

MALDIVES

“Compilation of Social and Gender Statistics at the National and Sub-national Level from Available Data Sources”

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BACKGROUND

ADB commenced a regional technical assistance (RETA), with the objectives of assisting ADBs developing member countries, particularly those in South Asian and the Mekong except for Afghanistan and Bhutan. Of the three major activities under the RETA, the first activity, which is an inception workshop at ESCAP headquarters in Bangkok, was held from 28 to 31 May 2002. The purpose of the inception workshop was to provide a means of sharing existing social and gender statistics as well as experiences in compiling these statistics and in understanding the relevance of the particular task in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The second activity under the RETA is to provide support to conduct a methodological study in each country focusing on alternative data sources available to generate social and gender statistics or to generate social statistics at the sub national level with gender breakdowns. The third activity will be a concluding workshop where the results of the methodological studies will be presented.

Maldives is a small-island developing nation situated in the Indian Ocean and belonging to the region of South Asia. It consists of about 1190 tiny islands scattered across 26 coral atolls stretching from 7° 6' 30" North to 0° 41' 48" South, between 72° 33' 19" and 73° 46' 13" East. Of these 200 are inhabited (Census, 2000). The total population of the country as reported in the census of 2000 was 270,101 persons with a sex ratio of 103 males per 100 females.

The Maldives witnessed significant social development during the past two decades. Infant mortality rates have declined sharply since the early 80s and average fertility levels of the Maldivian women have declined from a high of 6.8 children per women to just under three children during the past decade. Average annual rate of population growth now stands below two percent. Maternal mortality ratio has declined from 500 per hundred thousand live births in 1990 to less than 143 per hundred thousand live births in 2001. For the first time in the country's history, life expectancies of women increased that of men's during the early 90s and the proportion of the population under the age of 15 started declining gradually.

Several obstacles had to be tackled in order to achieve this. Of particular significance are the problems posed by the country's geography and the spatial distribution of its population. The population of the Maldives is inhabited on 200 tiny islands scattered across the entire length of the archipelago. It therefore shares the plethora of development problems that characterize all small island countries of the world.

These developments have been achieved by heavy investments in the provision of near-universal primary education of 98 percent by 2001, in the achievement of universal childhood immunization against major childhood illnesses in 1989, in the provision of basic health services access, and through the adoption of prudent macro-economic policies, with an emphasis on sustainable and equitable social and economic development of the country. The achievements of the Maldives in the area of social development have seen it ascending rapidly in the rankings of the United Nations Human Development Index. The most recent estimates published in 2002 places Maldives 84th among the 173 countries listed, placing it in the medium HDI group and the highest in the region of South Asia. The generous contributions made by our development partners, both bilateral and multilateral, particularly the support of the United Nations and its various agencies, have been crucial in these endeavours.

In the Maldives, as is the case in many countries of the two regions, large amounts of social and gender statistics are collected through censuses and surveys and through information collected for administrative purposes. This report presents the findings from a methodological study on the

sources of social and gender statistics, methodologies used in data collection and the transfer from source of collection to the central authorities in Male', and the extent of their utilization in social and gender planning.

SOCIAL AND GENDER DATA AT NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL

THE CURRENT STATISTICAL SYSTEM OF MALDIVES

The statistical system of the Maldives is decentralized, with the various government ministries and agencies generating statistics through censuses, surveys and through by-product of administrative and regulatory functions.

The Statistics Section of the Ministry of Planning and National Development (MPND) occupies a key role in generating all-purpose statistics such as population and households and businesses through censuses and surveys; and in compiling the national accounts. It has a critical role as the coordinator of statistical activities of the country. The coordination role should ensure that all the agencies generating statistics follow common definitions and standards. It should also take the lead in developing statistical manpower resources in the country.

The following are the ministries and agencies that generate the main social and gender statistics and the ministries/agencies collecting or publishing the statistics:

Statistics	Source of Statistics	Ministry/Agency Producer
Demographic and Population Statistics	Population and Housing Census	Statistics Section, Ministry of Planning and National Development
Vital Registration and Health Statistics	By-product of service delivery and regulatory function	Ministry of Health
Education Statistics	By-product of service delivery and regulatory function	Ministry of Education
Manpower, Labour and Employment Statistics	By-product of regulatory and administrative function	Ministry of Human Resources, Employment and Labour
Law and Order Statistics	By-product of administrative function	Ministry of Defense and National Security
Judicial Statistics	By-product of regulatory and administrative function	Ministry of Justice

Housing and Household Statistics	Population and Housing Census	Statistics Section, Ministry of Planning and National Development
Poverty Statistics	Vulnerability and Poverty Assessment Study (VPA, 97); HHIES?	Ministry of Planning and National Development

DEMOGRAPHIC AND POPULATION STATISTICS

Ministry of Planning and National Development conducts the population and housing census every 5 years since 1985. The data are published by the MPND and also available on its website.

The following demographic and population data were collected from the Census 2000.

General

- age
- sex
- relationship to head of household
- nationality

Internal migration

- population by place of registration
- lifetime migrants
- recent migration

Education

- highest level of education completed
- population currently attending school/educational institution by educational level

Employment

- economically active population
- employed population by industry, occupation, employment status, sector
- unemployed
- not economically active population, by functional categories
- income

Time use in unpaid household activities

Marital status

- age at first marriage
- number of marriages and number of persons married

Fertility

- total number of children born by sex
- total number of live births by sex
- number of children living by sex
- children born (includes still births) during last one year by sex
- children born alive during last one year by sex
- children living, among those born during last one year by sex

Mortality

- number of deaths among household members, during the past year by age and sex

VITAL REGISTRATION AND HEALTH STATISTICS

As part of the service delivery and regulatory function of the Ministry of Health, it generates statistics derived from vital registration and on the delivery and facilities of health services from hospitals health centers and private health clinic. The ministry collects these data through the atoll offices and various service delivery points, processes the data and release the statistics to government agencies and international institutions, with an average lag of six months after the reference period. Using several types of reporting forms, the ministry generates statistics, incidence and prevalence of diseases, health facilities and services delivery, manpower and basic health services including immunization and hospital related statistics. It also conducts ad hoc multi cluster surveys on various health characteristics of women and children.

Health Information System (HIS) consists of various subsystems. They are:

- Vital Registration System
- Diseases Surveillance
- Immunization
- Nutrition
- Safe Motherhood
- Reproductive Health and Family Planning
- Hospital data and other service based data
- Others

Vital registration System

Vital registration is undertaken by the island offices using standardized forms provided by the Ministry of Health. These forms are then transferred via Atoll Offices to the Ministry, which in turn process the data to derive key indicators on birth and death rates, mortality rates by cause, infant, child and maternal mortality, and age specific mortality rates.

Disease surveillance data

Disease notification
 Lab investigation results
 Treatment advice
 Duration/incubation period
 Outbreak/epidemic implications
 Catchment area/sex and age groups
 Vector/carrier etc.

Immunization

- Coverage by national immunization schedule
- Monitoring of cold chain
- Stock management data

Nutrition Programme

- Routinely collects data on growth monitoring for
 - Low birth weight
 - Growth faltering

Safe motherhood programmed

- Routinely collects data to monitor
 - Deliveries attended by untrained birth attendants
 - Anemic deliveries
 - Provision and seeking of antenatal care
 - Identification of high-risk pregnancies

Reproductive health and family planning

- This programmed collects data on
 - Contraceptive use and discontinuation
 - Stock maintenance of contraceptives

Hospital and other types of health data through record keeping

- Inpatient/outpatient flow of hospitals and other health facilities
- Bed capacity/bed occupancy of hospitals
- Service delivery outlets
- Human resource development and availability

EDUCATION STATISTICS

The Ministry of Education generates statistics as part of its service delivery and regulatory functions. In general, education statistics are collected annually as a survey, by sending questionnaires to all schools in the country. The ministry regularly collects the following information from all schools:

- Student enrolment (by age, grade, sex)
- Number of teachers (by qualification, level, region)
- Staff characteristics at schools
- In-service training of teachers
- Number of classes by session
- New entrants to grade one
- Number of school leavers at different levels
- Allocation of subject period to teachers
- Facilities available
- Number of classrooms, toilets, water tanks, etc
- Income/expenditure

The statistics on number of schools, enrolment by level, teachers etc, are released annually by the Education Ministry in their Annual Education Statistics Yearbook in print and electronic media. Data on other educational establishments are collected through registration process.

HUMAN RESOURCES, EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR STATISTICS

The Ministry of Human Resources, Employment and Labour (MHREL) collects statistics as by product of its administrative and regulatory functions. It is in charge of giving quota for foreign workers working in the country, allocation of overseas training of government personnel. It also collects information on secondary school graduates, employment, vacancies advertised and job seekers.

Data on expatriate employment are collected through two forms – application for quota (to be completed in order to get or to increase quota to bring expatriates) and application for work permit (to get permission to bring expatriates). Information on expatriates collected through these forms includes: name, address, passport number, application date, employer's name/company, sex, type of employment, work site, visa duration, occupation and salary.

Statistics collected on expatriates employed is available on a monthly basis under “facts and figures” on MHREL website. Annual statistics on expatriate employment is also published in the Statistical Yearbook of Maldives (SYB).

MHREL also disseminates statistics on job vacancies, job seekers and overseas training, by the ministry and through their website. It also has begun piloting a job matching service. MHREL is currently undertaking a project to set up a labour market information system with the assistance of UNDP and ILO. Employment statistics are also collected by MPND from the population and housing census.

Data on government employment are maintained by the Public Services Division of the President's Office, as a by-product of its regulatory functions. Information on number of temporary and permanent employees by sex and sector of employment are published in the SYB.

LAW AND ORDER STATISTICS

The database maintained by the Ministry of Defence and National Security covers various areas aspects of law and order, one of which is crime statistics. These statistics are derived from police and other law enforcement authorities of the country. Weekly reports on these statistics are provided to relevant ministries on selected topics. Statistics on accidental deaths are published periodically in the annual Statistical Yearbook of Maldives.

The database and reporting system of the ministry was designed as an integrated system but due to budgetary limitations, the whole system has not been fully operational. It has been planned for an interconnected system that would have instantaneous link with databases of other ministries. However, the systems are not compatible to attain this.

STATISTICS ON JUDICIAL SYSTEM

As by-product of the judicial function of the ministry, it collects and release statistics on judicial cases handled by the courts in Male' and all the other islands of the country. The statistics cover marriages and divorces, finished and unfinished cases, new assigned cases. The data on convicts by different crimes are disaggregated by age and sex.

The ministry maintains the Judicial Information Management System and computerization are now taking place although at a low pace due to financial constraint. The statistics generated are fed-back to the judicial courts for information on their performance.

Most recent and up-to-date statistics are provided to the Office of the President on a weekly and monthly basis. They are also distributed to international organizations. However, there are still problems faced by the ministry in the classification system for consistency with international standards. There is also a need to establish a standardized platform for computer systems within the government to facilitate easy flow of information. The ministry is also looking into the inclusion of minor cases in the statistical database for more detailed and comprehensive coverage of the justice system.

STATISTICS ON HOUSING AND HOUSEHOLDS

Ministry of Planning and National Development conducts the population and housing census every five years since 1985.

The following housing data were collected from the Census 2000.

- types of housing units
- number of storeys
- age of structure
- construction material of wall and roof
- number of rooms and rooms used for sleeping
- rented and owner occupied housing
- period/duration of rent, monthly rent paid
- type of lighting, type of toilet facilities
- type of water used for drinking, cooking and washing
- type of fuel used for cooking
- frequency and place of household waste disposal
- household utilities

The Ministry of Home affairs, Housing, and Environment, as part of its regulatory function, processes applications for building permits. This provides a useful database on the numbers of permits issued for residential and non-residential units and their floor areas, plots and structures in the plots.

POVERTY STATISTICS

In 1997 MPND and UNDP jointly conducted a nationwide study on vulnerability and poverty. The Vulnerability Assessment of Maldives (VPA) was conducted through a household survey to collect information on households and analyzed the results using a framework specific to the circumstances of Maldives. It computed the traditional poverty indicators plus other indicators to determine the vulnerability of the households weighted on the basis of a set of household priorities. The study was used as basis for developing strategies to alleviate poverty in areas identified with high incidence of poverty and vulnerability. In future, data from the Household Income and

Expenditure Survey, that is currently being conducted in the country, will be used as one of the main sources of poverty statistics.

MPND is also in the process of establishing a vulnerability and poverty monitoring system for the country. Poverty indicators to be incorporated in the system are currently being identified by MPND. This work is being done with assistance from UNDP.

DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM IN ATOLLS AND ISLANDS

The Ministry of Atolls Administration is responsible for coordinating the activities of the atoll offices. As part of the internal need of the ministry to provide information to the President's Office, it requires atoll offices to submit quarterly information covering population, land utilization, economic activity and production, employment etc. The statistics is used internally and submitted to the President's Office.

While the statistics appears to be comprehensive for all atolls, the reliability of many of the variables in the list are suspect as the atoll does not have mechanism or capacity to collect some of these statistics using accepted statistical procedures.

EXISTING SOURCES OF SURVEY DATA

Survey data on social and gender related statistics are collected mainly by three sectors of the government. That is, Health, Education, Women's Affairs and Planning Ministries. Of these, health sector, being one of the most established of the social sectors in the country, also has the longest history of survey data collection. Of the various surveys that have been recently conducted, the following are conducted or planned to be conducted on a regular basis:

Maternal death audits: Maternal deaths occurring in the country are audited every two years. The purpose of the audit is to identify preventable causes of maternal mortality in order to develop appropriate strategies to minimize its incidence.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey: In implementing the Plan of Action for Children endorsed by the World Summit on Children, Maldives conducted its first Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 1995 to assess the progress made in achieving the mid-decade goals set in the Plan of Action. A second MICS survey was conducted in 2001 to assess the end decade achievements towards the goals. In addition to the information relating to key indicators of health and welfare of children, the MICS-2 also collected data on salt iodization, pre-natal care and care during delivery, anaemia among women, child labour, general living arrangements of children and the extent of birth registration.

Apart from these surveys other sources of survey data that are either irregularly collected or have been discontinued are: Survey on tobacco use by government employees; Quit and win survey (conducted on a purposive sample); Reproductive health baseline survey; Mental health survey (currently being conducted for the first time); Non-communicable diseases risk functions survey and; KAP survey on nutrition.

Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Security does not conduct any surveys for social and gender data collection. An initial baseline survey was conducted in 2001 to establish a database on people with special needs, including the elderly and disabled needing social welfare. The purpose of the database is to maintain a register of those who are eligible for the *zakaath* allowances. The register is updated annually through administrative sources.

Household Income and Expenditure Survey: MPND is currently conducting the country's first nationwide Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES). MPND plans to conduct HIES every five years. The following information is collected from the HIES 2002/03.

- Information on household characteristic
- Number of nuclear families
- Rented or owner occupied
- Monthly rent
- Presence of household durables
- Household durables purchased during last year and expenditure incurred on them
- Household expenditure on travel and construction during the past year
- Household saving
- Information on household members
- Age
- Sex
- Membership status
- Employment and income
- Number of earning members
- Industry, occupation, employment status and sector of employed persons
- Goods and services produced/provided, expenses incurred in production and their profits
- Income from paid and self employment
- Income from all other sources (rental, other property income, transfers etc)
- Expenditure by household members (one week through recall and one week by maintaining diary for each earning member. The following categories of expenditure were taken for different durations
- Food, Rent (1 month)
- Clothing, Education (3 months)
- Household durables, Travel (1 year)

DATA USED FOR SOCIAL AND GENDER PLANNING BY RELEVANT AGENCIES

Social and gender data collected through surveys and administrative procedures are utilized for planning and policy purposes to the extent such data are available. However, due to problems of analytical capacity in most government departments, access to such data sources are restricted due to their limited analysis. Increasingly, various international developmental agencies and donor governments are demanding more detailed data on social and gender aspects. Its availability has been enhanced through international technical assistance in the form of consultancies and capacity building efforts. With emphasis on more target oriented and evidence based planning of sectoral developmental activities, sectoral agencies are also requiring more detailed and gender disaggregated analysis of existing data for the development of sectoral development plans and in the formulation of various development projects.

The Ministry of Health uses the vital registration and health statistics for planning purposes such as in calculating eligible population for immunization, child rights and to take preventive interventions and programme monitoring purposes.

The Ministry of Education is the major user of education statistics. Some key indicators used for policy and decision making include the study of enrollment trends, teacher demand and supply, teacher student ratios, teacher allocation and training, budget planning and preparation, expenditure on education, provision of facilities etc and uses data on number of schools, enrolment at various levels (primary grades 1 to 7, lower secondary grades 8 to10, higher secondary grades 11 and 12), number of trained teachers, admission rate, promotion rate, repetition rate, drop out rate etc. Other ministries and international agencies are also regular users of the education statistics.

The Ministry of Human Resources, Employment and Labour uses labour statistics to establish the trends such as growth of expatriates over time in different occupations and industries, in order to review and revise the policies on this area.

The HIES data will be used by MPND to revise the weights of the existing CPI basket for the capital Male' and also for developing weights for CPI to other regions of the country. It will also be used in deriving poverty indicators and also in the compilation and improvement of GDP estimates.

SOME PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS OF STATISTICS COLLECTED

- Poor response rate in the surveys and substandard quality of the response
- Lack of awareness and appreciation for statistics among the general public
- Lack of personnel with skills to fill up reporting form
- Lack of awareness and appreciation of the importance of information provided in the reporting form
- Lack of statistical and computer personnel or computer for processing, tabulation and analysis of the results
- Absence of national standard definitions and classifications for statistical purposes. e.g. definition of children, classification of judicial cases and commodities.
- Inconsistency in computer platform among the data bases of ministries; this limits the efficient access of information

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF INDICATORS TO MONITOR SOCIAL AND GENDER DEVELOPMENT

In order to facilitate the development of a national system of indicators to monitor social and gender development, the following actions need to be taken:

- Adopt standard definition and classification for use in statistics.
- Conduct statistical training for the personnel at the atoll offices who are responsible for filling up forms and collecting statistics
- Strengthen regulations to obtain statistics from various sources
- Give priority to place statistical personnel at the island level/atoll level
- Need to review the format of questionnaire to systematize the collection

- Improve collaboration and coordination in data collection among ministries
- Provide incentives such as results of survey to respondents to establish cooperation
- Establish a mechanism of sharing information e.g. statistical library, newsletter on statistical activities and output/publication
- Undertake awareness raising of the general public on the value of the data that they provide
- Enact statistical legislation
- Produce and analyze sex disaggregated social data by all producers of socio-economic data
- Improve data dissemination through close collaboration with media
- Made socio-economic databases held by different agencies more accessible to interested researchers
- Promote research among local academics using existing databases
- Take steps to train and retain technical staff in relevant agencies through training and remuneration packages
- Develop and provide a diploma level statistical training within the country, in order to guarantee the increased availability of qualified entry level staff, leading to quality improvement in statistics and also increase the effectiveness of higher training abroad
- Improve the analytical capacities of the statistical personnel in the government

GOVERNMENT WEBSITES

[Airports Authority](#) — *Maldives Airports Company Limited*

[Communication Science and Technology](#) — *Ministry of Communication Science and Technology*

[Department of Immigration and Emigration](#) — *Department of Immigration and Emigration*

[Dhiraagu](#) — *Dhivehi Raajjeyge Gulhun Pvt. Ltd.*

[Education](#) — *Ministry of Education*

[Fisheries Agriculture and Marine Resources](#) — *Ministry of Fisheries Agriculture and Marine Resources*

[Foreign Investment Services Bureau \(FISB\)](#) — *Foreign Investment Services Bureau*

[Health](#) — *Ministry of Health*

[Human Resources, Employment & Labour](#) — *Ministry of Human Resources, Employment & Labour*

[IGMH](#) — *Indhira Gandhi Memorial Hospital*

[Ministry of Trade and Industries](#) — *Ministry of Trade and Industries*

[Permanent Mission to the UN](#) — *Permanent Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations*

[Planning and National Development](#) — *Ministry of Planning and National Development*

[STO](#) — *State Trading Organization*

[Tourism](#) — *Ministry of Tourism*

[Transport and Civil Aviation](#) — *Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation*

[Women's Affairs & Social Security](#) — *Ministry of Women's Affairs & Social Security*

LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED

Name	Post	Office/ Organization
Mr. Mohamed Farook	Asst. Director General	Ministry of Atolls Administration
Mr. Hassan Fuwad	Project Officer Trainee	Ministry of Atolls Administration
Lt. Col. Ibrahim Rasheed	Lieutenant Colonel	Ministry of Defense and National Security Services
Dr. Ahmed Shareef	Director	Ministry of Education
Mr. Mohamed Waheed	Assistant Director	Ministry of Education
Mr. Ahmed Shaheed	Asst. Statistical Officer	Ministry of Education
Ms. Maimoona Abu Bakur	Program Manager	Ministry of Health
Ms. Waseema Fikry	Asst. Statistical Officer	Ministry of Health
Mr. Mohamed Inaz	Senior Environment Analyst	Ministry of Home Affairs, Housing and Environment
Mr. Ali Rasheed	Assistant Director	Ministry of Human Resources, Employment and Labour
Ms. Shahida Abdul Rahman	Planning Officer	Ministry of Human Resources, Employment and Labour
Ms. Ameera Abdul Rasheed	Secretary	Ministry of Justice
Mr. Ahmed Misbah	Senior Computer Programmer	Ministry of Justice
Mr. Asim Ahmed	Director	Ministry of Planning and National Development

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS TO MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT REFERRED:

1. Ms. Heidi Arboleda, Interregional Advisor on National Accounts of ESCAP
2. Mr. Rob van eck, advisor to MPND during the implementation of ADB assisted National Accounts Project
3. Mr. Willem van den Anel, advisor to MPND during the implementation of ADB assisted National Accounts Project

MAP OF THE MALDIVES

