 17.8 years with about 55% of the population composed of 15 years and younger. The mortality rate has improved slightly from the 1988 CPH of 59.6 years for male and 62.6 years for females, to 1999 CPH of 65.7 and 69.4, respectively. Jenrok’s population profile is not much different.

Without the free access for Marshallese into the United States under the immigration provisions the Compact Treaty, population figures and urban densities would be far higher. The Household survey reveals that 190 people or 10% of Jenrok’s population left Jenrok for the United States within the last year.

About two thirds of the Marshall Islands population in 1973 lived in the two urban centers of Majuro and Ebeye. Today, more than two thirds live in the urban centers with a much higher population than in



1973. Majuro Atoll has a population of 23,676 people, followed by Kwajelien Atoll with 10,902. It is estimated that in 2003 population for Majuro to be at 27,379 and Ebeye to be at 12,607.

The remainder of the population is dispersed over a large area of ocean in the rural outer-islands. The geographic isolation of these atolls has posed a significant barrier for an efficient inter-island transport system, key if needed social and economic development is going to take. The issue of access is a key problem for all of the outerisland in all aspects: education, food and clothing, fuel, energy, potable water, sanitation, etc. Out of 29 inhabited atolls and islands, only 4 have a source of electricity and two have high schools.

8.5 Rapid Urbanization

Growth in the urban centers has led to serious overcrowding conditions where population densities are already one of the highest in the world such as the case in Jenrok. There are no space for home expansions and no recreational areas for youths

Exacerbating the problem is the continuing migration of outer-islanders to the crowded urban centers, where land is fast becoming scarce. Most acute are the D.U.D. areas of Majuro and Ebeye. It is estimated by some that by 2023, the year the second compact expires, that at least 85% of the Marshall Islands population will either live on Majuro or Ebeye.

It is not surprising that migration is increasing every year from the outer-islands. People from the outer-islands are searching for better jobs, better access to education and health services. This has compounded overcrowding in the urban centers coupled with rapid population growth. These trends are unlikely to change unless substantive incentives are promoted and improvement to basic services in the outer-islands is done. The future sustainability of outer-island communities will now be in question if this trend of migration continues at its present rate. The cost of providing these services to the outer islands will undoubtedly rise exponentially due to low populations in the outer-islands.

These trends have serious consequences for Jenrok where it no longer can accommodate more people.

Today basic social services are stretched to the limit. It is not uncommon to have over crowded classrooms, especially at the secondary level. Hospitals are inundated with people with lifestyle diseases and therefore scarce financial resources are diverted from preventative health care programs in the Ministry of Health.

As a consequence of rapid population growth and urbanization, these communities are now producing large amounts of solid waste that the national and local governments are having difficulty controlling.

These circumstances have led to a poor and inefficient health and education system. The overcrowding condition in the urban areas, especially in Jenrok, poses significant challenges to all strata of society in addressing and providing adequate and safe housing, efficient solid waste management, sufficient capacity of the education and health systems to handle continuing influxes of people from the outer-islands compounded by rapid population growths.

¹⁶ Participatory Poverty Assessment – ADB November 2002

¹⁷ Without this out migration to the US, annual growth is 3.71% per annum.

8.6 Majority of the people of Jenrok lacks the skills to compete in the Job Market

Almost 80% of the people surveyed in Jenrok lack a high school education. Currently, due to our poor education system the majority of the Marshallese bring poor human skills to the job market, especially those arriving from the outer-islands. This has forced individuals in this segment of the community to compete with one another for a small set of low skilled jobs. Those individuals who have chosen to compete in the high-skilled job market are artificially expanded. At the same time, most Marshallese are not empowered to compete in the high-skilled job market, while the supply in the high-skill is artificially contracted. As a consequence, given demand conditions, the wages for low-skilled jobs is artificially depressed and wages for highskilled jobs are artificially expanded.

Every year more than one thousand new job seekers will be added to the labor market making it a challenging task to create job opportunities.¹⁸ The pressure to create new jobs is particularly acute due to persistent increases in the population of working age. If new jobs are not created in the near future, the current unemployment rate will surely rise.

The lack of skilled Marshallese in the workforce is an indication that the education and vocational systems are not training enough Marshallese with the necessary skills to fill the jobs that are in high demand, especially semi to highly skilled jobs, which are acutely short in the private sector. Education in the Marshall Islands can be characterized as very poor and very inadequate. The main characteristics of the education environment are as follows:

- Not enough classrooms – ST Radio on Majuro is 35.1 to 40.1 both at the elementary and high school levels;
- Not enough qualified teachers. About 50% of elementary teachers have only High School Diploma. Less than 5% have an undergraduate degree and less than 1% have a master's degree;
- Lack of Materials & Supplies; and
- Lack of Community Involvement.

Of those who graduate from elementary school, only 39.8% went to high school.¹⁹ Of those accepted into High School, about 30.5% eventually dropped out. Of those who graduated, about less than 15% go onto tertiary education.

Factors influencing high school enrollment include space availability and the score on the high school entrance exam. The Marshall Islands High School entrance exam has a cut-off score of 43% in 2003. Between 1997 and 2001, the average test 18 EPPSO – 2002 Statistical Yearbook Jenrok Socio-Economic Survey 2004 41 scores were below 30%. Test score between 2001 and 2003 improved slightly raising the average to 36%.

The questions on the exams are of a style and simplicity and obtaining a score of 100% is obtainable. The fact is that the average scores for the country remains in the range of 30-40 percent. Many students average less than 40% correct answers over the whole test, reflecting poorly on the skill development in the elementary schools.²⁰

¹⁸ EPPSO – 2002 Statistical Year Book

¹⁹ EPPSO – 2002 Statistical Year Book

The Ministry of Education statistics shows a disturbing trend in test scores. While students from private schools, on average, do better than public schools, students from the two population centers are not strictly comparable due to family background. Those parents who can afford to enroll their children already indicate that they have different home experiences than many in the public schools. This suggests that your social-economic status corresponds to how well a student does on the high school entrance exam.

At the college level, specifically the College of the Marshall Islands, about 30% of those accepted. 30% were enrolled in developmental math and English in 2003. The year before, the ratio was the other way around at an astonishing 70%. This may be attributed to the following:

- Improved learning outcomes from the high schools;
- Improved assessment of academic skills prior to course selection and enrollment; and
- CMI recently also introduced much stricter selection criteria, thus reducing the number of students entering CMI.

For the most part, statistics on education are limited and incomplete thus not giving an accurate picture of the education situation. The current education statistical records do not lead to any conclusive outcomes that indicate which factors are more influential.

Overall, the Ministry of Education has taken steps to improve the standard of education, in particular at the elementary level. But the Ministry faces some difficult challenges ahead, compounded by the increasing number of children entering school and rapidly deteriorating school facilities. Although, the Ministry of Education is getting substantial increases in the second compact funding, they are receiving less from the General Fund or domestic revenues. The net affect is the same level of budget allocation as in previous years. It would be difficult for the Ministry of Education to improve the standards of education, especially at the elementary level, if the budget allocations are not increased in the coming years. The probable results would be that the education output would continue to be low.

There is an acute shortage of skilled labor. As mentioned before, the majority of the Marshallese labor pool brings very poor skills and many work in low skilled jobs. In most cases, those who have substantive skills work for the public sector, which in the end deprives the private sector of desperately needed skilled labor. As a consequence, many in the private sector have to depend on foreign labor. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is strong demand for those with specialized skills, such as accountancy, electricians, plumbers, welders to name a few. The demand for these types of skills is acute for the construction sector, but something that is shared by all sectors. To compensate for the lack of specialized skills in the local labor market, the private sector has had to resort to hiring foreigners to fill this need.²¹ The increased dependence on foreign labor exacerbates the currently high unemployment conditions in the Marshall Islands. The result of poor education is high unemployment and therefore it is not surprising that the unemployment rate is high in the Marshall Islands.

²⁰ Ministry of Education 2003 – Annual Performance Report FY-2002-2003

8.7 Incomes and Health

The majority of the cash incomes in Jenrok are earned from low wage and low skilled jobs. Many in the community do not possess the skills necessary to enter the semi and high skilled workforce. The result is many have limited income-generating prospects.

As confirmed in the Household survey, the majority of the community is employed in the low skilled service and construction sectors. The survey indicated that the average wage in Jenrok is \$2.57 an hour, just above the national minimum wage. The household survey also shows that nearly 92% are employed in the private sector, while 75% are employed in the service sector. Of those employed in the service sector 64% are women. Even if the construction sector picks up in the future, many of the men in Jenrok would be engaged in menial work as laborers and earning between \$2.00 to \$3.00 dollars an hour. Therefore, household incomes in Jenrok would not increase dramatically.

At the same time, the prices for basic food items are increasing sharply relative to wages. The inflation rate in the RMI is twice that of the United States. Between 1994- 2001 inflation was 4.45%. It appears about two-thirds of income is spent on basic needs, which includes food items.

Due to low income in Jenrok, many increasingly rely on cheap imported foods based on refined rice, flour and foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt. The household survey asked what the top 5 food purchases in Table 3 are and not surprisingly rice was the most purchased food item in Jenrok. This is so unlike traditional Marshallese diets, which are high in complex carbohydrates from bananas, pandanus, breadfruit, and arrowroot found in the outer islands communities

The high incidences of non-communicable diseases appear to be linked to changes in diets and eating habits. These include diabetes, cardio-vascular disease, gout, cancer, slow infant growth and diseases due to inadequate vitamins and minerals in the diet. Data from the Bureau of Health Planning and Statistics show that diabetes and diabetes-related deaths are the number one cause of death from 1996-2000 with the age groups for those found at highest risk for diabetes getting younger.²² The Household Survey revealed that many in Jenrok have diabetes and the majority being women.

The rate of malnutrition among children in Jenrok appears to be high. The Household Survey did not address child nutrition. But anecdotal suggests children from Jenrok suffer from some form of nutrition deficiency. A national nutrition survey in 2000 found that two-thirds of school age children suffered from malnutrition. Around 17% of children under age five were regarded as underweight. Malnutrition is reportedly a major cause of illness and death among children as reported by the Ministry of Health.

The nature of malnutrition is mainly associated with the heavy incidence of cheap imported junk food. This is particularly an issue among disadvantaged and lower income urban families like Jenrok community who have reduced capacity to produce their own food. In fact, while many children do get enough to eat, others are fed junk food. The result is that there are simultaneously health issues of both under and overnutrition.²³

²¹ Philippine workers now account nearly 12% (estimate) in the total workforce

²² Ministry of Health Annual Report FY 2002

²³ ADB 2002 – Discussion Paper, Assessment of Hardship and Poverty

It is widely accepted that children that are malnourished lead to stunted growth, and in turn could lead to learning disabilities. In many large extended families, children do not receive the individual care they need, and some teenage and young mothers do not know how to raise children properly.²⁴ This may explain why there are such a large number of school age children with very low tests scores from Jenrok.

8.8 Future Economic Outlook

The Marshall Islands lies on the fringe of the largest and fastest growing economies in the world, the United States and Asia and strategically located in the center of the Pacific yet the Marshall Island continues to struggle to provide cost effective and efficient services to its people.

Compounding this is limited natural resources that could be exploited on a sustainable basis. Distance and isolation from key markets limits the Marshall Islands ability to develop a vibrant and self-reliant economy. Although, the Marshall Islands do have a potentially rich marine base, it is nevertheless acutely short on skilled labor and a weak domestic private sector affecting its ability to be a leading force in the economy.

The economy is highly distinctive, in which US Compact and foreign aid continue to influence economic and social development in the Marshall Islands. The first distinctive feature of the economy is the large size of the public sector which accounts for 29% of GDP. Second is the large size of construction and service sectors of which is 50.3% of GDP. Third is the lack of a production and export base, agriculture, fisheries, and small-scale manufacturing, which accounts for less than 14% of GDP.

The relative large size of the public, construction, and service sectors and the insignificance of tradable activities are not by accident. The level of tradable output is a consequence of non-trade/public sector boom with the income effects of a large volume of external and donor funds, especially from the Compact.

In its present economic environment, the Marshall Islands will be subject to world trade shocks and continued dependency on foreign aid, especially US Compact/Aid. The structure of the economy will probably remain the same. Unless the Marshall Islands is able to increase its production base and earn substantial foreign exchange, the Marshall Islands will not develop into a diversified and self-sustaining economy, therefore affecting future income prospects in Jenrok.

8.9 Governance in Jenrok

Marshallese are a homogenous society and is of matrilineal descent where land rights, clans (*jowi*), and lineage (*bwij*) are passed on by the mother. Most families form a close-knit community; and occupy a series of land (*weto*), which is shared by the entire clan. The society is structured into a two-class system of people: the royalty (*iroij*) and the commoner (*kajur*), which is subdivided into landlords (*alap*) and workers (*dri-jerbal*). The land is the foundation of Marshallese identity and society. In pre-Japanese mandate, ownership rights to the land were held exclusively by the *iroij* (high chief)²⁵.

²⁴ ADB 2002- Priorities of the People, Hardship in the Marshall Islands

²⁵ Under Section 10 of the Constitution, the Iroij no longer has absolute authority over land and cannot arbitrarily expel any family from the land. Use of land now requires the consent of the Iroij, Alap and Dri-Jerbal.

In 1979, the Marshall Islands declared independence from the United States and are a democracy based on a mixture of the Westminster and US political models. The constitution provides for a parliamentary system with independent legislative, executive and judiciary branches. Legislative power is vested in the 33-member Nitijela (Senate). In addition, the Council of Iroij or traditional legislature acts as a consultative body, which may request reconsideration of any bill from the Senate affecting customary law or any traditional practices or land tenure, but has no veto powers over legislation.

Each atoll and island is formed into 24 separate municipalities with powers to set their own laws that are not contrary to the national constitution. The municipalities Jenrok Socio-Economic Survey 2004 45 have different local constitutions to varying degrees, but all have an elected mayor with a legislative council that includes the traditional chiefs representing a district.

Although, constitutionally a democracy, the traditional system remains strong. Traditional High Chiefs and to a lesser extent the Alaps continue to wield considerable influence within Marshallese society, particularly those affecting land tenure matters. In reality, a parallel system of governance is widely practiced, particularly at the local level.

The governance of Jenrok lies mainly with the traditional landowners. They have greater influence on how the community is governed than the MALGOV and Government of Marshall Islands (GRMI). Although there is an elected councilman for Jenrok, his influence is checked by the landowners, especially the Chief. Without the support of the landowners, it is very unlikely for the councilman to get elected. Although, the Mayor and Senators of Majuro have greater influence than the councilman, often they have to seek support from the traditional landowners in order to push any measure forward.

The constitution gives a broad range of powers to the government, but rarely are those powers exercised, such as declaring imminent domain for the benefit of the public.

8.10 Implications of the Proposed Dumpsite in Jenrok

Jenrok was identified as the next possible long-term dumpsite for Majuro Atoll. Currently there are several proposals pending, but the Cabinet and the Mayor of Majuro have yet to endorse any of them.

Although, there is a strong desire by the public to solve the solid waste problem in Majuro, it is very difficult for anyone to agree on how to go about solving the problem. The management of solid waste on Majuro has had a long history of problems. In the past Ministry of Public Works, RMIEPA and MALGOV often feuded over control and blamed each other when things went wrong. The lack of cooperation between the government agencies has led to a poorly managed solid waste program.

There have been attempts in the past to coordinate efforts between the key stakeholders in solving the solid waste issue. The Solid Waste Group comprised of the different government agencies and including the private sector was established for this purpose. The group has since fizzled mainly due to differences and lack of support from the government.

Also there were attempts to put the management of solid waste into a single state owned enterprise (SOE) with a board of directors comprised of the Ministry of Public Works, MALGOV, EPA and representatives from the private sector. The proposal was strongly supported by the Majuro Chamber of Commerce. A bill was later introduced in Parliament to create the Marshall Islands Solid Waste Authority, but the bill faced opposition and was put on hold indefinitely.

The government has asked its donors, namely Japan and the ADB to help develop a solid waste plan and to provide funding for new capital equipment. All of the donors have responded to the RMI's request, but all appear to be on different tracks and are at risk of duplicating their efforts.

Japan has stated it would be willing to fund the construction of the new dumpsite along with all the necessary equipment, but it is only tentative at the moment. The Ministry of Public Works has submitted a solid waste proposal to the ADB, which is currently under review. If the ADB approves the proposal, it would take several years to get the project started. In the end it will take at least several years for the donors and the government to mobilize a plan of action to get the new dumpsite going. Therefore, there are no immediate implications to the IWP pilot project in Jenrok at least in the short-term.

8.11 Implications of Water Quality in Jenrok

There is an urgent need to improve water access and water quality in Jenrok. The high incidence of diarrhoea, typhoid and amebic dysentery in Jenrok is an indication that people do not have access to clean and drinkable water. Fortunately, there have been no reported cases of cholera. However, Jenrok is at risk especially since the frequent occurrence of droughts in the RMI and the poor access to clean water. The situation in Jenrok could be worsened if there is an extended El Nino.

The survey revealed that about half of the homes are hooked up to city water. There are 215 households in Jenrok and 211 of them are subscribers to city water, meaning 98% of homes have access. But out of the 211 subscribers 102 homes were disconnected because of non-payment of their bills. The other 109 subscribers more than two thirds are 90 days behind in their water bill payment and are currently under threat of being disconnected. If disconnected, the majority of the homes in Jenrok would be without access to city water.

Water access is widely available to people in Majuro and the lack of access to water is not a matter of lack of water infrastructure in Jenrok. But the fact that the majority of people in Jenrok cannot pay their water bill is a clear indication that people are facing severe economic hardships.

Because of the lack of access to city water, many in Jenrok rely on rainwater for drinking. About 59% of the homes have some form of water storage tank even the 55- gallon fuel drums. But during the severe drought months, people have been known to use well water for drinking. If well water is being used for drinking, there is a sure chance that people will get sick because there is clear evidence that the well water in Jenrok is highly contaminated.

The wells tested by EPA revealed high levels of nitrates suggesting decomposing matter is present in the water lenses. None of the wells met WHO standards for safe water drinking. Even the test of the coastal shores of Jenrok both on the ocean and lagoon sides revealed the highest level of ecoli counts on all of Majuro. About 75% of the households have toilets and 67% of them are connected to a septic system, which seeps into the ground table. The survey revealed that only

5 households are hooked up to the city sewer system. This could explain why there is a high level of decomposing matter in the water lenses.

Increasing access to clean drinking water will improve the health of people in Jenrok. To do that, it requires all homes to be hooked up to city water. Risk of water diseases increases during extended droughts and the best prevention is to have adequate water storage tanks for every home in Jenrok. This is clearly beyond the financial means of many of the people in Jenrok, especially given their poor socio-economic status. Therefore, there is an urgent need for government intervention in preventing possible health crises in Jenrok.

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Appendix 1

Sample household survey

Statement of Confidentiality

This survey is being conducted to establish a baseline database for Jenrok Village. The findings of this survey is to determine the socio-economic status of the community of Jenrok and could be used as a future template for future surveys, which then could be used to measure changes of the status of the community.

This questionnaire has been prepared under the supervision of Economic Policy, Planning and Statistics Office (EPPSO) in conformity with the **Statistics Act 1986**, which protects the **CONFIDENTIALITY** of its contents. No individual or household will be identified in this report.

Date of Interview: _____ Age of person interviewed: _____ Sex: **MALE/FEMALE**
 Weto: **TUR/JENROK/TETELABUK/LOMAKA/TEITE** Survey # _____

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Household Composition

Sex	Relationship	Age	Majuro	Outer- Is
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			
Male/Female	Papa/Mama/Niju/Jima/Bubu/Nuku			

TOTAL _____

2. Has anyone in your household moved to the United States in the last year? YES/NO
3. If YES, how many left? _____

EMPLOYMENT

4. Does anyone work in your family?

	Age	Occupation	Place of Work	Level of Ed.	Average Hourly
Male/Female					
Male/Female					
Male/Female					
Male/Female					
Male/Female					

5. Is anyone in your family engage in self-employment activities? YES/NO

If yes, what type of activity? _____

6. What are the most common household tasks you do during the day or evening?

Cooking	Washing Cloths	Washing Dishes
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Yard Work	House Cleaning	Other Specify
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HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS & AMENITIES

7. Household Description

Type of House	No. of Rooms	Metered Power	Metered Water	Toilet	Bath	H2O Tank (Size?)
Concrete/Wood		YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	

8. If YES for toilet. Is your toilet hooked up to a septic tank? YES/NO/DON'T KNOW

9. Where do you get drinking and washing water from?

Rank 1-5	Drinking	Washing
Neighbor's Tank		
Community Well		
City Water – Meter		
City Water – Neighbor		
Other Specify		

10. Where do most of you sleep?

	Bedroom	Living Room	Outside	Other
How Many				

11. Do you regularly use the following?

Kerosene Stoves	YES/NO
Kerosene Lamps	YES/NO
Cook in open fires	YES/NO
Solar Panels for Lighting	YES/NO
Other Specify	

12. Do you have the following appliance(s) in your household?

Lights	Refrigerator	Freezer	Wash Machine	Sewing Machine
TV	Video	Water-pump	Electric Fan	Air conditioner
Radio AM	Stereo	CB Radio		

HOUSEHOLD FOOD PURCHASES

13. Where do you purchase your foodstuffs? Rank them 1-5 or N/A

Family Fishing	
Family Garden	
Fish Market	
Supermarket	
Jenrok Stores	

14. Please list the top 5 foodstuff purchased in the last week.

HOUSEHOLD FINANCES

15. Do you or anyone in your household have a loan (s)? YES/NO

16. What is your average monthly payment? \$ _____

17. What was the purpose of the loan?

Build House
House Improvements
Purchase Household Appliances
Pay for KEMEMS
Pay for Funerals
Purchase Food and other basic necessities
Pay for Education
Pay for Health
Other Specify

18. Do you have a credit account with any of the stores? YES/NO

19. How do you pay your debts?

By cash at the end of Pay Period	
By allotment	
Other Specify	

HEALTH & VIOLENCE

20. Does anyone in your family have diabetes and how many? YES/NO

#Male: _____ #Female: _____

21. Does anyone from your household suffer from frequent diarrhea and how many?

22. Has anyone from your household contracted typhoid and how many? _____

23. Has anyone from your household contracted amebic dysentery and how many? _____

24. Has anyone in your family or anyone in Jenrok experienced violence? YES/NO

Type of Violence	Family Members	Others - Jenrok
Assault & Battery		
Sexual Assault		
Spousal Assault		
Child Abuse		

25. Do you know of anyone in your Jenrok who have attempted or committed suicide in the last year?

	Number of Incidences	Alcohol Related
Attempted Suicide		YES/NO
Completed Suicide		YES/NO

26. Do you think alcohol abuse is a problem in the Jenrok Community? YES/NO

27. Is alcohol easily accessible to people, especially to youths? YES/NO

28. Does anyone in your household practice family planning and how many? YES/NO

ADOPTIONS

29. Has anyone in your household given up their child for adoption to foreign parents, in particular American adoptive parents? YES/NO

30. How was the adoption initiated?

Approached by prospective adoptive parents
Approached by an attorney representing the adoptive parents
Approached by an agent for the adoptive parents
Approached by the new government adoption agency
Approached by a close relative
Family initiated the adoption
Other Specify

31. Was the mother at the time of adoption married or had a steady boyfriend? YES/NO

32. How old was the mother at the time of adoption? Age ____

33. Did the family or husband encourage the adoption? YES/NO

34. If yes, what were the reasons for giving up the child for adoption?

Economic	
Better Education for Child	
Unable to care for the child	
Other Specify	

35. Does the birth mother have regular contact with the child? YES/NO

EDUCATION

36. How many from your household are of school age?

	Attending	Not-Attending	
Elementary (Ages 5-12)			PRIVATE/PUBLIC
Middle School (Ages 12-15)			PRIVATE/PUBLIC
High School (Ages 15-19)			PRIVATE/PUBLIC
College (Ages 19-above)			PRIVATE/PUBLIC

37. If child or youth not attending school, what are the reasons for not attending?

Lack of classroom space	
Late Registration	
Unable to pay for education (fees, books, supplies, cloths)	
Illness	
Disability	
Expelled from school	
Other Specify	

38. How many from your household have completed the following?

Elementary	
High School	
Vocational Institute	
College	
Other Specify	

SOLID WASTE ISSUES

39. How do you dispose of your household waste?

Put in Pit	Burn Garbage	MALGOV Trash Bin
Throw it in the Ocean	Take to dump	Composting

40. Do you recycle your cans? YES/NO

41. If YES, do you weigh them for cash? YES/NO

42. Are there enough garbage bins in your area? YES/NO

43. Are the garbage bins close to your house? YES/NO

44. How many times does MALGOV pick up the bins?

Once a day	Twice a week	Three times a week
Once every two weeks	Once a month	Don't know

45. Who do you think is responsible for solid waste in Jenrok?

GRMI	MALGOV	EPA	Iroij
Alap	Individuals	Businesses	Other Specify

LAND TENURE

46. Do you have land rights on the weto where your house is situated? YES/NO

47. If no, do you have a lease? YES/NO

48. If YES, how much do you pay a year? \$_____

49. Do you have difficulties obtaining permission from landowners to do extensions to your house or hookup to public utilities? YES/NO

SOCIAL AND TRADITIONAL

50. Which of the following have the greatest impact of your family's financial situation?

	Rank 1-5
Traditional Obligations	
Church Obligations	
KEMEMS	
Family Funerals	
Other Specify	

51. If a death occurs in your family, do you

Bury in a wooden coffin
Bury in a steal coffin
Bury using traditional mats & cloths
Cremate
Other Specify

52. Do you find it difficult to find a place for burial? YES/NO

53. What do you think is the biggest problem in Jenrok? _____

54. How would you improve the problem? _____

Appendix 2

SAMPLE LABORFORCE SURVEY

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This survey is being conducted to establish a baseline database for Jenrok Village. The findings of this survey is to determine the socio-economic status of the community of Jenrok and could be used as a future template for future surveys, which then could be used to measure changes of the status of the community.

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Date of Survey _____ Company Surveyed _____

1. How many employees does your firm employ? _____
2. How many of those employees are from Jenrok Village? _____
3. How many of these employees are from Jenrok are women? _____
4. What is the average hourly wage earned? _____
5. What is the age range of your employees?
6. How many job applications or job seekers did you get last month? _____
7. Do you have a high turnover of workers? YES/NO
8. If YES, what are the main causes?

Always late
Always Sick
Drunk/Hung over
Unable to perform required work
Stealing
Quit job
Other
9. What is your assessment of the economy?

Economy is booming
Economy is stagnate and will continue to deteriorate
Economy is stagnate, but set to improve next year
Not sure of the future economic prospects
Other
10. If the economy improves, do you plan to hire more workers? YES/NO

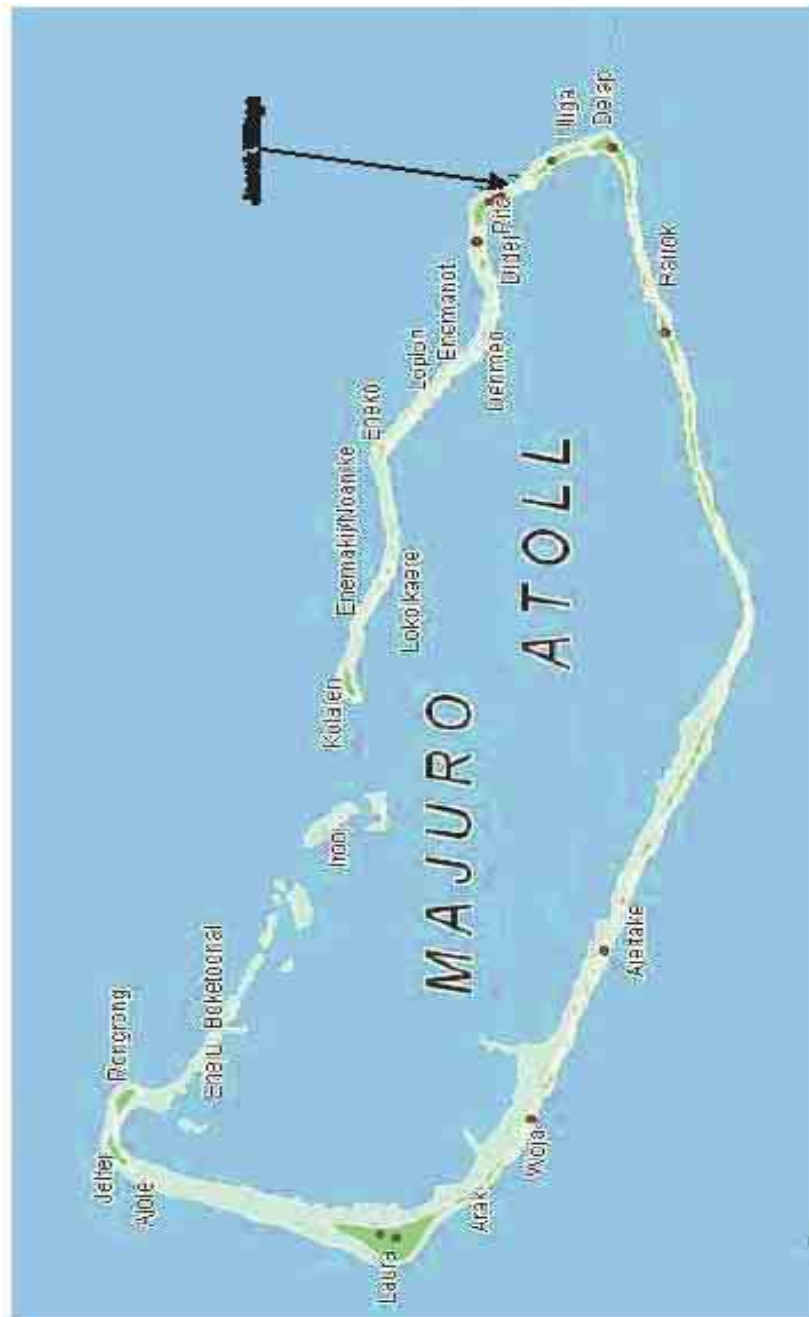
Appendix 3

Map of the Marshall Islands (courtesy of ADB)



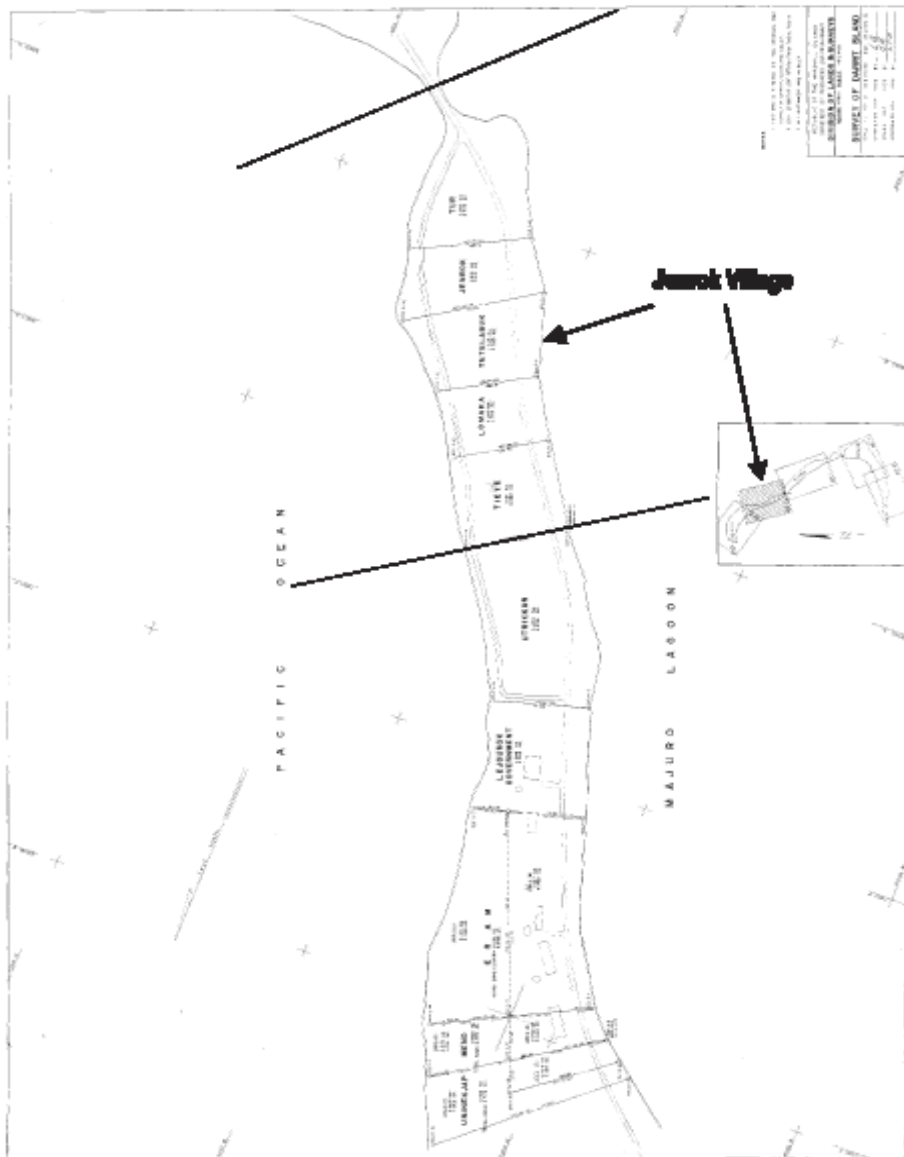
Appendix 4

Map of Majuro Atoll (courtesy of EPPSO)



Appendix 5

Jenrok Survey (courtesy of Ministry of Internal Affairs)



Appendix 6

Jenrok 1973 Photo (Courtesy of MIVA)



Appendix 7

Jenrok 2002 Photo (Courtesy of MIVA)



Appendix 8

Jenrok Sattelite 2004 Photo (Courtesy of MEC)

