

**Expert Group Meeting on Effective Data Generation
for the Incheon Strategy Indicators
Bangkok, 6-7 November 2013**

Country Brief

Country name: **Maldives**

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1. On the availability of national baseline data for the Incheon Strategy Indicators as reported in the ESCAP survey

Please provide a summary of key findings from country-level work on the ESCAP survey (max. 500 words):

The first ever disability screening was undertaken in the Maldives in 1981(President's Office 2006). Then there were 1,390 persons with disabilities that comprised 0.9 percent of the population.). In 2000, according to the Population and Housing Census data there were 4,728 persons with disabilities in the Maldives (Velezine 2001). This constituted 1.75 percent of the total population. According to the Report on Survey of People with Disabilities undertaken in 2002 a total of 9,216 persons with disabilities were identified that comprised about 3.4 percent of the total population (MGFDSS 2002). In Census 2006, a total of 897 persons identified that they were not able to work due to a disability (MPND 2008).

According to the preliminary report of the Disability Screening Survey undertaken by Handicap International in 2009, about 4.7 percent were found to have severe permanent functional limitations or disabilities (HI 2009). In those islands where all the households were screened the prevalence rates varied between 9 percent and 11.8 percent. Based on this study, the most recent estimate of disability prevalence rate would be 8.1 percent of the population having either temporary or permanent disabilities.

2. Country practices of data collection

Please select 1 to 3 indicators for which data are being collected and describe briefly key aspects of your country's good practices (max. 500 words):

Statistical Regulation assigned Department of National Planning (DNP) the authority to take censuses and surveys and to issue permits for surveys to be carried out by any other agency or unit. The statistics system in Maldives is highly decentralized with Statistics Division being the core statistical unit, but with others pursuing their own objectives in many ministries and other institutions, where the statistics activity is often combined with functions, such as planning, policy and program formulation monitoring, research and analysis.

The DNP Statistics Division is responsible for conducting the Population and Housing Census of Maldives. Maldives conducting census since 1911, the 5 yearly censuses started from 1985. The Last census was conducted in 2006 and the next Census will be conducted from 20-27 Sept 2014.

The last Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) of the Maldives was conducted in 2009-2010. It is the second such nationwide survey conducted by the Department of National Planning and is planned to be conducted every five years on a regular basis.

The household surveys conducted trained enumerators collected information in personal interviews using questionnaires; some residents refused to answer but most cooperated. The questionnaires prepared for the 2006 census was designed for scanning using ICR, which was deemed quite successful as the data got scanned within 3 months (manual data entry took about 6 months).

Statistics activities outside the DNP such as the Ministry of Health, the Decision Support Division plans to the DHS every 5 years. The 2009 Maldives Demographic and Health Survey is the first demographic and health survey conducted in the Maldives with the principal purpose of providing reliable and detailed information on the Demographic and health Situation of the country.

The DNP follows international guidelines for conducting population and housing censuses with a focus on recommended core topics and tabulations as identified in the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. National versions of major classifications, particularly ISIC and ISCO are under preparation.

A number of methods were used in census data dissemination. Republic and Atoll Level data and information were included in the census book which was published.

- The census database and island data level available in CD
- Data Dissemination workshops
- Wall charts
- Leaflets at atoll level
- Graphical hand books
- Media related presentations were done
- Atoll profiles were shown through TV.
- Website (www.planning.gov.mv)
- Census Data was uploaded to MaldivInfo.

Work is ongoing at this time to integrate key statistics and indicators from statistical yearbook into Maldivinfo and publish an island level statistical yearbook in Maldivinfo. Statistical Yearbook of Maldives is made on the website (<http://www.planning.gov.mv>), on CD-ROM, A "statistics pocket book of Maldives" and a leaflet "Maldives in figures". Now the wealth of the historical data in our annual series of Statistical Yearbook of Maldives from 1980 to 2009 is available in the "Statistical Archive of Maldives" on the Department's website.

3. Achievements and lessons learnt

Please describe briefly major achievements in disability data collection in recent years, and the lessons learnt (max. 500 words):

Maldives have not made enough progress in disability data collection during the passed years however policy development has been mad which will enhance data collection machanisms.

One of the very important attempt made made to collect disability informations is developing a national disability registry. This was developed in light of disability Act for providing financial benefits for persons with disabilities.

4. Major challenges to improve the availability and quality of data

Please highlight the institutional, financial and technical constraints in collecting data for the Incheon Strategy Indicators (max. 500 words):

The Statistical system of the Maldives has seen major developments since the early 1990s. However, the system continues to remain dependent on donors for key components, while government commitment and ownership has been gradually improving, there is still a long way to go in terms of a strong legal basis for Statistics, and GoM commitment to increased budgetary funding for key Statistical operations.

One of the main challenges faced is the delays in getting the data from some sectors, leading to delays of data availability and inability to meet the target dates. This is partly due to the delays in getting data from the islands and atolls to the line ministries and the need for additional time to compile and verify the data. For many statistical purposes meetings were held with relevant government agencies and members of the "National Statistics Coordinating committee" on the importance of getting timely data. We continue to work with the agencies. These challenges still remain. The proposed solution is to increase statistical staff in the other government agencies, creating statistics units in many government offices without such units and placing statistical officers at the atoll /island/city councils and the seven sub-regional government offices within the atolls.

5. National capacity-building needs

Please identify critical capacity-building needs in your office (max. 500 words):

A major obstacle to statistical development in the Maldives is the problem of high employee turnover in the government. For many kinds of activities in official statistics, skill depends as much or more on institutional memory and knowledge of specific cases as it does on an understanding of the relevant concepts and theories.

There is a huge need in institutional capacity building in identifying the situation of persons with disability and how much they are being provided the equal access in all areas. Disability is a subject which requires strong advocacy to increase awareness in the policy level and community level. Disability Act which was enacted in July 2010 has brought a huge impact to the situation. A disability council is being established in light of disability act to coordinate, advocate and monitor the implementation of the Act.

6. Action plans to improve the availability and quality of disability data

If an action plan exists, please provide a summary of the plan. Otherwise, please describe the modalities you envisage in the development of a national action plan (max. 500 words):

As there haven't had been a proper head count done to know the numbers of persons with disabilities in Maldives. However Ministry of Gender Family and Human Rights is planning to conduct a national level survey to know the total number of PWD, types and degree of disabilities in 2014 with the help of WHO. A national disability policy is also being endorsed on 31st October 2013 and an action plan will be formulated during the year 2014 for the implementation of disability policy and disability Act 8/2010.

National disability policy will facilitate for a comprehensive mechanism to generate disability data at a national level.

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