

Reflecting 15 years

THE "RIGHTS" SIDE OF LIFE

2020



Family Protection Authority



PARTNERS

Human Rights Commission of the Maldives



The Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) is an independent and autonomous statutory body under Human Rights Commission's Act of Maldives. Our mission is to lead the promotion and protection of Human Rights under the Maldives Constitution, Islamic Shari'ah and regional and international Human Rights Conventions ratified by the Maldives.

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Family Protection Authority



The Family Protection Authority (FPA) was established under the Domestic Violence Prevention Act (3/2012) to take lead nationally on the issue of domestic violence by creating public awareness; providing the required services to the victims of such violence; and by co-ordinating the work of the relevant government institutions including the police and the health sector, and various local efforts made by individuals to protect survivors of domestic violence.

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people better by learning from its lessons and overcoming the challenges. The commission hopes that the findings of this survey would provide essential data for decision makers, policy planners, international agencies and the community for their future development plans. We hope that this report will be useful for the students and the wider public.

The Commission would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of current and past members of the Research Team of HRCM, including Aminath Shifaath Abdul Razzaq (former Director of Research and Monitoring Department), Ahmed Yamaany, Aishath Maurifa Mohamed, Fathimath Hussain, along with previous Commission Members. We would like to acknowledge the support of UNDP and FPA for this exercise and thank them for their continuous support to the HRCM. We also acknowledge the work undertaken by Riyan Private Limited, the consultant that carried out the survey. Finally, we express our sincere appreciation and special thanks to Mr. Peter Hosking, designed the survey instrument.

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Human Rights Commission of the Maldives

FOREWORD



Family Protection
Authority

Domestic violence is a universal problem occurring at epidemic proportions with grave violations of human rights. It has devastating physical, psychological, reproductive, economic and social effects, especially on vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly and people with disabilities. The human rights framework has allowed for this global issue to be reframed as a collective problem that needs to be addressed by the society as a whole, whilst challenging the traditional views and the perception of domestic violence as a private matter. It is crucial that we all do our part to protect and promote core fundamental rights such as the right to life and to bodily integrity that is entitled to all human beings.

In the Maldives, the dire need to address the issue of domestic violence instigated the enactment of the Domestic Violence Prevention (DVP) Act on 23rd April 2012. The implementation of the DVP Act expedited policy formulations, and facilitated institutional developments as well as better coordination among state institutions, civil society organizations and those in the private sector working in domestic violence prevention. Further, it has paved the way for increased public awareness, strengthened law enforcement, improved psychosocial support, and growth of legal assistance for survivors of domestic violence.

The Family Protection Authority (FPA) was established as an independent body under the DVP Act and has been tasked to take a lead on a national scale to address the issue of domestic violence in the country by creating public awareness, co-ordinating the work of the relevant government institutions and various local efforts made by individuals to protect survivors of domestic violence. Amongst its wide range of responsibilities, FPA is mandated to conduct and publish research on the prevalence, characteristics and socio-demographic correlations of domestic violence. To meet this end, FPA formed a partnership with HRCM and UNDP for the Third Human Rights Survey to include a new chapter dedicated to domestic violence. This Third Human Rights Survey recognizes and integrates domestic violence as a human rights issue.

The Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM) has now successfully conducted three comprehensive Human Rights Surveys in the Maldives, documenting the public's awareness, attitudes and knowledge on various aspects of human rights. I hope that the findings of this Third Survey would serve as a basis for formulating decisions and developing strategies by law and policy makers in the years ahead. It is also my hope that practitioners will utilize these findings to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the issue and strengthen service delivery.

On behalf of Family Protection Authority, I would like to thank HRCM, UNDP, Riyan, and our staff involved in this important survey, for their

unwavering commitment in bringing the third "Rights" Side of Life to fruition. We are fortunate to have had the opportunity to collaborate in this study and be a part of a publication that strives to further strengthen and uphold the rights of the beloved people of our nation.

Aminath Leena Ali

Chief Executive Officer

Family Protection Authority

FOREWORD



UNDP is pleased to support the publication of the third 'Rights Side of Life' (RSL) Survey in Maldives. Since its first edition in 2005, the RSL Surveys have provided useful updates and trends regarding the issues related to human rights in the Maldives. As a young democracy on its journey towards the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development, Maldives has made significant strides towards becoming a nation centered on the universal values of human rights, freedom and justice for all. For instance, out of the nine core international human rights treaties, the country has joined eight and ratified seven. For the Maldives to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is fundamental to recognize the interlinkages between SDGs and human rights.

In this regard, the National Human Rights Framework guided by the 2008 Constitution of Maldives identifies and maps the interlinkages between SDGs and human rights. However, the country's efforts to promote and protect human rights while working towards the achievement of SDGs continue to be challenged by the fragility of the social and political fabric of the country. In the face of these challenges, the third Rights Side of Life survey provides valuable data in continuing discussions and dialogues around human rights, state obligations and citizen responsibilities.

The 'Rights Side of Life: A Baseline Human Rights Survey', determines the extent of awareness among the general public about human rights, their attitudes towards human rights issues, and their awareness of the existence of the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM), its functions and its effectiveness.

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