



MALDIVES UNDAF 2011 - 2015

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

(October 2014)

Richard M Chiwara, PhD

DISCLAIMER

The author is grateful for the support provided by the UNRCO, management and staff of the UN agencies in Maldives. The author is also thankful for the useful information and insights provided by officials of the Government of Maldives and other development partners.

Although efforts were made to crosscheck the accuracy of the data and information that is contained in this report, the author takes full responsibility for any errors, whether by omission or commission. This report therefore represents the independent views and opinions of the author, which may not necessarily be the views and opinions of the UN in Maldives or its development partners.

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Maldives United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2011-2015 was signed in 2010 by the Government of Maldives (GOM) and 16 UN agencies, of which four had resident presence and 12 were non-resident. This evaluation of the Maldives UNDAF 2011 -2015 was commissioned by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Maldives in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 67/226, which ‘requested the funds and programmes, and encouraged the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities, to intensify the use and the evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the evaluations of the United Nations system-wide contribution to national development results’.

The evaluation was undertaken by an independent consultant over a period of 30 working days starting on 3 July to 22 October 2014. The purpose of the evaluation is to inform the decision makers in Maldives on how to enhance the role and contribution of the UN System in support of national policies and strategies to achieve national development results in the context of transition to the Middle Income Country (MIC) status. Within this context, the evaluation assessed the progress made against the results envisaged in the UNDAF and provided evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDAF in the Maldives.

Overall the evaluation found that the outputs of individual UN agencies were visible, but the overall contribution to UNDAF outcomes was not that apparent. This was in part due to the defect of the UNDAF design, which lacked a clear strategic logic. In addition there was very little coordination among UN agencies, while the coordination mechanisms that were established were not fully operationalised.

In spite of these weaknesses, the UN contributed and added value to addressing development challenges in Maldives in several ways. UN agencies contributed to develop national institutional systems and capacities in the planning, collection and use of evidence-based data to support policy formulation and planning. Secondly, UN studies and surveys highlighted inequalities that are normally concealed by aggregated data such as MDG+ and graduation to middle-income country. And thirdly, through some of their programmes, UN agencies supported the government to institutionalise systems and develop guidelines for inclusiveness, targeting and reaching the most vulnerable groups.

Based on analysis of the information collected from review of documents and interviews with key stakeholders, including UN agency senior management and programme staff, central and local government officials, independent institutions and civil society organisations, the evaluation made the following findings.

Evaluation findings

- The design of the UNDAF was too broad and generic and lacked fundamental characteristic of a strategic framework

- While efforts were made to respond to changes in the country context, there was general lack of clarity on national priorities
- The UNDAF was aligned to international goals, conventions and treaties
- The UNDAF contributed to strengthen national capacities in health planning and service delivery
- UNDAF programmes did not have expected impact on behaviour at community and individual level
- UNDAF support helped to highlight critical gaps in policies and issues on the quality of education
- UN advocacy contributed to institutionalise social protection services for women, youth and children
- The UN contributed to prevention of HIV and substance abuse
- The scale and focus of UN interventions did not sufficiently target the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to impact on poverty.
- There was general lack of reliable data and effective monitoring tools to assess attributable contribution
- The normative role of the UN in rule of law, access to justice, human rights and public accountability contributes to social cohesion and political stability
- The UN did not give substantial priority and support to decentralisation and empowerment of civil society to meaningfully impact on governance
- Gender was not effectively mainstreamed in sector ministries and the national gender machinery was weak
- Some of the core UN principles were better mainstreamed than others
- The UN contributed to the development and use of evidence-based policy formulation and planning
- UN studies and surveys highlighted inequalities that are normally concealed by aggregated data such as MDG+ and graduation to MIC
- The UN helped to institutionalise systems and develop guidelines to identify and target the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
- The UN in Maldives was not operating as a 'Delivering as One'
- UN-Government coordination and national ownership of the UNDAF was weak
- Lack of clear long-term national strategic framework and frequent changes of government structures and institutional mandates affects sustainability
- Project documents do not include a clearly articulated sustainability plan
- Graduation to MIC status made it hard for UN agencies to mobilise resources, while government had no capacity to upscale service delivery on its own

The UN in Maldives is operating in a challenging environment, which among many other factors is characterised by (a) numerous and widely dispersed small islands with small populations that do not provide sufficient economies of scale for decentralised public service delivery, (b) the majority of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) members are non-resident agencies (NRAs), while at the same time resident agencies have very limited staff and resources, and (c) the country graduated to middle income status, bringing with it a different

set of dynamics for development cooperation. There are therefore a considerable number of key lessons that emerged during the implementation of the UNDAF

Lessons learned

- * Traditional models of UN development assistance may not work that well in a middle income country (MIC). A basic assumption for a MIC is that the government has increased access to resources and institutional capacity to address development challenges. This alters the role of the UN, which is usually defined in terms of delivering development assistance towards MDG achievement. The implications for the UN may include developing new partnerships, particularly with the private sector. In addition, as a MIC, Maldives is an attractive destination for international migrants, which impacts on government's capacity to provide basic services; thereby creating a further dilemma for the UN.
- * Inequality and access to services may actually decline in MIC. The Maldives' high dependence on tourism, combined a variety of other factors has led to lack of opportunities and growing levels of unemployment, especially among women and youth. However, the rapid economic growth may lead policy-makers to think that economic progress led and defined by the government comes first and issues of democratic governance and accountability are of lower priority. The UN may therefore have to re-examine its strategy on engagement with civil society in order to strengthen their capacity to participate in decision-making as well their demand for public accountability.
- * NRAs have regional programmes and may belong to more than one UNCT. Although NRAs bring expertise that may not be available among resident agencies, there is a challenge of institutionalised coordination covering both covering both programming and operational activities due to physical distance and the cost of travel. This may affect the UNCT's capacity for joint planning and implementation.
- * An UNDAF with many outcomes is difficult to coordinate. UN agencies may work in silos based on their institutional mandates and their interventions may not have the critical scale to make a significant impact at the result level.
- * It is difficult to monitor and measure performance without a common indicator framework.
- * Adequate capacity is required in the UNRCO in order for the UNCT to effectively coordinate the UNDAF implementation.

Based on the findings and lessons learned, the eight recommendations were made to strengthen UN system delivery and coherence in the context of Delivering as One (DAO).

Recommendations

1. *The UNCT should undertake a comprehensive assessment (SWOT analysis) to reposition itself strategically in order to enhance its relevance and effectiveness.*

The UNCT should use the process of developing the next UNDAF as an opportunity to carry out a strategic assessment of its comparative advantages in order to reposition itself for the emerging challenges in Maldives. The analysis should include (but not limited to) the following issues:

- a) Funding alternatives.
- b) Role of NRAs in the context of Maldives and DAO.
- c) Partnerships in the context of MIC

2. The UNCT should strengthen its role as “partner of choice” for both duty bearers and rights holders.

The UNCT should re-examine its strategy on how it can effectively and equitably serve both providers and users of services, by adding value for the duty-bearers as well as rights holders. In this regards, the UNCT may consider two major areas; (i) strengthening the role of the UN as providers of high quality data for policy and decision-making; and (ii) strengthening institutional capacity of civil society to contribute meaningfully to development and for holding government to account. This way, the UN can reposition itself as “champion for inclusive growth” and “voice of the voiceless”.

3. The UNCT should reduce the number of UNDAF focus areas and outcomes.

The UN in Maldives should identify relevant strategic priority areas that best reflect its comparative advantages and presence in the Maldives in consultation with the government. The UNCT may consider the following for possible priority areas in the next UNDAF:

- (i) Youth empowerment and employment,
- (ii) Environment and climate change adaptation,
- (iii) Democratic governance and social cohesion, and
- (iv) Economic diversification and agriculture development.

4. UN agencies should strengthen UNDAF monitoring and reporting through use of national indicator framework.

Using the national indicator framework provides an opportunity for the UN to identify relevant gaps in the national statistical systems, thereby opening a window to further strengthen national capacities.

5. The UNCT should consider ways to strengthen joint programming.

Joint programmes are an effective tool for strengthening the UN’s ‘delivering as one’ approach, and can strengthen inter-agency collaboration.

6. UN agencies should ensure that project documents include a clear exit strategy and sustainability plan.

Effective exit and sustainability planning should clarify and define the UN's role and responsibilities to national and local beneficiaries as being time bound, thereby reducing the potential for misunderstandings and future dependency.

7. The UNCT should strengthen UNDAF coordination mechanisms, including Theme Groups.

Theme groups constitute the mechanism for coordinating work of the UNDAF. The UNCT should ensure that the theme groups develop joint work plans, so that they can be accountable for joint planning, monitoring and reporting.

8. The UNCT should strengthen capacity of the UNRCO and explore alternative sources of funding.

The UNRC and UNCT should develop a well-considered coordination architecture, taking into account that majority UN agencies are non-resident. The UNCT should also consider options to strengthen the capacity of the UNRCO, including, through resource mobilisation from traditional and non-traditional donors.

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C. ACRONYMS

ADMP	Agriculture Development Master Plan
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CP	Country Programme
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CSO(s)	Civil Society Organisation(s)
DAO	Delivering as One
DNP	Department of National Planning
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOM	Government of Maldives
HDI	Human Development Index
HPA	Health Protection Agency
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HRCM	Human Rights Commission of the Maldives
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMR	Infant Mortality Ratio
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISDR	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
LDC(s)	Least Developed Country (s)
JJU	Juvenile Justice Unit
JP	Joint Programme
LECReD	Low Emission Climate Resilient Development
LSE	Life Skills Education
MARP	Most at Risk Population
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
MEMP	Maldives Environmental Management Project
MHRYS	Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports
MIA	Ministry of Islamic Affairs
MIC	Middle Income Country
MED	Ministry of Economic Development
MOD	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MMA	Maldives Monetary Authority
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MTR	Mid-term Review

MVR	Maldives Rufiyaa
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NFP	National Forestry Policy
NRA(s)	Non-resident Agency (s)
NSPA	National Social Protection Authority
OHCHR	Office of the High Commission for Human Rights
RBM	Results-Based Management
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SME(s)	Small and Medium Enterprise(s)
SOP(s)	Standard Operation Procedure(s)
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNAIDS	UN Joint Team on HIV and AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNODC	United Nations office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
VAW	Violence Against Women
XB	Extra-Budget (resources)

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Evaluation Context

1. The Maldives United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2011-2015 was signed in 2010 by the Government of Maldives (GOM) and 16 UN agencies, of which four had resident presence and 12 were non-resident.¹ This evaluation of the Maldives UNDAF 2011 -2015 was commissioned by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Maldives in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 67/226, which ‘requested the funds and programmes, and encouraged the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities, to intensify the use and the evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the evaluations of the United Nations system-wide contribution to national development results’.² The day-to-day management and support of the evaluation was facilitated by the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office (UNRCO).

2. The evaluation was undertaken by an independent consultant over a period of 30 working days starting on 3 July to 22 October 2014. The UNDAF evaluation was conducted in a consultative manner and in compliance with the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), and is therefore independent of interference or influence on its analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

3. This report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Country Level Evaluation of the Maldives UNDAF 2011 – 2015. It is envisioned that the main users of the UNDAF evaluation report will be the UNCT and UN partners including the Government of Maldives (GOM), development partners and civil society organizations (CSOs).

4. The report includes the overarching questions as outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) in order to provide reference points to the key questions posed for this evaluation. The report is presented in seven chapters.

- Chapter 1 introduces the report including a description of the evaluation methodology.
- Chapter 2 presents the country context and describes the development challenge in Maldives as well as government policies and strategies.
- Chapter 3 describes the UNDAF and presents its strategy and results framework.
- Chapter 4 contains the evaluation findings in accordance with the guidelines of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) criteria for evaluation of: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

¹ Resident agencies are: United Nations development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organisation (WHO).

² General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/Res/67/226) of 21 December 2012, para 182.

- Chapter 5 contains the lessons learned and good practices emerging from the UNDAF implementation.
- Chapters 6 and 7 contain the conclusions and recommendations respectively.

1.2. Purpose and Objectives

5. The purpose of the evaluation is to inform the decision makers in Maldives on how to enhance the role and contribution of the UN System in support of national policies and strategies to achieve national development results in the context of transition to the Middle Income Country (MIC) status. Within this context, the evaluation assessed the progress made against the UNDAF results and provided evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDAF results in the country.

6. As articulated in the evaluation terms of reference (TOR) and further agreed during the inception phase, the specific objectives of the evaluation were:

- To assess overall progress made against the national development goals.
- To determine the extent to which cross-cutting issues (poverty, environmental sustainability, human rights, equity, vulnerabilities, gender equality and empowerment of women, and HIV/AIDS) were mainstreamed in relevant outcomes.
- To assess the effectiveness of UNDAF Action Plan and the UN system coherence as a Delivering as One (DAO) approach.
- To assess how effectively evidence-based data was used for planning and policy-making purposes.
- To assess the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies used to achieve outcomes.
- To assess the relevance, including strengths and weaknesses of existing partnerships including state partners, independent institutions and civil society with a view to identify potential partners for the next UNDAF cycle.
- To make substantive and practical recommendations for the design of the next UNDAF.

1.3. Scope of the Evaluation

7. The evaluation covered the period 2011 to June 2014, focusing specifically on the UNDAF Action Plan and provided evidence based on the following five evaluation criteria:

- **Relevance** of UNDAF in terms of responsiveness to the needs and national priorities of Maldives.
- **Effectiveness** of the UNDAF in terms of contribution to agreed UNDAF outcomes and whether any major changes in the development landscape could reasonably be attributed to the UNDAF, including their impact.
- **Efficiency** of the UNDAF as a coordination and partnership framework, including specifically to what extent implementation helped to minimize transaction costs for UN agencies, the GOM and Donors.

- **Sustainability** of UNDAF supported results and strategies.
8. The evaluation had a particular emphasis on four key areas:
- a. Response to the national development objectives, including the extent to which UN agencies were able to respond effectively to changes in national needs and priorities, or to shifts caused by crisis and/or major political changes,
 - b. Coherence and results oriented strategy, more specifically, the added-value of the UNDAF as well as individual UN Agencies, and to what extent the observed results within the eight UNDAF focus areas³ would have been achieved without UN support,
 - c. Joint programming processes focusing on whether the UNDAF Action Plan mechanism facilitated joint programming and joint synergies across participating agencies, and application of UN programming principles, and
 - d. The role of government in terms of ownership and leadership both operationally as well as programmatically.

1.4. Evaluation Approach

9. The methodology was agreed with the UNRCO as the commissioner of the evaluation. An evaluation inception report was prepared and submitted for comments. The evaluation was participatory and stakeholders had opportunity to provide inputs and comments during presentation of preliminary findings and draft report. The final version of this report incorporates stakeholder comments from these processes.

10. The following five-step approach was adopted.

a) **Document Review.** Desk review of UNDAF and UN agency reports, including UNCT annual reports and UNDAF annual reviews, and other official government reports and publications. The desk review culminated with a draft inception report outlining the evaluation plan and methodology, to which the UNRCO and UN agencies provided comments before its approval. The list of documents reviewed is at Annex 1 to this report.

b) **Individual Interviews.** A data collection mission to Maldives was undertaken from 3 to 21 August 2014. A total of 85 individuals were interviewed. These were drawn from UN agency senior management and programme staff, officials of the Government of Maldives from key ministries and departments, and representatives of independent institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs). Telephone interviews were also conducted with staff from the non-resident agencies (NRAs). The list of individuals interviewed is at Annex 2.

³ UNDAF focus areas: (i) Health, (ii) Education, (iii) Social Security and Protection, (iv) Substance Abuse and HIV Prevention, (v) Economic Sector, (vi) Environment, Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction, (vii) Democratic Governance, and (viii) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

- c) **Field Visits.** A visit was undertaken to Laamu Atoll, where the consultant interviewed members of the Atoll Council and two Island Councils, as well as local NGOs. The selection of the Atoll was agreed between the consultant and UNRCO.
- d) **Preliminary analysis.** Qualitative analysis of the data was undertaken to extract information linked to the evaluation questions outlined in the terms of reference and inception report. Preliminary findings were presented to the Evaluation Management Group (EMG) for comments as part of triangulation and validation of information.
- e) **Comments to draft report.** The draft evaluation report was presented to stakeholders for discussion and comment. The final version of this report incorporates those comments.

1.5. Limitations

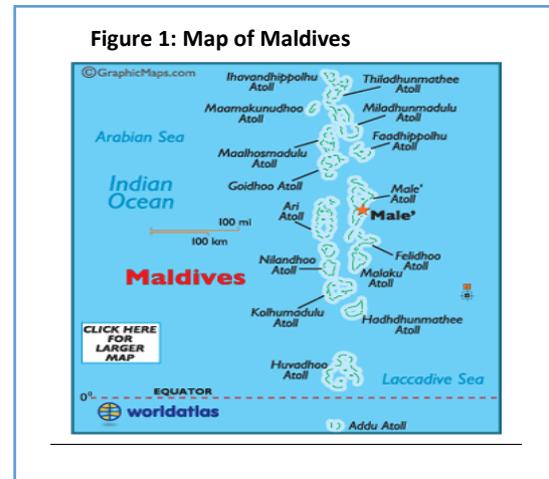
11. The results matrix served as the UNDAF theory of change logic, but the UN had not been regularly reporting on the basis of its results groups, thereby limiting the evaluation's capability to determine the extent of UN contribution in a systematic manner. Output indicators were not consistently monitored, and in some instances baseline data was not established; thus making it difficult to assess the degree of progress against key results using the indicator framework.

12. The evaluation also faced a challenge of obtaining updated data on the status of indicators. A request was sent out to UN agencies to provide data on the progress of output and outcome indicators based on the baselines and targets established in the UNDAF. This data was either not available or not compiled in the format as per the UNDAF indicators. Some UN agencies were therefore unable to provide the data by the time of drafting of this report. In addition to data on progress of indicators, UN agencies were also requested to provide financial data on their resource mobilisation and expenditures. This information was not made available to the consultant by the time of drafting (only five UN agencies provided financial data).

13. The consultant was only able to visit one Atoll and two Island councils. Given the diversity and disparities between different Atolls and Islands, there was a risk that some of the relevant issues may not have been sufficiently captured.

II. COUNTRY CONTEXT

14. The Maldives (Figure 1) is made up of 1,190 coral islands out of which about⁴ 190 are currently inhabited. For administrative purposes the islands are divided into twenty atolls. The total area of land is 298 sq. km and the total area of the coastline is 644 km. With 99 percent of its territory being ocean, the Maldives has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 859,000 sq. km rich in marine life and biodiversity. The island nation was colonized by the Dutch and the Portuguese during the 16th and 17th century and was also a British Protectorate from 1887 until 1965. Although the country retained full internal sovereignty during the years 1887 – 1965, the Maldives gained full independence from Britain on 26th July 1965.



2.1. Development Context

2.1.1. Economy

15. Despite the global economic crisis and the severe devastation caused by a tsunami in 2004, Maldives attained average economic growth of 6 per cent between 2000 and 2009. This high economic growth was spurred by the rapid expansion of tourism and the corresponding development in related sectors. In January 2011, Maldives graduated a middle income country (MIC) status, and its Human Development Index (HDI) rose to 0.77⁵ making it the highest ranking country in South Asia. Maldives also achieved five of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ahead of schedule, making it South Asia's only "MDG+" country.

16. Tourism contributes about 28 percent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and more than 60 percent of foreign exchange receipts.⁶ Over 90 percent of government tax revenue comes from import duties and tourism-related taxes, while also receipts from the tourism sector played a significant role in employment, income and addressing the food import bills. However, this high dependency of the national economy on tourism created challenges, including marginalization of rural communities and issues of social disharmony.

17. The contribution of fisheries to the economy has been declining (MMA, 2012); affected by the persistent decline in fish catch, owing to both environmental factors and higher fuel

⁴ Different sources have different data on the number of inhabited islands ranging from 187 to 200.

⁵ The Maldives HDI (2013) was 0.698 according to the Global Human Development Report 2014

⁶ Maldives Monetary Authority: Annual Economic Review, 2012.

prices. Total fish catch declined by 12 percent in 2011, although the fish export sector performed favourably as a result of higher tuna prices in the international market.

18. Moreover, the importance of agriculture had been underestimated in the past when its contribution was measured solely on the grounds of its value added to GDP. National estimates indicated that about 14,000 fisherman and 9,000 farmers were actively engaged in both sectors supporting a large population of rural families. Recent statistics indicated a slow but steady growth in the agriculture sector, contributing 1.6 percent to GDP. However, while agriculture's contribution to GDP was low, it remained vital sector from a livelihood and employment perspective.

19. The longer-term prospects for sustainable agriculture in the Maldives faced a challenge of the shortage of land, labour with appropriate technical skills, capital and investment.⁷ The country faced a definite shortage of arable terrain, coupled with issues of appropriate land allocation, utilization and land tenure systems in both inhabited and uninhabited islands. In addition, labour shortage and the lack of skilled labour were an important impediment to sustainable agriculture. Although the age distribution of the population actively engaged in farming on some of the islands was growing as younger people joined the sector, the country lacked national capacity to adequately train and provide extension.

20. The influence of international price fluctuations was high on domestic prices in Maldives. As measured by the percentage change in the 12-month average of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Male', inflation increased to 11.3 percent at the end of 2011 from 6.2 percent at the end of 2010 (MMA, 2012). This trend continued, and at the end of the first quarter of 2012, inflation reached an unprecedented level of 19.8 percent. The domestic price pressures in early 2011 reflected the rise in global food and energy prices during the first half of 2011, while the inflation in the first quarter of 2012 was largely driven by the increase in food prices, especially fish prices, owing to the continued decline in fish catch. At the same time, the prices of other food items also increased from 3.5 percent to 6.0 percent in January 2012, largely due to the increase in the rate of Goods and Services Tax (MMA, 2012).

2.1.2. Population and socio-economic

21. The Population and Housing Census of Maldives 2006 indicated that the population of Maldives was 298,968 with an annual average population growth rate (2008–2010) of 1.6%.⁸ In 2013, the population was estimated to be in the region of 336,000.⁹ The Maldivian population was widely dispersed, inhabiting over 190 islands out of the total of 1,190 islands in the archipelago. The average population size per island was estimated at 900 people. In the estimated 194 inhabited islands, 128 had a population less than 1,000. Besides Male' (capital) only 2 islands had a population more than 5,000. The estimated population in the capital was

⁷ FAO Country Programme Framework

⁸ This figure does not include an estimated 100,000 expatriate workers, 70,000 of whom are estimated to live in the Maldives primarily in Male and on the resorts. Mostly unmarried men from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

⁹ Situation Analysis of Children in the Republic of the Maldives, UNICEF 2013

over 100,000 which accounted for a third of the total population. The national population density is 977 per square kilometre, making it among the highest in the world (FAO, 2012).

22. Maldives had one of the lowest labor force participation rates in South Asia, especially among women. Overall employment was 64 percent with 75 percent male and 54 percent of female labor force participating.¹⁰ Unemployment increased from 16 percent to 28 percent from 2006 to 2010. However, despite this high unemployment, the incidence of poverty was considered marginal, although the gap between low and high income groups was widening. In addition, there were considerable disparities in access to basic social services between urban and the rural islands, as well as disparities by gender and age group. With regards to gender equality, Maldives ranked 101 out of the 135 countries in the Gender Gap Index, with a score of 0.648,¹¹ reflecting a considerable gap in women’s opportunities.

23. According to the most recent MDG Progress Report (2010), Maldives had already achieved 5 out of the 8 MDG goals, making it South Asia’s only MDG+ country with the highest per-capita income in South Asia. This performance was driven largely by a strong and sustained social sector expenditures and allocations in the national budget. Over the period 2000 – 2010, Maldives spent an average of 40 percent of its budget on the social sector.¹²

24. As reported by resident UN agencies (Table 1), more work remained to be done in order to consolidate and sustain the progress achieved on the MDGs.

Table 1: Extracts on the status of MDGs

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Although MDG1 has been achieved in Maldives, additional efforts must be undertaken to address remaining gaps, particularly in terms of eliminating inequalities within the atolls, expanding limited employment opportunities, especially for youth, and addressing persistent high levels of under-nutrition among children.
MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education	The goal of universal primary education was achieved in the Maldives by 2002. The Ministry of Education reported 100 percent net enrolment in primary level Grades 1 to 7 annually since 2002. Similarly, the 2006 Census shows that 98 percent of children between the age of 6 and 12 were attending school. Access to primary education is available in all islands and there is no significant gender disparity in school enrolment or performance. Maldives has also constantly maintained an overall literacy rate of 98 percent which is among the highest literacy rates in the world.
MDG 3: Promote gender equality and women’s empowerment	There is gender parity in primary education with 100% net enrolment of both girls and boys while there is more female enrolment in secondary levels of education. The ratio of women to men with tertiary qualifications in 1990 was 24 percent compared to 58 percent in 2006. With the higher net enrolment ratio of girls in secondary education the gender gap in tertiary education is predicted to narrow further. In 2006, the share of women in the labour force was 37 percent compared to 20 percent in 1990.
MDG 4: Reduce child mortality	Maldives achieved the target in 2005, having reduced under-five mortality from 48 per 1000 live births in 1990, to 16 per 1000 live births in 2005. However, there have been fluctuations in child mortality rates over the past few years and progress needs to be closely monitored. Maldives has also

¹⁰ Maldives Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2011

¹¹ Global Gender Gap Report, 2011

¹² Asia Pacific Ministerial Dialogue, August 2013.

	maintained close to universal vaccination for Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) vaccines over the years and has one of the highest vaccine coverage in the South Asia region.
MDG 5: Improve maternal health	Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has been reduced from 500 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 69 per 100,000 live births in 2006, this target has been achieved. However, gender inequality is one of the social determinants at the heart of inequity in health, so progress in achieving MDG3 (promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment) affects progress on MDG5.
MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases	Maldives has not yet achieved MDG6. Major challenges remain to be overcome both on HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, and require further sustained efforts. In particular, it will be crucial to maintain Maldives’ low-prevalence status with regard to HIV.
MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	This goal has not been achieved. Environmental sustainability is one of the most fundamental problems in Maldives, challenging the basic right to life.
MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development	Although considerable efforts are under way, MDG8 remains a daunting challenge just five years before the 2015 target date.

Source: Compiled from UNDP Maldives website, www.mv.undp.org

2.1.3. Governance

25. Maldives faced significant challenges due to uncertainty in the political sphere since the country’s first-ever openly contested elections in 2008. The development of effective and inclusive governance institutions and processes, consolidation of the rule of law, and the evolution of an informed civil society and an independent, professional media were in their formative stages. Lack of consensus between the executive and legislative branches, and within the parliament, often slowed implementation of the new constitution and inhibited progress of the democratisation process, including inability of parliament to pass laws.

26. A report on the independence of the judiciary noted “...*inconsistencies and gaps in the Maldives’ legislation. Judges have been relying on laws and acts that were passed before the Constitution of 2008 and may be in contradiction with it, such as the Penal Code and the Evidence Act, which are mostly incomplete and outdated and do not reflect the modern living conditions of the Maldives. There exist no Criminal Procedure Code, no Sentencing Act and no Civil Procedure Code. A draft Penal Code, including sentencing guidelines, an Evidence Bill and a Criminal Procedure Code have been pending for years before the Parliament. As regards the civil justice system in particular, concerns were expressed that not enough attention is given to the development of commercial, corporate and other regulations, which are most needed in the current economic environment*”.¹³

27. The human rights situation in Maldives improved since the initiation of democratic reforms, but there were still some challenges around civil and political rights, and emerging complex issues such as human trafficking and the rights of migrant workers. In this context the Human Rights Commission of the Maldives (HRCM), has a considerably huge mandate, including monitoring, promoting and protection of human rights, and in terms of the OPCAT (Optional Protocol to the Prevention Against Torture) was also the National Preventive

¹³ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, A/HRC/23/43/Add.3

Mechanism. However the Commission lacked sufficient resources (both financial and human), as well as technical and institutional capacity to discharge its mandate effectively.

28. With its population spread over more than 190 islands, most of them with a population of less than 1,000 people, the delivery of social services and public administration was very difficult and costly. However, the legislative and policy landscape for local governance was characterised by consistent changes and reforms. The Maldives Parliament passed the Decentralisation Act in April 2010, to formalise the roles and responsibilities of Atoll and Island Councils and required that they would be democratically elected; and also established Local Government Authority to which the councils would be accountable. However, although mandated to provide basic municipal services island councils did not control the assets of the Atolls and Islands, which continued to be under the control of the utility corporations that were established in 2009. Lack of policy consistency and coherence was providing fertile ground for rent seeking behaviour by officials at all levels.

29. Maldives also faced an increasing challenge of trafficking and consumption of drugs. Drugs were easily available on the streets, mainly cannabis and heroin, and around 80 percent of the prison population were drug offenders with approximately 30 percent serving life sentences for drug-related offences. The vast majority of prisoners were young, and the criminalization of young drug users and the imposition of severe sentences was a particularly serious problem.¹⁴

2.1.4. Environment

30. Maldives is the lowest-lying country in the world, with its highest natural ground height of only 2.4 meters and 80 percent of the landmass at one meter or less above sea level. Maldives therefore is faced significantly with the threat posed by climate change and the rising of the sea-level. While Maldives has a long history of resilience in the face of its delicate geographic and environmental profile, However, pressures in the form of climate change factors now increase the threat of rising sea levels and sea temperatures, as well as more frequent and severe weather events. A total of 90 inhabited islands have been flooded at least once in the course of the last six years, and 37 islands have been flooded regularly, at least once a year. With over 40 per cent of the population and housing structures in Maldives within 100 meters of the coastline, flooding and other natural disaster risks threaten to damage infrastructures and the provision of essential services potentially affecting food security, livelihoods, health and the overall well-being of vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and the poor, in particular.¹⁵

31. Saltwater intrusions in freshwater aquifers were already a major environmental threat on several islands, particularly those severely affected by the tsunami tidal waves of

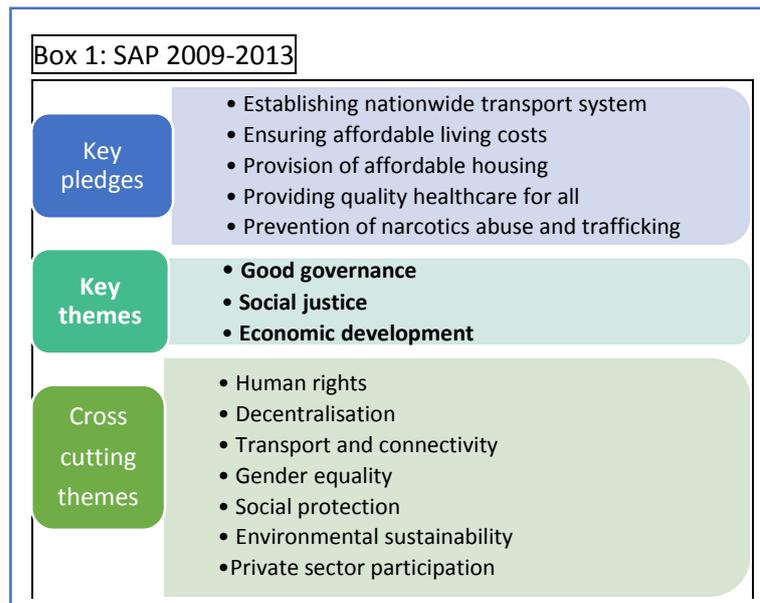
¹⁴ National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1; A/HRC/WG.6/9/MDV/1/Rev.1

¹⁵ Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, A/HRC/19/54/Add.1

December 2004, where deeper-rooted trees with low salt tolerance such as mango and breadfruit were severely affected. The fisheries sector was also perceived to be at risk from the events of climate change and already the pressure was being felt with reduced fish catch, damage to reefs, emerging diseases and destruction of productive assets due to rough seas and changing ocean currents.

2.2. Government Policies and Strategies

32. The UNDAF 2011 – 2015 was developed at a time when Maldives was considered a nascent democracy, following the establishment of a new constitution and national elections in 2008. The government had developed its first medium term plan known as the Strategic Action Plan (SAP 2009 – 2013), which outlined good governance, social justice and economic development as the key themes for development (Box 1). The economic development policy agenda was based on the diversification of



the economy to achieve sustainable growth and reduced vulnerability from external shocks as well as attain greater self-reliance. The country’s strategic economic policies also highlighted the importance of developing the fisheries and agriculture sectors alongside tourism.

33. The country went through a period of political unrest culminating with resignation of the President in 2012, followed by elections in 2013. The government that came into power in 2013 decided to pursue its development agenda based on its election manifesto, rather than develop a national strategic framework. This included a manifesto specifically for the (a) youth, (b) sports manifesto, and (c) ‘Yageen’ manifesto— that outlined programs targeting health, fisheries, decentralization, women’s rights, national security, agriculture, transport and tourism. However, many of the legislative and policy instruments of the previous governments were not changed. Some key policies and strategies as highlighted by the Department of National Planning (DNP) are discussed below.¹⁶

34. On youth unemployment, the government established the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) programme in 2005. The programme had also been diversified to

¹⁶ National Operational Review, 2012

offer trainings on hospitality and tourism, construction and building, agriculture, engineering and handicrafts. The basic trade functions of the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) such as trade registration and obtaining permits were decentralized to island level. The MED also established Business Development Service Centres (BDSC) in a number of Atolls to provide business consultancy services and to conduct trainings on entrepreneurship to the local community businesses.

35. Social sector spending had been growing since 1995 and tripled since 2000 from an average of USD 116 million annually between 2000 - 2004 to an average of USD 337 million during 2005 - 2009. The enactment of Law Number 8/2009 Pension Act, Law Number 8/2010 Disability Act and Law Number 15/2011 National Health Insurance Act and the establishment of the National Social Protection Authority (NSPA) extended a comprehensive social security system towards the vulnerable population.

36. The National Health Insurance Act (15/2011) established the NSPA and extended a comprehensive social security system towards the vulnerable population. In 2012, the Government launched the social insurance programme (Aasandha Programme) in which the State provides up to MVR 100,000 of health care services for all Maldivian citizens free of charge. Other welfare services are given through financial assistance for chronic illnesses such as cancer and for medical evacuations. Government also provides allowances to vulnerable families to alleviate poverty, including the single parent allowance of MVR 1,000 per child up to a maximum of MVR 3,000 per family; provision of a monthly allowance of MVR 2,000 and assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and prosthetic limbs to people registered in the National Disability Register.

37. In line with its vision for agriculture to become the third important driving force for economic growth after tourism and fisheries, the government developed the Agriculture Development Master Plan, (ADMP), Agriculture Commercialisation Plan (ACP) and National Forestry Policy (NFP). To streamline the close linkages of fisheries and agriculture to the environment development agenda, Maldives was among the first countries to adopt the Kyoto Protocol under United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The government developed the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) to communicate the most urgent and immediate climate change adaptation needs of the Maldives as stipulated under UNFCCC identifying the policy directions for natural resource management.

38. To ensure sustainable resources management, the Maldives Environmental Management Project (MEMP) was implemented under the Ministry of Environment and Energy. Regional waste management centres were established in the northern atolls, and capacity development in environmental resource management was carried out in collaboration with the Maldives National University and through overseas scholarships. A draft bill on waste management was drafted and it was expected to be ratified in 2013.

39. Law Number 3/2012 Domestic Violence Act outlines procedures and protocols to be followed by the Government, social workers and law enforcers with regard to domestic violence cases, and also provides protection against all forms of violence for victims of Violence against Women (VAW) and Domestic Violence (DV).

40. In the area of drugs and substance abuse, alternative rehabilitation facilities were established to forgo imprisonment and direct involved youth to detox centres. A Juvenile Justice Unit (JJU) was established in 2005 to address the increase in juvenile delinquencies and to address the need for the establishment of a system that facilitated the rehabilitation and reform of young offenders.

41. Law Number 7/2010 (Decentralization Act) created the Local Governance Authority (LGA) and Atoll and Island Councils. The local councils have mandate to prepare development plans for their local communities and secure funding through the central government and through other sources. Health Service Corporations and Utility Companies were also established in 2010, at provincial level to provide respective services in a decentralized manner. However, these corporations and companies had since been dissolved.

42. An Anti-Human Trafficking Action Plan 2012 - 2015 was developed; and the Anti-Human Trafficking and People Smuggling Bill was drafted and translated. The bill was approved by Parliament and ratified by the President in December 2013. The government was also revising Law Number 1/2007 Immigration Act to make it more comprehensive and address loop holes on human trafficking.

43. Furthermore, Maldives had signed and ratified many of the international treaties and conventions. In compliance with obligations for implementation and reporting on international conventions, the government had developed various master plans and strategies in the context of its national policy framework.

Maldives was reviewed under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in May 2010 and the state accepted over 100 recommendations to improve the human rights situation in the country. A mid-term assessment evaluating the progress in implementation of recommendations was submitted in 2013.

The Maldives for the first time reported to the Human Rights Committee under the International covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) in 2012.

III. DESCRIPTION OF UNDAF 2011 - 2015

44. The UNDAF serves as the strategic long term planning document for the UNCT in Maldives. The purpose of the framework document is to support the achievement of the Maldives' Strategic Action Plan (SAP) 2009 - 2013. The SAP's goals support the country's attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the realization of the values and principles of the Millennium Declaration.

45. The Maldives is a self-starter Delivering as One (DAO) with a One Fund. The UN in Maldives developed an UNDAF Action Plan replacing the Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), while the other specialised agencies maintained their respective Country Programme frameworks.

3.1. UNDAF Strategy

46. The strategy of the United Nations in the context of supporting the SAP was to leverage its comparative advantage in three areas of cooperation:

- ∇ First, providing policy analysis and advice in elaborating the components of the action plan for implementation, including in improving regulatory frameworks and participatory oversight, and in data collection and access for planning and monitoring purposes;
- ∇ Second, using its experience of advocacy and communications strategies to facilitate consensus building amongst stakeholders and support behavioural change in the society; and
- ∇ Third, making available a range of expertise and knowledge in designing specific and practical capacity development strategies to ensure the SAP targets are realized while also enhancing capacities in government and other institutions to lead the change process.

47. The UNDAF is structured around four main pillars; (i) Social Equity, (ii) Democratic Governance, (iii) Poverty and Environment, and (iv) Gender Equality. Within these four pillars, the UN focused on eight strategic areas (Box 2) that were aligned with the national priority areas in the SAP. These were further strengthened by mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues. Emphasis was given to prioritising concerns and needs of youth as well as achieving regional balance in the context of Maldives' decentralization and regionalization initiatives.

Box 2: UNDAF Focus Areas

1. Health
2. Education
3. Social Security and Protection
4. Substance Abuse and HIV Prevention
5. Economic Equity
6. Environment, Climate Change Adaptation, and Disaster Risk Reduction
7. Democratic Governance
8. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

3.2. UNDAF Results Framework

48. The UNDAF contributed to 15 outcomes under the eight strategic focus areas. Specific UNDAF outputs were elaborated in the UNDAF Action Plan, making a combined total of 51 outputs to which UN agencies were directly accountable for the delivery of results (Table 2).¹⁷

¹⁷ The UNEG defines outputs as “the products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention and are within the control of the organization”. Outcomes are defined as “the short-term and medium-term results from the interventions of several actors.”

Table 2: UNDAF Results Framework

Strategic focus	National development priority	UNDAF Outcome	Outputs
Health	Strengthen health promotion, protection and advocacy for healthy public policies; enhance response of health system in emergencies	1. Targeted groups have equitable access to preventive and essential health care services and nutrition (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOPS)	4
Education	Equitable access to quality education for holistic development of child in all regions, including children with special needs. Align the education system to the economic and social needs of the country.	2. Children including those with special needs and vulnerable youth are engaged in quality, gender-responsive, and relevant educational programmes (UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, ILO, UNESCO)	4
Social security and protection	Establish a social floor (minimum social protection), to lay down the foundation of a system that is preventive (against poverty shocks), promotional (expand opportunities), and transformative (cohesion)	3. Most vulnerable and socially excluded groups have equitable access to basic child and family protection services (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO, ILO)	3
		4. Social security floor implemented as part of the national social security strategy to provide the vulnerable and socially excluded groups with systematic access to social security (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO)	3
Prevention of HIV and substance abuse	Provision of affordable basic healthcare as integral component of socio-economic development, and a coordinated and comprehensive national response to substance abuse	5. Most at risk (MARP) and vulnerable populations have equitable access to drug and HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services (UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, UNODC, UNFPA, ILO, UNAIDS, UNESCO)	5
Economic equity and decent work	Promote SME development, to diversify the economy and increase livelihoods and employment especially for women, and consolidate support services for SME development.	6. Opportunities are created for diversification of the economy in selected regions (UNDP, ILO, FAO, UNOPS, UNIDO, UNWTO, IFAD)	4
		7. Creation of opportunities for decent work and labour markets better governed and regulated in line with ILO principles/standards (ILO, UNDP, WHO)	4
Environment and climate change	Protect and preserve the natural environment to ensure prosperous economic development and healthy communities; reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve carbon neutrality; promote renewable energy technology applications; build institutional framework for DRR and climate change adaptation	8. Communities have access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation and sustainably manage the natural environment to enhance their livelihoods (UNICEF, UNDP, UNEP, WHO, FAO, UNICEF, ILO, UNOPS)	4
		9. Enhanced capacities at national and local levels to support low carbon life-styles, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction (UNDP, UNEP, WHO, ISDR, ESCAP, UNOPS, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIDO)	3
Democratic governance	Full independence of judiciary and independent institutions, improve access to justice and promote rule of law, protect and promote rights of citizens, improve public confidence in justice system	10. Increased transparency and accountability of public institutions with emphasis on decentralized bodies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNODC)	4
		11. Equitable access to justice and strengthened rule of law (UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, UNODC, OHCHR)	2
		12. Culture of respect for human rights advocated, fulfilled protected and fostered at all levels (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, WHO, UNESCO, OHCHR)	3
		13. Civil society is active and thriving (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, UNV, UNODC)	1
Gender equality and women's empowerment	Ensure that equality of women and men are upheld and are able to realize their full potential and participate in and benefit from democracy and development both in public and private life	14. Institutional capacity strengthened and framework in place to coordinate and plan national development at local and national levels (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNOPS, WHO, UNESCO, UNODC)	2
		15. Improved individual, institutional and systemic capacities to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, and to empower women and girls to enjoy their rights in all spheres of life in line with national commitments by 2015 (UNFPA, UN Women, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO)	5

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

49. Chapter 4 contains the main findings and issues arising from analysis of the information collected through document review and stakeholder interviews. The findings are structured around the evaluation criteria of Relevance (Section 4.1), Effectiveness (Section 4.2), Efficiency (Section 4.3), and Sustainability (Section 4.4).

4.1. Relevance of the UNDAF

Finding 1: The design of the UNDAF was too broad and generic and lacked the fundamental characteristic of a strategic framework

50. The UNDAF had total of 15 Outcomes and 51 Outputs. The issues that were addressed in the UNDAF broadly covered most (probably all) aspects of human and social development, whether viewed from an MDG perspective or from the perspective of socio-economic development. While this may not be a weakness by itself, it draws attention to issues to do with UN capacity in the country – both financial, human and technical, as well as its role as a non-funding partner.

51. In the first instance, there are only 6 UN agencies with resident presence out of total 16 that make up the UNCT. In the context of delivering as one, the UNCT established Theme Groups to coordinate work on the UNDAF results. With that many number of outcomes, the workload for resident agencies was very high, and it becomes difficult to coordinate work on the UNDAF. In addition, as the country graduated to middle income status, it becomes increasingly difficult to mobilise resources from donor partners, further constraining the UN's ability to effectively contribute to that many outcomes.

52. The genesis of the problem had its roots in the political landscape that existed at the time of the UNDAF formulation. A new government had just been elected into office following the approval of a new constitution and the multi-party elections in 2008. The incoming government abandoned the ongoing National Development Plan in favour of the development paradigm outlined in its election Manifesto. With support from the UN, the government developed a strategic action plan (SAP) based on the key crosscutting themes considered to be central to Maldives; (a) Environmental sustainability and climate change, (b) Gender equality, (c) Social protection, (d) Decentralization and regional development, (e) Private-public partnerships, and (f) Transport and connectivity.

53. The UN was caught-up in the optimism of the moment. At the time, the UNCT consisted of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNOPS and WHO, which had resident offices and FAO, which was represented by the FAO Advisor. Several UN staff members had been inducted into the new Government's team, which was seen as reinforcing the UN's role in providing key policy advice and support in the transition process. Following accession to its conventions in May 2009, the ILO had started to engage the Government, employers and trade unions to assist them with

strengthening the legal framework and operational capacities to improve labor relations and employment conditions. UNODC, IFAD and UNIDO were at various stages of discussion with the new Government and were indicating a likelihood to establish country presence. WHO had agreed to be part of the new UNDAF and agreed to have elements of their country strategy reflected in the document.

54. In that context, in the Situation Analysis of January 2010,¹⁸ the UN noted that:

“The UNCT will focus on developing sector programmes to match the SAP priorities and identifying those that warrant further joint efforts, including with other international partners. In the transition from Least Developed Country (LDC) status the physical presence of the UN as well as its access to global knowledge and experience should provide an increasing valuable resource to the government and other international partners. In this context also the UN will revisit with the government the idea of creating a one UN office, to maximize resources for development and ensure high levels of effectiveness in the post LDC era”.

55. According to UNDAF Guidelines, “...experience to date suggests that it is difficult to manage a large number of outcomes. It is recommended that the outcomes are limited in number and specifically reflect the capacities and comparative advantages of the UN system in the country. Outcomes may reflect the contribution of one, two or more agencies, though typically their achievement depends on the joint efforts of agencies. While agencies are accountable for achieving outputs, they are also accountable for their respective contributions towards the achievement of outcomes”¹⁹. Clearly therefore, the UNCT would need to undertake a comprehensive situation analysis, and combine it with a realistic assessment of its comparative advantages relative to other partners. This will assist the UN to identify key development gaps and areas in which it can make the most significant impact.

Finding 2: While efforts were made to respond to changes in the country context, there was general lack of clarity of national priorities

56. The socio-political environment in the Maldives was characterised by periods of social unrest and uncertainty. In February 2012, the President resigned from the office and the government announced that fresh elections would be held in July 2013.

57. These events highlighted the uncertainties in the programming environment and the need for the UN to review its programming strategies. A rapid situation assessment of the country situation was conducted to highlight the real and potential impacts of these political events on the implementation of UN development programmes and identify emerging issues that should be addressed.

¹⁸ Situation Analysis of Emerging Development Challenges in Maldives, January 2010.

¹⁹ How to Prepare an UNDAF (Part 1): Guidance Note for UN Country Teams, January 2010, page 12

58. A high-level meeting of the UNDAF Steering Committee co-chaired by the Minister of Finance and Treasury and the UN Resident Coordinator was held in July 2012, with participation of Government Ministers, Heads of Independent Commissions, the Parliament, Judiciary and the security sector. The meeting resolved that an up-to-date situation analysis should be undertaken to assess the crisis situation, highlight its real and potential impacts on implementation of UN development programmes, and identify emerging issues; and adjust UN programmes to reflect realistic targets in the context of constraints and risks for implementation; as well as mainstreaming conflict prevention and social cohesion across UN programmes and activities.

59. In light of the changes in the programming environment, the UNCT has conducted situation analyses annually. In 2013, the UNCT decided to conduct a mid-year review of the UNDAF and the UNDAF Action Plan to provide the UN system and national partners a platform to discuss emerging issues, concerns, and opportunities, and ensure that UN support remained relevant and effective. As a result, UN agencies had opportunity to review and adjust their activities and indicators in the UNDAF Action Plan.

60. A consistent challenge, however was the absence of a national development plan. UN agencies have noted a lack of clarity on government priorities on which to benchmark their planning. In addition, there was general misalignment between Government and UN perceptions of priority areas and expectations. Government officials were often driven by a need to show quick results in order to generate political capital, but the upstream support which typifies UN support in a middle-income country did not lend itself to showing immediate attributable results. This led to undercurrents of tension whereby government accuses the UN of only producing assessments and analyses and not delivering on development results.

61. UN efforts to respond to these changes do not appear to have helped to bring better clarity. Part of the challenge was that the UN operated for long periods without a substantive UNRC, which affected the UN's strategic leadership and high-level engagement with the government.

Finding 3: The UNDAF was aligned to international goals, conventions and treaties

62. The UNDAF was aligned to, and addressed relevant issues associated with achieving the MDGs. An analysis of the UNDAF results framework indicated that one or more UN agencies had interventions focused on each of the MDGs.

63. UN agency programmes were also appropriately aligned with relevant international treaties and conventions, according to their respective mandates. A few examples are highlighted; UNICEF's country programme revolved around the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its programme of work under the UNDAF addressed this through 5 result areas:

- Children enjoy the benefits of improved child rights legislation, policies, regulations and plans and contribute to legislative processes.

- Disaggregated data and information that contributes to realisation of child’s rights is accessible, analysed and used.
- Children enjoy learning in an inclusive child friendly environment and are aware of sustainable environmental practices.
- Women and children benefit from a responsive protection system and juvenile justice mechanisms.
- Child rights awareness enhanced through active monitoring and reporting by civil society groups and media.

64. The conventions on women’s rights defines discrimination against women as:

“Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field”.

65. This convention is addressed in the UNDAF under outcome 15 to which seven UN agencies contribute (UNFPA, UN Women, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and UNESCO). The programme of work of UNFPA had two components:

- a) The reproductive health and rights component, which contributed to improving access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health services and information for women, men and adolescents, including poor and vulnerable groups, at national and subnational level, and
- b) The gender equality component, focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of government bodies and the community to address gender issues for the full realization of the rights of women and girls.

66. Through various other UN agency country programmes, the UNDAF also supported the government to implement and meet its obligations under various international treaties and conventions, including; ILO conventions and core labour standards, Conventions on climate change, Human rights treaties, and Conventions on migration and human trafficking.

4.2. Effectiveness towards Development Outcomes

67. This section presents an assessment of the UNDAF’s effectiveness in achieving the development outcomes in the results framework. As per UNDG guidelines UNCTs are required to produce one UNDAF progress report to national authorities on progress towards the outcomes of the UNDAF results matrix, drawing on available evidence of what the UN has contributed towards these outcomes. The UNDAF progress report does not discuss UN-supported activities, but on how the outputs, produced by the UN or specific UN-supported projects and programmes, contributed towards progress in achieving the outcomes of the

UNDAF results matrix.²⁰ The analysis was based on review of documentary evidence such as UN agency annual reports and evaluations of projects, as well interviews with partners. While reference was made to the UNDAF outcome and output indicators in the UNDAF Action Plan, in some instances, the indicators were either poorly defined or lacked reliable data to assess progress.

4.2.1. Health Sector

68. The overall UNDAF objective for the health sector was to support the Government in reaching the MDG targets for reducing maternal and child mortality, and tackling under-nutrition of children, with special emphasis on groups that are vulnerable due to poverty, discrimination or location. The UN strategy was to focus on (i) community empowerment and capacity to promote and practice healthy behaviours; (ii) increased and equitable access to health and nutrition services for children, youth and women; (iii) equitable access of women and youth to preventive, promotional and curative reproductive health services; and (iv) strengthening the capacity of the health system to address health and nutrition during emergencies.

Table 3: Progress on Health Sector Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
1. Targeted groups have equitable access to preventive and essential health care services and nutrition	Maternal mortality ratio (2008) Baseline: 57/100,000 live births Target: 46/100,000 live births	MMR: 13/100,000 ⁽²⁰¹²⁾ NMR 6/100,000 ⁽²⁰¹²⁾ The Global Monitoring Report 2013 puts Maldives among countries that have achieved MDG goals on Maternal and Child Mortality. The UN in Maldives however notes that the set of indicators for MDG 5b have not been met.
	Neonatal mortality ratio (2008) Baseline: 10/1,000 live births Target: 7/1,000 live births	
	Prevalence of underweight in children <5 years Baseline: 17.30% Target: 10%	

Finding 4: The UNDAF contributed to strengthen national capacities in health planning and service delivery

69. The UN in Maldives was actively engaged with the national institutions that have a bearing on health delivery. Overall, the extensive provision of health-care services by the government had reduced disparities in access to services. It had also ensured a high degree of protection against the financial risks associated with medical treatment through pro-poor service provision. An outreach health service system for populations in small rural islands was established; and a social health insurance system “Aasandha” was introduced, in 2012, with

²⁰ Ibid. How to Prepare an UNDAF.

free universal access to the scheme for the entire population, subject to annual individual financial limits. The UN also supported the National Health Accounts survey, followed by situation review on health financing and policy options on health system re-design based on review of the evidence and data.

70. The Ministry of Health (MOH), with the support of the UN and other partners was conducting an evidence-based strategy to ensure availability of quality human resources for health (HRH) that meet the needs of the people of Maldives. The UN supported evaluation of the Health Master Plan 2006-2015, and preparation of a new Health Master Plan 2016-2025; including training materials on health planning. In collaboration with the Health Protection Agency (HPA) of the MOH, there was ongoing work to design and develop a Mother and Child Nutrition Guide and Manual for the purpose of supporting dietary behaviour changes of mothers, children and families. National infant and child feeding guidelines were developed. There were also plans to develop a separate manual for health care workers in order to build capacity of health care providers at community level.

71. In the area of family planning and reproductive health, UNFPA collaborated with HPA to support a workshop on Quality of Care and Clinical Guidelines for Counselling in Family Planning. The UN also supported the situation analysis of cervical cancer in Maldives, including evidence on capacity of health facilities, knowledge, attitude and practices on cervical cancer. Capacity of the MOH was strengthened to establish a national cervical cancer screening programme, which is now available in Maldives. National guidelines and protocol for cervical cancer screening were developed to be rolled out at national level.

72. The Reproductive Health Knowledge and Behaviour of Young Unmarried Women in Maldives was published in 2013, highlighting anecdotal evidence and community perceptions of sexual reproductive health knowledge and practices. The recommendations from research have been shared with the relevant Ministries to serve as evidence for programming and planning, as well as in advocacy with policy makers. Through this advocacy, the National reproductive Health Coordinating Committee initiated high level dialogue to stimulate discussions on revitalising family planning and demand generation. The UN facilitated collaboration between the MOH and Ministry of Islamic Affairs (MIA) to create awareness on family planning from an Islamic perspective, as a major positive step in addressing unwanted pregnancies as well as ending violence against women. As a direct result, Figh academy under the MIA legalised abortion on specific situations which include rape and incest.

73. Within their programmes of work, UN agencies supported the development of the Youth Health Strategy (YHS) to provide standardised youth friendly health services in a coordinated manner both in-school and out-of school young people. A cabinet paper to discuss the strategy was developed, but the strategy was yet to be endorsed. However, from the onset, the development of the YHS was affected by the changes in the Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports (MHRYS), but through intensive UN advocacy, it was eventually successfully completed. The national standards for youth friendly health services and service delivery packages for each level of health service delivery were also developed and finalized.

Finding 5: UNDAF programmes did not have expected impact on behaviour at community and individual level

74. As previously noted, the focus of the UN for the health sector was based on empowering communities to promote and practice healthy behaviour. UN agencies consistently acknowledged in their annual reports that the reach and impact of health care services at community and individual level was under stress (Box 3). In the mid-term review of its country programme, it was noted that “UNICEF and other partners agree that it was difficult to influence household level practices due to lack of agencies or groups working at community level with technical expertise in Behaviour Change Communication (BCC).

Box 3: Challenges in health sector

“One main risk for health sector was drastic changes in government priorities and health policies. ...decentralisation and privatization policy of health services and in less than a year re-decentralisation of the health system. This has brought about numerous challenges to achieve CPD and UNDAF outcomes. At present the health system and health infrastructure is weak and the achievements Maldives has made on ICPD indicators maybe at risk”

[UNFPA Standard Progress Report, Jan-Dec 2013](#)

75. In yet another example, UNICEF reported “*There was need to monitor correct hand washing practices. Campaigns were conducted on proper hand washing in a number of schools to influence children’s behaviour particularly before and after eating and using the toilet. However, the programme had not yet reached the household level although planned in the work plan. There was an assumption that the school-based activity would trickle down to children’s families but no mechanism could be established to ensure how this would happen*”.

76. A major risk for the health sector was the drastic changes in government priorities and health policies, particularly the decentralisation and privatization of health services, which were reversed in less than a year. These changes left the health system and health infrastructure in a weak state, such that, according to UNFPA reports, “the achievements that Maldives has made on the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) indicators maybe at risk”.²¹

77. Among some of the consequences of these changes, the UN facilitated a stakeholder workshop in February 2013, which highlighted large inefficiencies throughout the medical supply chain identifying the need to improve forecasting, stock management, storage, distribution, and access of medical supplies. UNOPS supported the MOH to develop capacity in procurement, and was able to demonstrate a 40% saving in the cost of medical supplies through procurement services. In spite of this, the MOH did not continue the collaboration and reverted to its previous procurement model.

²¹ Held in Cairo in 1994, the Programme of Action of the ICPD is the steering document for UNFPA; and has 4 goals: Universal education, Reduction of infant and child mortality, Reduction of maternal mortality, and Access to reproductive and sexual health services including family planning.

78. In its reports, WHO noted that despite the notable achievements made in the control of communicable diseases, Maldives still faced persistent challenges. Dengue, scrub typhus and toxoplasmosis had surfaced due to environmental and climate changes. Diarrhea and acute respiratory infections (ARI) continued to cause significant morbidity among children and adults. Although it was under control, the risk of Tuberculosis spreading in Male' was high due to overcrowding and poor housing conditions. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) accounted for more than 70 percent of all deaths and disease burden²² in the country; and Maldives had the highest prevalence of Thalassemia in the world with a carrier rate of 18% of the population.

4.2.2. Education Sector

79. The overall UNDAF objective for the education sector was to support the Government's policy focus on providing access to improving quality in terms of achieving better educational outcomes, providing improved facilities in schools, providing more appropriate curriculum and courses, and acquiring more skilled and trained national teachers in order to consolidate the country's achievement of the MDG 2.

80. The UN contribution was focused on ensuring that children in their early years, those with special needs, and children and youth at risk were engaged in quality and relevant educational programmes, including that: (i) all schools, including preschools, met the basic standards for Child Friendly Schools; (ii) an inclusive education policy and strategy including children with disabilities and special learning needs was developed and implemented; (iii) institutional capacity for teacher development and in-service training was strengthened; (iv) all children between the ages of 12 - 18 years and out of school youth completed an appropriate life skills and civic education programme; (v) appropriate and relevant vocational guidance and job orientation was provided to disadvantaged or at risk youth.

Table 4: Progress on Education Sector Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
2. Children, including those with special needs and vulnerable youth are engaged in quality, gender-responsive and relevant educational programmes	Net enrolment rate in preschools disaggregated by gender and special needs Baseline: 81% (2008) Target: 90%	The targets were not directly monitored and tracked. However, anecdotal evidence indicates that net enrolment targets may have been achieved although there still remained a gap with regards to addressing special needs. The baseline to establish data on child labour was not done.
	Net enrolment for primary disaggregated by gender and special needs Baseline: 95.8% (2008) Target: 99%	
	Transition rate to secondary disaggregated by gender and special needs Baseline: 96% (2008) Target: 99% % of children of compulsory education age not involved in child labour	

²² Cardiovascular diseases caused 38.9% of all deaths, chronic lower respiratory diseases 7.0%, cancers 6.9% and diabetes 3.2% of all deaths.

Finding 6: UNDAF support helped to highlight critical gaps in policies and issues on the quality of education

81. The Maldives achieved MDG 2, and particularly the quantitative enrolment related targets. The UNDAF mid-term review noted the UN support for the education sector had a good balance between upstream-oriented policies and capacity development support and downstream-focused support at institutional, community and individual levels. Through the national budget, the Government supported free primary and secondary education, and provided textbooks and learning materials to students, with children from poor and disadvantaged families able to access special facilities to avail of school uniforms. Government also provided travel allowances for students who lived in islands with no schools.

82. Despite the progress as measured at the aggregate level of the MDGs, the education sector still faced a number of challenges. Some of these challenges were also targeted for support by UN agencies through the UNDAF, but effective progress was hampered by a variety of challenges. In the area of pre-school education the Decentralisation Study undertaken in 2013 concluded that there was lack of clarity in Government regarding the demarcation of responsibilities for supervision and monitoring between the Island Councils and the Ministry of Education (MOE). The absence of clear policies on such issues obviously impedes access to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD). Furthermore, the curriculum for pre-schools was not yet in place, although the Institute for Education had started to develop it.

83. Majority of stakeholders interviewed said there was low quality of education and lack of qualified local teachers, while expatriate teachers also lacked appropriate language skills to build rapport with students, especially younger children. These were cited as factors that contributed to low national secondary level pass rates. In an effort to address this skills gap, the MOE published a Professional Development Policy (PDP) and developed School Based Professional Development (SBPD) guidelines for schools. These guidelines made it mandatory for all academic staff in schools to receive a minimum of 15 hours (3 days) of professional development in every year. However, there was no mechanism established to monitor compliance in all schools, or studies to determine whether 15 hours were adequate to make a difference.

84. The UN supported a Training Needs Assessment of teachers of special education but the report was yet to be published although the diploma course on Special Education Needs (SEN) was developed and institutionalized at the Faculty of Education. The planned training of pre-school teachers was yet to be implemented. In the mid-term review of its work programme, UNICEF reported that teachers from 52 schools had undergone training on life skills education (LSE), but there was no monitoring system in place to establish whether or not they were able to deliver LSE sessions in the classroom.

85. There also appeared to be a typical case of lack of coordination by UN agencies, because in its Annual Report for 2013, UNFPA reported that LSE was yet to be integrated in youth centres and schools; further noting that support to the MOE to integrate LSE in the school curriculum had been delayed due to difficulties in recruiting an international consultant at the

time needed and within the available budget. The UN supported the Society for Health Education (SHE) to integrate sexual and reproductive health education in schools. The training also covered aspects of HIV/AIDS, thereby helping to close the gap left by the closure of Global Fund on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

4.2.3. Social Protection

86. The UN strategy was to support the design and implementation of the minimum social floor in accordance with international standards by: (i) building institutional capacities to design, deliver and monitor effectiveness of the minimum social floor including establishing appropriate legal and institutional frameworks for health insurance, unemployment benefits and pensions; and (ii) empowering most vulnerable and socially excluded groups to protect themselves from abuse and to seek access to improved child and family protection services, while also improving legal and institutional arrangements for the social protection of vulnerable groups, especially children, the elderly, and the disabled.

Table 5: Progress on Social Protection Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
3. Most Vulnerable and socially excluded groups have equitable access to basic child and family protection services.	Rate of response to persons seeking/accessing basic child and family protection services in Male and atoll level Baseline: 536 (registered in 2008) Target: 100% response rate	Data was not available.
4. Social security floor implemented as part of the national social security strategy to provide the vulnerable and socially excluded groups with systematic access to social security.	Proportion of vulnerable and socially excluded individuals who benefit from social security schemes Baseline: Health – 100% Absolute poor group – 100% General population – 16% (2009) Target: 50% general population	Data was not available. Stakeholders were concerned that the social security scheme may not be sustainable; and access among the general population could actually be sliding downwards.

Finding 7: UN advocacy contributed to institutionalise social protection services for women, youth and children

87. Through UN advocacy work and support for institutional capacity at various levels, national legislative and institutional mechanisms for protection of women, children and vulnerable groups were established. Particularly noteworthy was the ratification of the Domestic Violence Act, establishment of the Family Protection Authority (FPA), and development of the Child Abuse Prevention Strategy.

88. The UN has provided ongoing technical and institutional support to the FPA to review relevant laws and regulations on the Domestic Violence Act to strengthen its enforcement.

However, UNFPA noted in its annual progress reports that the Act still lacked appropriate enabling regulatory framework for effective enforcement. For example, while Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) and guidelines for a shelter for victims of domestic violence were developed, there was still no policy framework required for the centre to operate; and the health services provided for victims of domestic violence and rape were not standardised.

89. As part of its advocacy efforts for Gender Based Violence as a public health response issue, the UN facilitated study tours to Sri Lanka by FPA, Ministries of Gender and Health, Police and Family Court, thereby also promoting south-south cooperation. These efforts enabled dialogue to take place between the FPA and Maldives Police Services resulting in the integration of domestic violence in the child protection database.

90. A Primary Prevention Action Plan was developed in 2012 and endorsed the following year. The framework provides guidelines on prevention procedures, as well as strategies for psychosocial support and premarital counselling, which were now being implemented by CSOs.

91. UN advocacy efforts were also catalytic in strengthening awareness and activism on social protection. The UN supported training and various studies to strengthen the national systems for child protection, including for example (a) training of Specialised Juvenile Police Officers on preventing juvenile crime, and (b) capacity assessment for Alternate State Care Institutions. The Maldives Child Protection Database was launched in 2011, although it was yet to be used widely. At the time of this evaluation, it was still just confined to the Police, Juvenile Justice Unit (JJU) and Ministry of Law and Gender. The Maldives Police Service had expanded the database to two (2) atolls.

92. Some legislation was also at various stages of completion. In addition, the UN also supported studies on child protection, most notably:

- a) Study on Mapping and Assessment of Social Protection in the Maldives.
- b) Child Protection System – Mapping and Assessment.
- c) Baseline Study on the Impact of Decentralisation on Services for Children.
- d) Assessment of Deprivation Among Adolescents.

4.2.4. Prevention of HIV and Substance Abuse

93. The UNDAF strategy was to ensure that the Most At Risk Population (MARP) and young people have equitable access to : (i) appropriate information on their risk perception of HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and substance abuse (including tobacco) (ii) harm- reducing interventions and rehabilitation services for drug users; (iii) enhanced capacity of service-providers to deliver comprehensive programmes for the management of HIV/AIDS; (iv) enhanced monitoring and evaluation systems on HIV/AIDS and substance abuse; and (v) support to establishment of legislative framework on HIV/AIDS.

Table 6: Progress on HIV Prevention and Substance Abuse Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
5. Most at Risk Population (MARP) and vulnerable populations have equitable access to drug and HIV prevention treatment, care and support services.	Percent of MARP and vulnerable population (youth 15-24 years) who access the services Baseline: To be established (2010) Target: 50% of MARP access available services	2074 individuals had access through the GFATM; but data was not disaggregated as per the indicator.

Finding 8: The UN contributed to prevention of HIV and substance abuse

94. The UN facilitated and supported two relevant studies – (1) Mapping and size estimation of MARPs, and (2) National drug use survey, which was completed in 2012. The findings of these studies fed into the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS, 2012 -2016, which was prepared with the support of the Joint UN Team on AIDS (UNAIDS). The surveys found that the country faced a significant burden of drug use, and recommended a multi-tiered national response, involving various strategies to reduce both supply and demand, as well as other harm-reducing approaches.

95. The mid-term review of UNICEF’s programme of work noted that the Programme supported interventions to increase preventive awareness on the effects of drug abuse and HIV. However, this was a small component of the Programme, with interventions in only six islands. The report noted that there was no mechanism for identifying and reaching the most at risk adolescents. Government officials also said that the UN approach was at variance with the national strategy, which was based on targeting the key risk groups. However, through UN support, national voluntary counselling and treatment (VCT) protocols were established, including establishment of 3 VCT centers and training of health care workers in the provision of adequate care, support and treatment for people living with HIV.

96. The UN also supported interventions on adolescent sexual reproductive health, premarital counselling and information, STIs, HIV/AIDS and Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCTs). Through this support, capacity of forty youth leaders to demand ASRH and HIV services as well vocational life skills was developed. However according to UNFPA’s reports, awareness among key decision-makers and opinion leaders was still low, which impacted negatively on the effectiveness of these interventions (Box 4).

Box 4: Reproductive and sexual health challenge

“A lot of sensitization needs to be done to prepare the ground to even to table ASRH services at political, technical, service provider and community levels. There was both active and passive resistance to discuss Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) service provision.

UNFPA Standard Progress Report (SPR-RH2-2013)

97. The UN also supported the development of the National Strategic Plan (NSP) for Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS (2012 – 2016), which was endorsed by the National AIDS Council in 2013. The costing of the NSP was undertaken.

4.2.5. Economic Sector

98. The UN strategy was to support government's economic drive to diversify the economy and increase the role of the private sector. Particular focus was given to strengthening the Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) sector to address the growing challenge of youth unemployment and to support agriculture development in order to enhance food security and close the poverty gaps that were becoming apparent in some communities.

Table 7: Progress on Economic Sector Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
6. Opportunities are created for diversifying the economy in selected regions.	Percent of employment/income of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Fisheries and Agriculture Baseline: Nil Target: 30%	No baseline was established in 2010. Percentage of employment from SME's are not collated at the national level.
	Number and type of private sector partners in selected services Baseline: To be determined in 2010 Target: Increase by 30%	Baseline was not established in 2010. However, based on one UN agency report, only 2 partnerships were established
7. Creation of opportunities for decent work and labour markets better governed and regulated in line with ILO principles/standards	Ratification of ILO 8 core conventions Baseline: nil Target: 8	8 ILO conventions were ratified by Maldives.
	Number of supporting legislation Baseline: Nil Target: As required (?)	Draft Occupational Safety and Health Bill not yet passed. Review of Employment Act. Draft Human Development and Employment Policy

Finding 9: The scale and focus of UN interventions did not sufficiently target the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to impact on poverty.

99. There was general agreement among stakeholders both in government and the UN that despite the country's middle income status, there were still pockets of poverty, including food insecurity among disadvantaged groups, particularly in the capital Male. However, a review of the UNDAF outputs indicated that there were interventions directly targeting these groups. UN interventions under Outcome 6 and 7 mainly provided support at the higher level of policy formulation and institutional capacities for policy implementation.

100. Stakeholders in government noted that many of the legislative and policy instruments were outdated and needed to be reviewed in order to align with current realities and thinking. Although the legislative process was very slow and there were a number of bills that had remained in draft form without getting government endorsement in order to be tabled in parliament, the SME Bill drafted in 2012 was enacted in April 2013.

101. Non-resident UN agencies that were supposed to contribute to this outcome did not have country programmes for the Maldives, and therefore also had limited impact at the community and ‘downstream’ level. For example, UNIDO had interventions to strengthen quality control systems and standards for exports; while ILO worked on review of Labour Laws, Employment Act and Occupational Safety and Health.

4.2.6. Environment and Climate Change

102. Government policy for environmental sustainability was to make Maldives a central player on climate change globally; protecting the rights of all citizens from the impacts of climate change; protecting and preserving the natural environment to ensure prosperous economic development; reducing Green House Gas emissions and achieving carbon neutrality; minimizing pollution for the development of healthy communities through proper waste management; and creating public awareness of environmental values to promote environmentally friendly lifestyles.

103. The UN strategy was to promote and strengthen institutional capacities for climate change adaptation at all levels, especially among most vulnerable communities, including preparedness and resilience to natural disasters; and provide replicable options for climate change adaptation.

Table 8: Progress on Environment and Climate Change Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
8. Communities have access to safe drinking water and equitable sanitation and sustainably manage the natural environment to enhance their livelihoods	% of population with access to safe and improved drinking water Baseline: 83% (2006) Target: 100%	Data was not available. However, based on observations from the Atoll visited, 100% access to safe water was still a challenge.
	Number of local partnerships on sustainable environment management Baseline: Nil Target: 20 local partnerships on ecotourism, mangrove and coral reef protection	Based on available information, 9 local tourist resorts contributed as partners to the Baa Atoll Conservation fund at the Baa Atoll Biosphere Reserve with additional 10 expected.
9. Enhanced capacities at national and local levels to support low carbon life styles, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction	National climate change strategy in place Baseline: Nil Target: Strategy developed	A Draft National Climate Change Strategy was developed but was yet to be endorsed by government.

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
	National platform for DRR established Baseline: Nil Target: 1	Disaster Management Bill was being considered in Parliament, which when passed, will formally establish a Disaster Management Steering Committee.
	Environment management/climate change and DRR incorporated in school curriculum Baseline: Pilot in 7 schools Target: All schools	The target was not yet achieved. However, the Ministry of Education was developing an Action Plan to review the schools curricula and syllabus.

Finding 10: There was general lack of reliable data and effective monitoring tools to assess attributable contribution

104. National counterparts both at central and local government level noted a general lack of tangible and concrete results from UN interventions. They felt that most of the interventions targeted the policy and institutional capacity level but did not directly impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. In addition, most of the policy level interventions were affected by the general slow speed of government processes. For example, the draft Environment and Climate Change Law had not yet been passed by Parliament after almost two years.

105. National stakeholder consulted in Laamu Atoll where the LECReD joint programme was being implemented felt that the JP was very thin on concrete and tangible deliverables. Review of some of the UN project documents also indicated a general lack of delivery on results as highlighted by the two examples below.

Mid-term Review of Project: Increasing Climate Resilience Through an Integrated Water Resource Management Programme, MTR February 2014. *“The effectiveness and results of the project as of the mid-term evaluation are considered unsatisfactory. The project has only disbursed 13% of the budget for activities, and the main components are approximately 13-15 months behind the originally planned timeframe. As such progress toward the expected outcomes is still limited”*

Annual Progress Report: Integrating Climate Change Risks into Resilient Island Planning in the Maldives; UNDP/GEF Project, December 2012. *“The level of achievement of results is low compared to the targets set in the LFM and activities scheduled in the Annual Work Plans every year since 2010. In general, project rating and effectiveness is moderately unsatisfactory”. The report also noted that government lacked absorption capacity for effective delivery of development aid to this sector.*

106. There was no joint monitoring or information sharing among UN agencies, either through regular meetings of thematic groups or through the UNDAF monitoring and implementation framework under the UNDAF Action Plan. Since the achievement of UNDAF outcomes depends on individual contributions of UN agencies towards their respective outputs, the lack of regular information meetings and joint monitoring to assess progress and challenges was a critical gap.

4.2.7. Democratic Governance

107. The UN strategy was to support the government in five key areas of change: to increase transparency and accountability of public institutions with emphasis on decentralized bodies; enhance equitable access to justice by all and strengthen the rule of law; promote a culture of respect for human rights at all levels; strengthen civil society; and enhance institutional capacities to plan and coordinate social and economic development at national and local levels.

Table 9: Progress on Democratic Governance# Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
10. Increased transparency and accountability of public institutions with emphasis on decentralized bodies	Voice and accountability indicator (World bank statistics) Baseline: 36.1% (ranking in 25th – 50th percentile in the world) Target: 50% (ranking in 50th – 75th percentile in the world)	Based on the Voice and Accountability Index 2013, the index further declined to 32% from 36% in 2008. The target of 50% will not be achieved.
11. : Equitable access to justice and strengthened rule of law	#. of courts established at sub-national level (civil, criminal, juvenile) in each region Baseline: Nil Target: One in each region	The target to establish one court (civil, criminal and family) in each region was achieved.
12. Culture of respect for human rights advocated, fulfilled protected and fostered at all levels	% of people aware of basic human rights issues and purpose of the HRCM Baseline: 50% (2006) Target: 80% (2015)	Based on Human Rights Commission of Maldives survey Rights Side of Life, 72.8% awareness. The target is on track.
13. Civil society is active and thriving	Existence of a government policy and law that meets the needs of the civil society Baseline: Nil Target: Policy and law approved	Based on anecdotal evidence, civil society was very weak. The Constitution had appropriate provisions but lacked appropriate statutes.
14. Institutional capacity strengthened and framework in place to coordinate and plan national development at local and national levels	Institutional structures for coordination of policy, planning, implementing, monitoring and budgeting at national and local levels established Baseline: Partial structures exist in all sectors and at atoll level Target: Streamlined structures and systems operational by 2012	Stakeholders noted that the indicator and its associated targets were very general and incapable of specific measurement.

Finding 11: The normative role of the UN in rule of law, access to justice, human rights and public accountability contributes to social cohesion and political stability

108. Given the unstable political environment that the country experienced during the period of the UNDAF cycle, the UN had a comparative advantage to contribute to, and strengthen national cohesion and stability leveraging on its standing as a trusted partner and convening power. In that regard, the UN made significant contributions to institutionalise systems and processes for social cohesion, including the development of a Green Paper system that enabled the public to debate and comment on draft bills before they were passed into law.

109. The UN also supported review of the Associations Act to align it with the Constitution and international standards. Some interventions also targeted local government institutions to strengthen participatory planning systems to support the government's decentralisation agenda. However, anecdotal evidence indicated that UN interventions had limited impact at the local level. For example, civil society groups at local level said that they were not consulted in the process of planning at Atoll or island level; while others said that they had attended some workshops on conflict resolution, but they had seen very little in terms of actual implementation and follow up by responsible local government institutions.

110. With regards to UN support to building institutional capacity in planning at local levels, members of the Atoll and island councils said that they already had prioritised plans, and what they lacked was budget support to implement projects. They therefore saw very little value-added in UN interventions that emphasised capacity building without concrete project support.

Finding 12: The UN did not give substantial priority and support to decentralisation and empowerment of civil society to meaningfully impact on governance

111. Despite UN support to decentralised bodies, members of Atoll and island councils felt that government lacked commitment to implement the Decentralisation Act. They observed that there was no policy coherence, with some of the existing legislation conflicting with the Decentralisation Act. Most particularly, they cited the Land Act which limited Atoll and island councils' discretion on land use, thereby affecting their capacity to implement their development plans. They also observed that local authorities had limited capacity to raise revenues, and national budget allocations were not sufficient to cover much more than salaries of administration staff and recurrent expenditures.

112. There was also an apparent lack of awareness on the role of civil society as a watchdog to hold government to account for delivery of public services. In particular, stakeholders observed that the policy to establish Women Development Committees under the local authority administration had actually disempowered women through loss of independence as a civil society body.

4.2.8. Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment

113. The UN strategy was to support gender mainstreaming in all outcome areas, while also undertaking specific programmes to improve women's empowerment focusing on Strengthened advocacy capacity of parliamentarians, religious institutions, civil society, private sector and media to promote gender equality, women's rights and empowerment.

Table 10: Progress on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Indicators

UNDAF Outcome	Indicators	Progress
15. Improved individual, institutional and systemic capacities to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, and to empower women and girls to enjoy their rights in all spheres of life in line with national commitments by 2015	Proportion of seats held by women in national Parliament and local councils Baseline: 6% (in 2009- only in the national parliament) 5% (in 2011 local councils) Target: 10%	The target was not met. While the absolute number of seats remained unchanged at 5 seats, the proportion reduced from 6.5% (2009) to 5.9% (2013) due to enlarged Parliament. Proportion of female local councillors increased marginally to 5.5%.
	Ratio of female to male with tertiary education qualifications Baseline: 37 (2006) Target: 50 (2016)	Data was not available.
	# of women holding leadership positions in private sector Baseline: Baseline to be established in 2010 Target: Increase by 25%	Data was not available. The baseline was not established in 2010.
	Female labour force participation Baseline: 52% (2006 Census) Target: 55% (2016 Census)	Data was not available.

Finding 13: Gender was not effectively mainstreamed in sector ministries and the national gender machinery was weak

114. The UNDAF outcome on gender was expected to improve institutional capacities at all levels to mainstream and implement principles of gender equality and standards in policy making, programme planning and implementation. Stakeholders noted that this was appropriately reflected in the national policy documents, but actual implementation and enforcement was weak.

115. The key results achieved with UN support included (a) the enactment of the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (2012), which led to the establishment of the Family Protection Authority; the Bill on Prevention of Sexual Harassment (2013) and the Sexual Offences Act (2013). However, the institutional mechanisms to enforce the laws was generally lacking. Civil society groups consulted during this evaluation noted that the police and judiciary institutions

were not sufficiently sensitised on gender equality and tended to condone violence against women based on their cultural inclination rather than strict interpretation of the law.

116. Stakeholders also noted a general instability of the national gender machinery. Previous governments had an independent Ministry of Gender, and later Department of Women's Affairs, which in 2008 was merged under the Ministry of Health. After the elections in 2013, gender was merged with the Attorney General's Office to become the Ministry of Law and Gender. Civil society groups also noted that national budget allocations for gender have been decreasing.

4.3. Crosscutting Issues

Finding 14: Some of the core UN principles were better mainstreamed than others

117. The UNDAF Guidelines²³ identify five programming principles: Human rights-based approach (HRBA), Gender equality, Environmental sustainability, Capacity development, and Results-based management (RBM). These principles constitute a starting point and guide for in the planning and development of the UNDAF. To varying degrees, these principles were reflected in the UNDAF document and to a greater extent in its implementation.

4.3.1. Human rights based approach

118. The issues of human rights were covered quite prominently in the UNDAF under Democratic Governance, with outcome 11 focusing on access to justice; and outcome 12 specifically on the promotion and protection of human rights.

119. However, some of the outcomes did not adequately provide interventions to cater to the needs of the duty bearers and rights holders as distinctive stakeholders in the human rights paradigm. For example, the two outputs intended to contribute towards outcome 12 involve the establishment of appropriate policies and building institutional capacity. There were no planned interventions to address corresponding issues from the perspective of rights holders (Box 5). However, following the political unrest in 2012, the UN also recognised the need to strengthen capacities in human rights based approaches and established the post of Human Rights Adviser (HRA) in the UNRCO, which was filled in November 2012. Since then, the HRA

Box 5: MTR on HRBA

“Although the outcome (and outputs) is framed in terms of community empowerment and awareness, a large number of activities are clearly focused on systems and duty bearers”.

UNDAF Mid-Term Review Report, para 20

²³ How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams; Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams.

has conducted training for UN agency programme staff in HRBA and also reviews upon request their project documents to ensure that they adequately integrate the HRBA principles.

4.3.2. Gender Mainstreaming.

120. There was also a specific outcome on gender equality and women’s empowerment. Many UNDAF outputs, especially under the health and education sectors also specifically identified women, youth and children as the most disadvantaged. The UNDAF Mid-term review also noted that a gender scorecard exercise was undertaken, culminating with recommendations to strengthen gender in monitoring and evaluation, as well as engaging religious institutions. Training was also conducted for gender trainers and women’s rights advocates in partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Family and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). However, the constant changes in government have made it very difficult to mainstream gender in government policy and programming as the Ministry of Gender has been moved around and its mandate and Family to gender focal points. The evaluation observed however, that the notion of gender mainstreaming was not adequately understood even among UN agencies. When asked how they addressed gender in their programmes, most programme staff responded that they made sure that women also participated in all activities, including training.

Gender mainstreaming is the process of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes, in any area and at all levels.

4.3.3. Environment sustainability.

121. The UNDAF addressed this through two separate outcomes covering environment and climate change, as discussed in section 4.2.7 below. The UN supported the MOH to develop the National Environmental Health Action Plan. However, given the specific vulnerability of the Maldives to environment and climate change, it could quite realistically be further mainstreamed in other outcome areas, particularly under the education and economic sectors (Box 6).

Box 6: Mainstreaming Environment

“UNICEF country programme has a very small component of environmental education implemented by an NGO in two schools as part of a school-based environment club managed by students. Only one school club has been able to sustain its activities. The programme is not mainstreamed in regular classes yet. Student members of the club learn how natural environment functions within the ecosystem and about environment-friendly sustainable practices in various settings. Currently, there is no policy advocacy plan that could influence government in adopting and promoting environment-friendly policies and programmes”.

MTR of UNICEF/Government Programme of Cooperation, (2011-15)

4.3.4. Capacity development.

122. Capacity development was one of the three pillars on which the UNDAF strategy was anchored; “...to be relevant and effective..., the UN needed to

renew its focus – to engage more in policy dialogue and legislative reform, in capacity development and in testing implementation of new approaches”. In line with this strategy, most of the UN agency interventions included an element of capacity building, both for institutional service providers and community beneficiaries. UN agencies were also engaged in initiatives to develop capacity at both the policy and community levels. For instance, the UN facilitated study missions to other countries in the context of South-South Cooperation, while also targeted training was undertaken for various institutions, (e.g. training on juvenile justice for law enforcement agencies) as well as supporting collaboration with institutions of higher learning to establish training modules for specific sectors (e.g. developing modules on juvenile justice for Magistrates Training Course with Maldives National University).

4.3.5. Results-based Management.

123. This was probably the area of greatest weakness of the UNDAF. A cursory look at the UNDAF results matrix illustrates several such weaknesses. For example, the target for Outcome 14 was to be achieved in 2012 – which clearly makes it an output target.

124. There was a general design weakness in the formulation of outcomes and associated indicators (Box 7). In a number of cases, an outcome with several outputs would duplicate

Box 7: Weak indicators

Outcome 8 Indicator: % of population with access to safe and improved drinking water.

- Output 8.1 Indicator: % of population with access to safe and improved drinking water.

Outcome 12 Indicator: % of population aware of basic human rights issues ...

- Output 12.3. Indicator: % of population aware of basic human rights issues...

one of the output indicators as the outcome indicator. Clearly, this would mean that the outcome could be assessed to have been achieved as soon as that one output with a similar indicator is achieved, even if the other outputs were not achieved. Some UN agency programme staff actually noted *“we do not monitor these (UNDAF) indicators at all, because we have our own indicators which we report on”*. RBM rests on clearly defined

accountability for results and requires monitoring and self-assessment of progress towards results, including reporting on performance.²⁴

125. There are three salient features of RBM - accountability, national ownership and inclusiveness. Some staff of UN agencies observed that they were unable to track or monitor indicators, because most of them had a point of collection in national institutions. However, as per UNDAF Guidelines, there should be no need to use different indicators if national indicators were available. Where national capacities to monitor those indicators was lacking, then it would be incumbent on the UN through its capacity building interventions to develop that capacity. Chapter 5 of the UNDAF adequately and appropriately promoted the use of national indicators:

²⁴ UNDG (2010) Results-Based Management Handbook: Strengthening RBM harmonization for improved development results.

“National statistical systems and reporting will be used wherever feasible in the monitoring and evaluation of UNDAF results, and where considered necessary, UN support will be provided to improve such national systems”.

126. After the UNDAF was developed and agreed jointly between the government and the UN, there was no exercise to harmonise the data collection systems of implementing partners to ensure effective reporting against UNDAF outcome and output indicators. While national data systems existed, partners used different data collection systems, and therefore national data was not always compatible or appropriate to monitor and evaluate the UNDAF results.

4.4. UNDAF Value-Added

127. While the outputs of individual UN agencies were visible, the overall contribution to UNDAF outcomes was not that apparent. This was in part due to the defect of the UNDAF design, which lacked a clear strategic logic. UN agencies interventions were driven more by their cooperation frameworks and country programmes than by the common framework. In the Social Sector (Outcomes 1 – 5) UN agencies made notable contributions to enhancing institutional systems and capacities, but not much on access of services by vulnerable groups. Under Outcomes 6 – 9 (Economy and Environment) the scale and scope of UN support, as well as capacity of government to upscale UN initiatives was minimal. In the Governance Sector (Outcome 10 – 14), the outputs of UN agencies, including support for the development of policy and legal instruments were not translating into the anticipated benefits at the lower levels of community and vulnerable groups.

128. However, in spite of these weaknesses, the UN system contributed quite substantially in a number of areas.

Finding 15: The UN contributed to the development and use of evidence-based policy formulation and planning

129. The Maldives generally lacked reliable and up-to-date data in most sectors. Through their programmes of work, UN agencies contributed to develop national institutional systems and capacities in the planning, collection and use of evidence-based data to support policy formulation and planning. Some of the notable examples include;

- (a) Second National Human Development Report (NHDR)
- (b) Survey on Human Resources for Health.
- (c) National Drug Use Survey.
- (d) Study and Mapping of Social Protection in the Maldives.
- (e) Baseline survey on justice sector.

Finding 16: UN studies and surveys highlighted inequalities that are normally concealed by aggregated data such as MDG+ and graduation to MIC

130. By 2008, the Maldives had achieved five of the MDGs, making it the only MDG+ country in South Asia; and in 2011, the country graduated to a Middle Income Country. However, studies supported by the UN have shown that these achievements are based on aggregated data, and often conceal high levels of poverty, food insecurity and lack of access to basic services among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Among some of the UN's notable contributions in this regard was to highlight the increasing inequalities due to distributive effects of national income and youth unemployment. Issues about the quality of education were also highlighted in spite of the quantitative enrolment statistics that indicate achievement of MDG 2.

Finding 17: The UN helped to institutionalise systems and develop guidelines to identify and target the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

131. Through some of their programmes, UN agencies supported the government to institutionalise systems and develop guidelines for inclusiveness, targeting and reaching the most vulnerable groups. Particularly noteworthy, the UN facilitated collaboration between the Ministries of Health and Islamic Affairs on issues family planning, thereby removing the cultural stigma associated with women's reproductive health. The UN also supported government to develop the Green Paper process enabling public dialogue on legislation before it is passed. Other notable contributions include development of Mother and Child Nutrition Guidelines and establishment of standards for child-friendly schools.

4.5. Efficiency of Delivering as One and the UNDAF

4.5.1. UNDAF Coordination

132. In 2006, the Secretary-General established the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, which published its first report "Delivering as one", with a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening the work of the UN in partnership with host Governments and a stronger focus on results. Eight countries volunteered to pilot the "Delivering as one" approach, innovating new approaches to coherence at the country level²⁵. The eight pilot programme countries were later joined by a growing number of voluntary adopters called 'self-starters', among them, the Maldives in 2010.

133. The mainstay of the DAO initiative was based on establishment of One Leader, One Program, One Budget, One Office, and One Voice for partner UN agencies operating at the

²⁵ The pilot programme countries were Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

country level. According to the UNDG guidelines, the essential requirements for One Programme include the following:²⁶

- ▽ *The UNDAF is the basis of the One Programme, which describes the collective vision and response of the UN system to national development priorities.*
- ▽ *The UNDAF results matrix serves as a mutual accountability framework, indicating which agencies will contribute to each outcome and to each output.*
- ▽ *Strategic guidance and oversight are exercised through a Joint National/UN Steering Committee with the participation of all national stakeholders as defined in the UNDG UNDAF Guidelines.*
- ▽ *UNDAF outcomes are operationalized and translated into concrete, measurable and time-bound outputs and annual action plans through the Results Group (or Theme Group) mechanism chaired by a Head of Agency on behalf of the UN Country Team.*
- ▽ *Each Results Group creates a joint work plan to contribute to the achievement of UNDAF outcomes. To ensure maximum reduction of transaction costs for all involved partners, the Results Groups' joint work plans will be the only work planning instrument, replacing agency-specific plans.*
- ▽ *A UN Country Results Report should replace agencies', funds and programmes, individual reporting requirements to document the collective work of the UN development system in a country and the contribution of the UN to the national development agenda.*
- ▽ *The UNCT and partners must carry out at least one evaluation during an UNDAF cycle, normally during the penultimate year.*

134. The evaluation acknowledges that these guidelines were not there at the time that Maldives decided to become a DAO country. However, the guidelines came into effect in 2013, giving ample time for the UNCT to adopt. Furthermore, the UNDAF mid-term review made similar observations, particularly with regards to the coordination role of UNDAF Theme Groups, but no action was taken to redress the situation.

Finding 18: The UN in Maldives was not operating as a 'Delivering as One'

135. The UNDAF 2011 – 2015 was signed by the Government and UN agencies in 2010. The Maldives One UN Fund was established on 20 December 2010 with the conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between 10 Participating Organisations and the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in its capacity as the Administrative Agent (AA) of the Maldives One UN Fund. The Maldives One UN Fund became operational in July 2011 with the first contribution from the Government of Denmark.²⁷

²⁶ UNDG (2013) Standard Operating Procedures for Countries Wishing to Adopt Delivering as One Approach, Section 2.2.; pages 9-11.

²⁷ First Annual Progress Report on Activities Implemented under the Maldives One UN Fund

136. UN agencies agreed to develop the UNDAF Action Plan to replace the Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) of the Executive Committee funds and programmes, although the specialised agencies maintained their respective Country Cooperation Frameworks. Five Theme Groups were established to lead the UNDAF outcomes under the four broad clusters by which the UNDAF was structured – Social Equity, Economic Development and Environment, Good Governance, Gender Equality and M&E Group.

137. However, the Theme Groups hardly ever convened, and were never operational to the point where they could develop their respective work plans as per UNDG guidelines. In addition, the Theme Groups were headed by programme staff rather than Heads of Agencies, thereby depriving them of their fundamental characteristic as a decision-making body at the UNDAF outcome level. Furthermore, the UNCT did not require regular updates from Theme Groups, thereby further diminishing their accountability for results. Consequently, the UNDAF Action Plan was regarded by UN agencies as a mere compendium of their respective work plans and did not add any value to joint planning, joint implementation or joint monitoring. Most of the resident UN agencies also had very few staff (UNFPA-3, UNICEF-5, UNOPS and WHO-2 each, FAO-1), and as most of them had outputs in more than one outcome, the same staff tended to be members of more than one Theme Group. However, the UNDAF Action Plan is not a requirement, since the UN and government have flexibility to determine whether to develop the UNDAF results matrix at the outcome level (Option 1a), or develop a fuller results matrix, that includes outputs (Option 1b).²⁸

138. Stakeholders outside the UN system said that they had not seen any evidence that the UN was delivering as one. In fact, many of the government officials interviewed during this evaluation did not know that the Maldives was a ‘Delivering as One’, and did not understand what that entailed either. Many of them actually observed that they had challenges in implementing projects, because UN agencies had different systems and templates for annual work plans, budgets and reporting.

139. One of the major challenges for coordination was that during the life of the UNDAF cycle under evaluation, the UN had operated for long periods without a substantive Resident Coordinator. In fact, over the three-and-half years from 2011 to 2014, the UN had 6 Resident Coordinators, four of them in an interim capacity. In addition, the UNRCO was also not adequately staffed. Until about August 2012, the UNRCO had only two staff – the Coordination Specialist and Coordination Associate. The post of NRA Coordination Analyst was only established and filled in September 2012, with a further addition of Communication Analyst in April 2014. Even at the time of drafting, the position of Coordination Specialist and Head of RCO had become vacant. This situation was further compounded by the fact that majority of the UNCT members were non-resident agencies.

²⁸ Ibid. UNDAF Guidelines

Finding 19: UN-Government coordination and national ownership of the UNDAF was weak

140. The UNDAF was characterised by weak coordination between the UN and Government counterparts. In fact, contrary to its conceptual objective to strengthen national ownership, many of the government officials considered the UNDAF to be a UN framework to which they were required to report. Although most of them confirmed that they had been involved in its formulation, they nonetheless felt that they were not sufficiently engaged in its implementation and performance monitoring to an extent that they could claim ownership.

141. A key coordination challenge was the constant changes in government policies and related mandates of various sector and line ministries. The government officials consulted for this evaluation all said that they were not quite clear about their roles and responsibilities for UNDAF coordination, and further noted that several departments had either been abolished or moved to other Ministries, and often these changes were not accompanied by clear restructuring and transfer of functions such as UNDAF coordination. They also observed that there seemed to be better UN-Government coordination at project level, where Project Steering Committees were usually chaired by the Ministers and Technical Working Groups were also functional.

142. The UNDAF Steering Committee was established and co-chaired by the UNRC and the President’s office with membership from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance and Treasury and Heads of UN agencies. However, the Steering Committee operated on an ad hoc basis, and according to information obtained, had only met twice throughout the UNDAF period. Several government officials felt that the sector Ministries should also have a structured platform to coordinate with UN agencies at the outcome level, possibly in the framework of the Theme Groups. A significant number of government officials actually saw the UN as a funding entity (some actually referred to the UN as a donor), remarking that UN projects were not mainstreamed into their work plans and also usually involved extra work preparing requests for advances and progress reports (Box 8).

Box 8: UN-Government coordination

“There is not much that the UN is doing here. But when it comes to time for reporting or evaluation, we are often surprised when they claim results that we actually as government have worked on by ourselves”

Interviewee responding to a question on UN coordination

4.5.2. Resource Mobilisation and Partnerships

143. Despite repeated requests, UN agencies were unable to provide data on resource mobilisation and expenditures.²⁹ However, based on anecdotal information, UN agencies were facing challenges to raise the resources according to the planned budgets. It was also apparent that the UNDAF was not used for joint resource mobilisation. Only one donor conference was undertaken in Sri Lanka in 2012, but according to UN agencies, it did not yield

²⁹ Only six UN agencies (from total 16) – FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNOPS and OHCHR provided data.

the desired results. It was also noted that some of the UN interventions could not be continued due to lack of funding. UN agencies attributed this to the country's graduation to middle income status.

4.5.3. Budget Delivery

144. As noted above, UN agencies did not provide data on expenditures. However, based on analysis of data from only 5 UN agencies, it would appear that many of the UN agencies did not meet the commitments made under the UNDAF. It was actually noteworthy that some UN agencies (particularly specialised non-resident agencies with regional programmes) noted that “...most of the UNDAF outcomes are not aligned with our work programme, and some of the Outcomes, we do not want to be in them”.³⁰ In addition, quite a number of UN projects had a delayed start, partly due to disturbances during the political unrest in 2012, and consequently, delivery rate was expected to be on the low side.

4.6. Sustainability

Finding 20: Lack of clear long-term national strategic framework and frequent changes of government structures and institutional mandates affects sustainability

145. Frequent changes of government structures and institutional mandates impacted negatively on the UN's ability to develop clear UN-Government handover and exit strategy. Based on information obtained from government counterparts, there was no clarity on who had responsibility for monitoring development programmes. This responsibility lay within the Office of Projects and Programmes (OPP), which was later dissolved in 2011. Under the circumstances, it was difficult for UN agencies to identify a single counterpart with whom to develop and handover projects upon their completion. For example, the National Employment Action Framework and Employment Policy has not been endorsed by government since 2011 due the change of government in 2012, and subsequent shifting of responsibilities between the Ministry of Youth and Ministry of Economic Development.

146. In addition, stakeholders noted that there was high staff turnover due to low salary structure in the civil service, which also affected the continuity of UN capacity development efforts as well as sustainability of UN supported processes and results.

Finding 21: Project documents do not include a clearly articulated sustainability plan

147. A cursory review of UN project documents indicated a lack of sufficient attention to sustainability planning. Programme staff generally viewed the projects' capacity building interventions as the basis and guarantor for its sustainability; but this is only a part of the

³⁰ For example, UNESCO had commitments under 8 UNDAF outcomes, but only funded programmes for two outcomes.

sustainability paradigm. Sustainability was often viewed only as building capacity of duty bearers to continue projects beyond UN support and funding, without giving more strategic thinking about ensuring that the objectives and results of UN interventions continue to be met in the context of changing environment and needs. Sustainability, among other issues involves planning for the continued delivery of economic benefits to target groups.

148. Government partners also felt that they were not sufficiently involved in project development; although they were consulted during design, most of them observed that their inputs were often ignored in the final project document. In addition, most projects were implemented under the Direct Implementing Modality (DIM), which does not augur well for building national capacities and sustainability.

Finding 22: Graduation to MIC status made it hard for UN agencies to mobilise resources, while government had no capacity to upscale service delivery on its own

149. Government counterparts observed that the government did not have the technical and financial capacity to deliver services on its own. While the geographic dispersal of island communities made service delivery very costly, the small size of island populations also rendered service delivery less cost-effective.

150. Information obtained from various stakeholders indicated that a number of UN supported interventions were stopped soon after completion due to lack of government funding. For example, UNODC was unable to continue funding for projects on substance abuse and subsequently closed its office in 2013, and since then, government has been unable to continue or upscale these projects. Stakeholders also noted that most of the traditional donors had no presence in the Maldives, which further compounded the challenges for resource mobilisation.

V. LESSONS LEARNT

151. The UN in Maldives operates in a challenging environment, which among many other factors is characterised by:

- a) Numerous and widely dispersed small islands with very small populations that do not provide sufficient economies of scale for decentralising public services.
- b) A UNCT that has a majority of NRAs, while at the same time resident agencies have very limited staff and resources.
- c) A country that has graduated to middle income status, bringing with it a different set of dynamics for development cooperation.

152. Although the broad nature of the UNDAF design made it inclusive and enabled individual UN agencies to establish relevance for their respective programmes, it also limited their ability to collaborate effectively. This was further exemplified in the LECReD joint programme in which seven UN agencies supposedly worked together under one programme document. However, a review of the planning, management and coordination arrangements

indicated that UN agencies developed their respective work plans separately and reported separately.

153. There are therefore a considerable number of key lessons that emerged during the implementation of the UNDAF.

Lesson 1. Traditional models of UN development assistance may not work that well in MIC

154. A basic assumption for a middle income country is that the government has increased access to resources and institutional capacity to address any existing development challenges. This essentially alters the role of the UN, which is usually defined in terms of delivering development assistance towards MDG achievement. Consequently, as is the case in Maldives, graduation to MIC is often accompanied by a reduction in official development assistance. Furthermore, it is also often assumed that the country already has strong institutional capacity and policies that helped to catapult its growth towards MIC.

155. This development paradigm has fundamental implications for the UN. Firstly, the decreasing access to development aid may require that the UN consider developing new partnerships, particularly with the private sector. In economic terms, there is a lot of scope for the private sector to increase its profits and financial returns by actively promoting the growth of the consumer base. Secondly, as is increasingly becoming apparent in Maldives, a MIC is an attractive destination for international migrants. This leads to a reduction in per-capita spending on social services, and therefore on government's capacity to provide basic services. This creates a dilemma for the UN, which on one hand is making efforts to shift away from 'downstream' interventions, while at the same time provision and access to basic services may be on the decline.

Lesson 2. Inequality and access to services may actually decline in MIC

156. There are a number of factors that may affect social inequality and access to services despite high economic growth. In the case of Maldives, the high dependence on tourism, combined with low quality of education and a variety of other factors has led to lack of opportunities and growing levels of unemployment, especially among women and youth.

157. There are several implications for the UN. Firstly, the UN may have to take a critical look at the structure of governance in the context of basic service delivery, and make a decision on how to support and strengthen service delivery at the local level. This creates an additional dilemma in a context where resources are declining. Secondly, this has implications on the issue of government's accountability. Rapid economic growth, especially that which is dependent on a single sector often creates a false dichotomy for policy-makers - that economic progress led and defined by the government comes first and issues of democratic governance and accountability are of lower priority. The UN may therefore have to re-examine its strategy on engagement with civil society in order to strengthen their capacity to participate in decision-making as well their demand for public accountability.

Lesson 3. NRAs have regional programmes and may belong to more than one UNCT

158. Although NRAs bring expertise that may not be available among resident agencies, and also facilitate south-south cooperation through their regional-wide networks, they usually participate in all the UNCTs in the region. Consequently, the levels of engagement and participation of NRAs may be minimal compared to resident agencies. This also has implications for the UNCT. Firstly, institutionalised cooperation covering both covering both programming and operational activities becomes difficult due to physical distance and the cost of travel. Use of communication technology may fill the gap, but the challenge remains that of NRA availability, since they may be covering a number of countries with limited staff.

159. In addition, joint planning and implementation entails that the UNCT establish results groups to coordinate the work of UN agencies around specific outcomes, NRAs may face challenges to participate effectively. In the case of Maldives, where the majority of UNCT members are NRAs, this may imply increased workload for resident agencies. The implication for the UN may be to reduce the number of focus areas in a way that the selection of strategic focus areas is determined on the basis of the strength of UN presence in the country.

Lesson 4. An UNDAF with many outcomes is difficult to coordinate

160. The UNDAF had 15 outcomes and 51 outputs. Experience and best practice from other countries has showed that it is very difficult to manage and coordinate too many outcomes. Although there is no prescribed optimum number of outcomes, UNDG Guidelines suggest that the number of outcomes should be limited in number and reflect the UN's comparative advantage in the country (Box 9).

Box 9: Number of UNDAF outcomes

“Experience to date suggests that it is difficult to manage a large number of outcomes. It is recommended that the outcomes are limited in number and specifically reflect the capacities and comparative advantages of the UN system in the country”.

[How to Prepare an UNDAF \(Part 1\), page 12](#)

161. In the first place, too many outcomes is usually driven by UN agencies trying to ensure that their specifically mandated programmes are reflected independently in the UNDAF. This creates difficulties for inter-agency collaboration and coordination. Besides the coordination difficulties that are associated with many outcomes, the UN may also spread itself too thinly, such that interventions do not have the critical scale to make a significant impact at the result level.

Lesson 5. It is difficult to monitor and measure performance without a common indicator framework

162. There is a direct correlation between the expected results (outcomes or outputs) and their related performance indicators. Indicators should be ‘objectively verifiable and repeatable measures of a particular result’. An indicator which is not capable of specific

measurement or which cannot give a consistent result from the same measurement is neither sufficient nor useful. If the performance of the UN systems is to be reported jointly, then it is essential that all UN agencies contributing to the same result have a common indicator framework; and in that regard, adopting (or helping to develop) a national indicator framework and monitoring platform simplifies reporting on results.

163. UNDG Guidelines state that “...it is strongly recommended to work with partners to develop or strengthen the indicators for the national development framework. UNCT efforts build on and influence what already exists in the country— not develop a parallel indicator framework. A robust indicator framework will help to establish baselines, identify trends and data gaps, and highlight constraints in country statistical systems”.³¹

Lesson 6. Adequate capacity is required in the UNRCO in order for the UNCT to effectively coordinate the UNDAF implementation

164. The UNRCO serves as the Secretariat for the UNDAF processes, providing technical support to the UNCT and related UNDAF teams and theme groups. The UNRCO has a critical role to organise the meetings of the UNCT and its standing committees, set the agenda and prepare minutes, ensure all background documents are available, follow up on actions between meetings, and ensure that the UNCT has the tools at hand to make decisions.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

165. There are three major challenges facing the UN in Maldives. The first is about the country’s graduation to middle income status. As the case in Maldives, graduation to MIC was accompanied by a reduction in development financing, and consequently even staffing levels of UN agencies. This affects the architecture of traditional development cooperation in which the UN could provide direct support in the provision of basic services. However, the existing inequalities and the geographic dispersion of the islands means that some sections of the population still remain marginalised. The second major challenge is about the structure of the UNCT, which has large number of NRAs. This also affected effective coordination among UN agencies. The third major challenge was lack of substantive UNRC for long periods of time. While there was no evidence to suggest that this is something to do with the country specifically, this also had negative effects on the UN’s effectiveness as DAO, and also its ability to engage at high levels with the government.

166. As a ‘Delivering as One’ country the UN in Maldives is not compliant with the established standard operational procedures for DAO countries. While acknowledging that the SOPs were established after the UNDAF, the UN and the country has not been able to fully benefit from the benefits expected from ‘delivering as one’. For UN agencies particularly, the mechanisms

³¹ Ibid.

for delivering as one have actually added an additional layer of work and responsibilities over and above their routing programming work. There can be no justifiable reason to develop an UNDAF Action Plan, for example, if it is not going to serve the purpose of enabling joint planning, joint monitoring and joint reporting.

167. In addition, it was very apparent that it is not sufficient to only adopt the tools for delivering as one without also establishing appropriate institutional mechanisms to make the tools operate effectively and efficiently. Thus, for example, an UNDAF Annual Review, which is not supported by UNDAF Theme Group Reports only serves as platform for UN agencies to report on their individual work programmes.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

168. In view of the foregoing analysis and lessons learned, the evaluation therefore makes the following eight recommendations to strengthen UN system delivery and coherence in the context of Delivering as One.

Recommendation 1. The UNCT should undertake a comprehensive assessment (SWOT analysis) to reposition itself strategically in order to enhance its relevance and effectiveness

169. The UNCT should use the process of developing the next UNDAF as an opportunity to carry out a strategic assessment of its comparative advantages in order to reposition itself for the emerging challenges in Maldives. As noted in 2012 by the General Assembly “...the UN system will always be part of the solution, but it may need to reinvent itself, in order to stand up to today’s challenges”³²

170. The analysis should include (but not limited to) the following issues:

- d) Funding alternatives.
- e) Role of NRAs in the context of Maldives and DAO.
- f) Partnerships in the context of MIC.

Recommendation 2. The UNCT should strengthen its role as “partner of choice” for both duty bearers and rights holders

171. One of the critical gaps of the UNDAF was lack of effective human rights based approach. The majority of UN agency interventions and outputs were geared towards supporting and strengthening institutional capacities of service providers and duty bearers. This is a good strategy for enhancing public service delivery. However, it is based on a presumption of good intention by service providers, and thus negates the role of rights holders in accountability.

³² Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2012): Emerging Issues in Development Cooperation

172. In the new UNDAF cycle, the UNCT should re-examine its strategy on how it can effectively and equitably serve both providers and users of services. In the context of MIC (as discussed above), the UNCT should assess how and where the UN can add value to the duty-bearers; and also how and where to add value for rights holders. The two major areas that can be considered are; (i) strengthening the role of the UN as providers of high quality data for policy and decision-making; and (ii) strengthening institutional capacity of civil society to contribute meaningfully to development and for holding government to account. The UN can therefore reposition itself as “champion for inclusive growth” and “voice of the voiceless”.

Recommendation 3. The UNCT should reduce the number of focus areas and outcomes.

173. The UNCT should identify relevant strategic priority areas that best reflect its comparative advantages and presence in the Maldives in consultation with the government. The strategic priorities should be identified based on specific criteria as per UNDG guidelines. These criteria help the UNCT to position itself appropriately in the context of critical development challenges in the country, and also in view of the UN’s own comparative advantages and alignment with international norms and sustainable development goals (SDGs). Based on information obtained from stakeholders, possible priority areas for the next UNDAF include (i) Youth empowerment and employment, (ii) Environment and climate change adaptation, (iii) Democratic governance and social cohesion, and (iv) Economic diversification and agriculture development.

Recommendation 4. UN agencies should strengthen UNDAF monitoring and reporting through use of national indicator framework

174. Using the national indicator framework provides an opportunity for the UN to identify relevant gaps in the national statistical systems, thereby opening a window to further strengthen national capacities. In addition, this reduces the workload, as the same data can also be used to report on international obligations.

Recommendation 5. The UNCT should consider ways to strengthen joint programming.

175. The UNCT should encourage development of more joint programmes among UN agencies (Box 10). Joint programmes can be an effective tool for strengthening the UN’s ‘delivering as one’, approach. If designed and implemented effectively, joint programmes should comprise a set of activities contained in a common work plan and related budget, involving two or more UN agencies and (sub) national partners. The work plan and budget will form part of a joint programme document, which will also detail roles and responsibilities

Box 10: Joint programmes
In 2002, the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Further Change called for more joint programmes and pooling of resources at country level.
How to prepare an UNDAF Part II.

of partners in coordinating and managing the joint activities. The joint programme document is signed by all participating organizations and (sub) national partners.

Recommendation 6. UN agencies should ensure that project documents include a clear exit strategy and sustainability plan.

176. As noted earlier, many stakeholders felt that UN interventions did not deliver concrete and tangible results. This is a failure of exit planning. An exit strategy is a plan that describes how the programme (or project) will withdraw its resources while ensuring that the achievement of the programme's goals are not jeopardized and that progress towards these goals will continue. Effective exit and sustainability planning should clarify and define the UN's role and responsibilities to national and local beneficiaries as being time bound, thereby reducing the potential for misunderstandings and future dependency.

Recommendation 7. The UNCT should strengthen UNDAF coordination mechanisms, including Theme Groups

177. Theme groups constitute the mechanism for coordinating work of the UNDAF. The UNCT should ensure that the theme groups are accountable for joint planning, monitoring and reporting. This entails that each results group should develop its work plan, which is then reviewed and endorsed by the UNCT.

Recommendation 8. The UNCT should strengthen capacity of the UNRCO and explore alternative sources of funding.

178. The UNRC and UNCT should develop a well-considered coordination architecture and consider options to strengthen the capacity of the UNRCO, including, through resource mobilisation from traditional and non-traditional donors. The coordination architecture should be based on the UNDAF option adopted as well as the UN presence in-country. The UNCT may also consider recruiting Junior Programme Officers (JPOs) and United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) as well as secondments of staff from other partner institutions and agencies. Nordic countries also support programmes to fund Special Assistant to Resident Coordinator (SARC).

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6. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant; CCPR/C/MDV/CO/1, August 2012.
7. ESCAP Mission to the Republic of Maldives on Issues Relating to Graduation from Least Developed Country Status; December 2008.
8. FAO Country Programme Framework (2013 – 2017).
9. First Annual Progress Report on Activities Implemented under the Maldives One UN Fund; May 2012.
10. ICPD Beyond 2014 Maldives Operational Review: 2012 Progress, Challenges and Way Forward
11. Joint Programme Document: Low Emission Climate Resilient Development
12. Maldives as a Biosphere Reserve: An Implementation Plan; January 2013.
13. Maldives UNDAF 2011-2015.
14. Maldives UNDAF Mid Term Review; December 2013.
15. Maldives UNDAF Mid Term Review Situation Analysis; July 2013.
16. Mid-Year Review (mid-2012) of the Maldives UNDAF Action Plan 2011 – 2015; September 2012.
17. Mid Term Evaluation Report: Integrating Climate Change Risks into Resilient Island Planning in the Maldives UNDP/GEF Project, December 2012.
18. MOH; health Sector Master Plan 2006 -2015.
19. National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 15 (a) of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1; A/HRC/WG.6/9/MDV/1/Rev.1, August 2010.
20. Project Document: Maldives Journalism Skills Development Programme
21. Project Document: Increasing climate resilience through an Integrated Water Resource Management Programme in HA. Ihavandhoo, ADh. Mahibadhoo and GDh. Gadhdhoo Island
22. Project Document: Enhance National Capacity for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management.
23. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Gabriela Knaul; A/HRC/23/43/Add.3, May 2013.
24. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, Chaloka Beyani; A/HRC/19/54/Add.1, January 2012.
25. Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, A/HRC/16/7, January 2011.
26. Report of the Mid-Term Review of the UNICEF/Government Programme of Cooperation (2011-2015)
27. Securing a "smooth transition": UNCTAD's recommendations to the Government of Maldives in anticipation of Maldives' graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status; June 2009.
28. Situation Analysis of Emerging Development Challenges in Maldives; January 2010.

29. Summary prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 15 (c) of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1; A/HRC/WG.6/9/MDV/3, August 2010.
30. Terminal Evaluation Report: Atoll Ecosystem-based Conservation of Globally Significant Biological Diversity in the Maldives' Baa Atoll – GEF Project, December 2012.
31. Terminal Evaluation Report: Building Capacity and Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management in Maldives; January 2013.
32. UNESCO (2012); Teaching and Learning Science in Maldives.
33. UNFPA Final country programme document for Maldives; DP/FPA/CPD/MDV/5, September 2010.
34. UNFPA Standard Progress Reports; 2010 – 2013.
35. UNICEF (2013), Situation of Children in the Republic of Maldives.
36. UNOPS Efficiency Assessment Report: Procurement & Supply Chain in the Health Sector, February 2013.
37. WHO Country Cooperation Strategy, 2013 -1017
38. Written statement submitted by Amnesty International, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status; A/HRC/21/NGO/122, September 2012.

UN Agencies:

Adam Isham	Coordination Assistant	LECRd
Ahmed A. Majeed	Finance and Administration Associate	UNRCO
Akjemal Magtymova	Representative (RC a.i.)	WHO
Alain Sibenaler	Country Director	UNFPA
Alia Hirji	Programme Manager	IOM
Alice Akunga	Representative	UNICEF
Aminath H. Adams	NRA Coordination Analyst	UNRCO
Aminath I. Shafeeq	Operations Analysts	World Bank
Asna Luihfee	Programme Associate	IOM
Ayumi Fujino	Representative to India	UNIDO
Devanand Ramiah	Officer in Charge	UNDP
Eemaan Rameez	Deputy Manger	UNOPS
Eteri Kvintradze	Representative for Maldives	IMF
Fathmath Adam Manik	Deputy Programme Coordinator	LECRd JP
Hamdhoon Rashad	Communication Associate	UNRCO
Ibrahim Naseem	M&E Officer	UNICEF
Igor Pokanevych	Public Health Administration	WHO
Kaita Chirizzi	Human Rights Advisor	UNRCO
Khadeeja Hamid	Human Rights Officer	UNRCO
Kirthisri R. Wijeweera	Senior Economist	IMF
Laura Marconnet	UNDAF Consultant	UNDG Asia-Pacific
Mauroof Ahmed	Programme Coordinator	LECRd JP
Mazeena Jameel	Senior Programme Specialist	UNICEF
Moe Chiba	Programme Specialist, Culture	UNESCO
Mohamed Yasir	Programme Management Analyst	UNDP
Rune D. Brandrup	International programme Coordinator	UNFPA
Shadiya Ibrahim	Assistant Representative	UNFPA
Shafia Aminath	Coordinator	FAO
Shafinaz Hasendee	Programme Officer	ILO
Shahida A. Rahman	National Project Coordinator	ILO
Shigeru Aoyagi	Director and Representative to India	UNESCO
Subrato Sinha		UNEP
Suruchi Pant	deputy Representative to India	UNODC

National Partners: Central Government

Abdul H..A. Ghafoor	Deputy Minister	MoFT
Ahmed Hussain	Social Service Officer	Ministry of Law & Gender
Ahmed S. Hussain	Chief Executive Officer	LGA

Ahmed Waheed	Director	MoEE
Ahmed M. Shihab	Director	Ministry of Tourism
Aishath Samiya	Deputy Director General	MOH
Aishtha Shooza	A/Director, Disability/Elderly	Ministry of Law & Gender
Ajwad Musthafa	Permanent Secretary	MoEE
Aminath Aroosha	Director	MoAF
Aminath Nadira	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Law & Gender
Aminath Nashia	Director	MoFT
Fathimath Farheeza	Deputy State Attorney	AG Office
Fathimath Lasheef	Technical Advisor	Ministry of Law & Gender
Fathimath Shafeega	Deputy Director-General	MoFT
Hala Hameed	State Minister	Ministry of Law & Gender
Hussain Azzam	A/Planning Officer	Ministry of Law & Gender
Imad Mohamed	Director, Planning	LGA
Khadeeja Najeeha	Director	MOFA
Maimoona Aboobakur	Director	MOH
Mariyam M. Naaem	Assistant Director	MOFA
Mariyam Saadhaa	Assistant Director	MoYS
Mariyam Sidhmeen	Director, PPMRD	Ministry of Law & Gender
Mohamed Imad	Assistant Executive Director	MoFT
Mohamed Shakeeb	Director, Child Rights Dev	Ministry of Law & Gender
Mohamed Zahid	Deputy State Minister	Ministry of Law & Gender
Mariyam Zoon	Deputy Director	MoYS
Maryam Gasim	Deputy Director General	Ministry of Tourism
Midnath A. Rasheed	Environment Analyst	MoEE
Miruzza Mohamed	Director	MoEE
Najfa S. Razee	Project Manager	MoEE
Nuha Mohamed Riza	Business Development Consultant	MoED
Saeeda Umar	Coordinator, Aid for Trade	MoED
Saleema Hameez	Assistant Planning Officer	MOH
Shaheedha A. Ibrahim	Director General	MoEE
Sheeza Ali	Director General, Health Services	MOH
Shidhatha Shareef	Deputy State Minister	Ministry of Law & Gender
Sultana Shakir	Permanent Secretary	AG Office

National Partners: Atoll/Island Level

Abdul Azeez	President	Laamu Gaadhoo Council
Abdulla Faisal	Councillor	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Ahmed Ali	Councillor	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Ahmed Riyaz	President	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Aishath Ilmuhnisa	Assistant Director	Laamu Atoll Council

Faruhaadh Mohamed	Vice President	Laamu Gaadhoo Council
Hussain Haleel	Councillor	Laamu Atoll Council
Ibrahim Shahid	Councillor	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Ismail Shafeeu	Councillor	Laamu Atoll Council
Mariyam Abdul Rahuman	Councillor	Laamu Gaadhoo Council
Mohamed Fareed	Councillor	Laamu Atoll Council
Mohamed Jameel	Councillor	Laamu Atoll Council
Mohamed Nadeem	Councillor	Laamu Gaadhoo Council
Moosa Abdulla	Vice President	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Shaaheen Ismail	Councillor	Laamu Atoll Council
Yoosuf Aamir	President	Laamu Atoll Council

National Partners: Independent Institutions and Civil Society Organisations

Abdul Hameed	National Programme Manager	HIV/AIDS Programme
Ahmed Aboobakuru	Director	Elections Commission
Ahmed Shakeeb	Zuvaanuge Guhlun NGO	Laamu Fonadhoo
Aiman Rasheed	Advocacy and Communications	Transparency Maldives
Ali Assadh	Rep; Women Enhancement	Laamu Fonadhoo
Amiliya Abdulla	Member, WDC	Laamu Fonadhoo
Aneesa Ahmed	Chairperson	Hope for Women
Azhath Rushdy	Director	Elections Commission
Fathmath Zaeema	President, Women Enhancement	Fonadhoo Island
Hawla Ahmed Didi	Managing Director	ARC (NGO)
Hawwa Haleela	Member, WDC	Laamu Fonadhoo
Hussain Moosa	Zuvaanuge Guhlun NGO	Laamu Fonadhoo
Mariyam Shadiya	Representative WDC	Laamu Fonadhoo Council
Mohamed Hamid	Program Manager	Transparency Maldives

Introduction

UN in the Maldives developed an UNDAF Action Plan replacing the Country Programme Action Plans for UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. The UN Country Team together with the government and other stakeholders formulated the Maldives United Nations Development Assistance Framework which outlines the United Nations' planned support to from 2011-2015.

The UNDAF review and development includes: situation analysis, UNDAF evaluation, UNDAF formulation and CPD formulation.

The UNDAF identified specific outcomes and outputs that are expected to be achieved for the period 2011 – 2015. An UNDAF Action Plan (UNDAF AP) incorporating an M&E framework was also developed to operationalise the UNDAF and to ensure that the UN, together with the partners, will be able to monitor progress towards achieving the intended development results. Progress towards achieving the UNDAF outcomes is assessed through annual reviews, mid-term reviews and the final UNDAF evaluation.

As part of the 2016-2020 UNDAF roll-out process and in line with the 2014 UNCT Annual Work Plan, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (UNRCO) will engage an international consultant and a local to conduct an evaluation of the current UNDAF. The evaluation will cover the first three years of the implementation of the UNDAF (January 2011 – December 2013). The consultancy will build on the UNDAF mid-term review conducted in 2013 and provide valuable analytical inputs by drawing key lessons learned from the implementation of the UNDAF into the ongoing UN programmes and the formulation of the next UNDAF.

UN in Maldives is a self-starter Delivering as One (DaO) with a One Fund. The Fund has been partially successful covering the gaps in funding needs.

The UNDAF outlines UN support in achieving eight national development objectives in the following areas:

1. Health
2. Education
3. Social Security and Protection
4. Substance Abuse and HIV Prevention
5. Economic Sector
6. Environment, Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction
7. Democratic Governance
8. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The principle behind delivering as one through UNDAF Action Plan is to ensure the UN Agencies are better aligned and more coherent in supporting the national development.

Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The purpose of the UNDAF Evaluation is to inform the decision makers on how to enhance the role and contribution of the UN System in support of national policies and strategies to achieve national development results in the context of transition to the Middle Income Country status. Within this context and the Mid Term Review recommendations, the evaluation will assess the progress made against the results envisaged in the UNDAF and identify areas of improvements including remaining

challenges. The evaluation will provide evidence on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDAF in the Maldives. The evaluation criteria are defined as follows:

- *Relevance* of UNDAF in terms of responsiveness to the needs and national priorities of Maldives;
- Assess the *effectiveness* of the UNDAF in terms of progress towards agreed UNDAF outcomes and factors affecting implementation. To the extent possible, assess the impact of the UNDAF and determine whether any major changes in the development landscape can reasonably be attributed to the UNDAF.
- Assess the *efficiency* of the UNDAF as a coordination and partnership framework. To the extent possible, assess the efficiency of the UNDAF as a mechanism to mobilize resources and minimize transaction costs for UN agencies, the Government of Maldives and Donors. Appraise the extent of stakeholders' participation in the UNDAF process;
- Analyse the *sustainability* of UNDAF supported results and strategies that has a higher probability of benefits to continue over time as a contribution to national development.

Specific Objectives of the evaluation

- Using MTR findings, assess overall progress made against the national development goals specifically to determine to what extent cross-cutting issues (poverty, environmental sustainability, human rights, equity, vulnerabilities, gender equality and empowerment of women, and HIV/AIDS) were systematically incorporated in the UNDAF reviews, UN agency assessments and evaluation processes in order to assess whether they were mainstreamed in all relevant outcomes.
- Determine progress made against the strategic intent of having the UNDAF Action Plan as a joint strategy and to identify *best practices and lessons learned* from UNDAF assessments and reports to inform the implementation of the UNDAF.
- Assess the effectiveness of UNDAF Action Plan as a delivering as One approach is perceived as relevant, coherent and effective to be replicated in the next UNDAF in the context of a MIC including regular programming as well as LECReD.
- Appraise the UNDAF *M&E process*, programming and decisions making, and propose methods to enhance the integration of UNDAF Programming Principles and their overall strategies within projects and programmes. How effective were UN agencies in using the UNDAF process for their programme delivery and internal M&E process.
- **Assess the use of evidence-based data for planning and policy-making purposes.**
- Assess the relevance, including strengths and weaknesses of existing partnerships including state partners and civil society with a view to identify potential partners for the next UNDAF cycle.
- Based on the current development landscape, national development priorities, policies and strategies, as well as the major outcomes of the 2011-2015 UNDAF Evaluation, provide substantive and practical recommendations for the design of the next UNDAF. These recommendations should also be informed by the latest UN Development Group (UNDG) guidance and best practices observed in other UN programme countries.
- To evaluate selected CPD based on agency identified needs.

Scope and Focus of the Evaluation

The Evaluation will focus on three key areas

- Response to the national development objectives
- Coherent and results oriented strategy
- Joint programming processes

The scope of the evaluation will cover the period 2011 to 2013, focusing on the UNDAF Action Plan and the UNDAF MTR. To achieve this, the Evaluation will try to respond to the following critical questions:

1. Responsiveness

The ability of the CO to respond to: (i) changes and/or additional requests from national counterparts, and (ii) shifts caused by external factors in an evolving country context. To what extent has the CO been able to respond to changes in national needs and priorities or to shifts caused by crisis or major political changes?

- To what extent has the UNDAF Action Plan mechanism facilitated joint programming and joint synergies across participating agencies
- Have gender and youth issues being fully integrated into the programming framework and implemented
- How effective is the UNDAF Steering Committee in guiding the One UN programming

2. Added value

The extent to which the UNDAF as well as individual UN Agencies adds benefit to the results from other development actors' interventions only. What are the main UN comparative strengths in the country – particularly in comparison to other UN agencies? Are they a result of UN corporate features or are they explained by the specific features of the CO?

- To what extent would the results observed within the eight focus areas have been achieved without UN support?
- What is the main UN's added value in the country context as perceived by national stakeholders? (Note that: the "what to check column" in the evaluation matrix could then include issues such as: in case the added value is not tangible or widely recognized, find out the reasons why; and examine the explanatory factors behind a good degree of added value)
- Review of UN Agency CPD indicators vis-à-vis UNDAF Action Plan.

Institutional Arrangements for the Evaluation

- *Evaluation Management Group*

The overall guidance for this evaluation will be provided by the Evaluation Management Group (EMG) under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. The group comprises of focal points from all participating UN Agencies preferably the Agency Head and key national partners (e.g. MOFT)

The EMG will design, oversee and manage the evaluation process including the selection of the evaluation team, providing guidance to the Resident Coordinator's Office and assuring independence of the evaluation. The EMG will provide the regular feedback to the Agency specific reporting needs who will provide quality assurance throughout the evaluation process.

- *Evaluation Team*

The evaluation team comprises of experienced evaluators with a solid understanding of the national context and proven track records of conducting evaluations in a professional manner. The team should

have members with substantive knowledge of the programmatic issues covered in the UNDAF AP. One international and one local consultant will form the evaluation team and the exercise should be carried out as independent as possible.

- *Reference Group*

The EMG will identify a larger reference group as a consultative body from the UN thematic groups, stakeholders, civil society and the development partners who would comment on the validity of results. Terms of reference, inception report as well as the draft and final reports will be shared by the EMG and comments sought at each stage of the evaluation

- *Quality Assurance*

The quality assurance will be provided by UNICEF/ROSA as the convening agency. UNDP, UNFPA and other participating UN Agencies will provide a focal point who is not directly involved in the implementation for quality assurance and peer review. Terms of reference, inception report as well as the draft and final reports will be reviewed by the QA team in the view to strengthen objectivity, effectiveness and visibility of the evaluation.

- *UN RCO*

The UN RCO will provide the day to day management and logistic support

Methodology and approach

The evaluation will be carried out in accordance with UNEG norms and standards.

Given the UNDAF MTR was completed in 2013 in a participatory and rigorous manner, this end of cycle evaluation will adopt a meta-evaluation approach, which will build on past analysis and supplementary secondary and limited primary data. UNDAF outcomes – both intended and unintended - and impact will be assessed through open and structured discussions with key stakeholders, and through a comprehensive review of documents, a synthesis and analysis of data from UNDAF MTR, UNDAF and agency-specific annual reports, completed mid-term programme reviews and regular programme monitoring of individual agencies. The discussions will also involve key stakeholders, UN Agencies and the Government. While interviews are a key instrument, all analyses must be based on observed facts to ensure that the evaluation is sound and objective.

UNDAF evaluation methodology shall consider all Programming Principles identified in the 2011-2015 UNDAF (Capacity Development, Environmental Sustainability, Gender Equality, Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and Result-Based Management (RBM), as well as other cross-cutting issues as appropriate.

- The UNDAF Action Plan and the Mid Term Review (MTR) will provide the document of reference. Progress of results will be measured against the indicators in two documents UNDAF AP and the MTR. In case of gaps, primary data will be collected through interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions. Key methods proposed include:

- Review of Situation Analysis, UNDAF and UNDAF Action Plan, the MTR and Annual Reviews, CPDs;
- Interviews with individuals to capture the perspectives of both the Government and UNCT. Key informants include both political and civil servants, Project Coordinators and Heads of UN Agencies;
- Focus Group interviews with project boards/steering committees as well as UN Thematic Groups for analysis of effectiveness and to identify perceptions and attitudes ;
- Interviews with key stakeholders to assess effects of the reform on government and donor transaction costs.

The Evaluation Team will develop a data collection workplan with a finalised methodological design and submitted as the inception report. As much as possible utilise the secondary data from the MTR, programmatic documents and reports, recent studies and research reports and critical analysis of the available data with regards to the national guiding documents.

The Evaluation Team should acknowledge relevant existing data from UN Agencies; the RCO, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Department of National Planning, NGOs, web-based information and other sources. The Evaluation Team will be responsible for the content including the findings and recommendations in the final report. All reports including the inception report, draft and final report will be produced in English language.

Deliverables

The Evaluation Team will deliver the following products

1. An inception report outlining the methodological approach, including types of data and information to be reviewed and analysed including the timeframe for completing the Evaluation based on this TOR
2. Outcome reports providing detailed analysis of results and issues at the each outcome level
3. Presentation of preliminary findings at a stakeholder workshop
4. Two draft reports to be submitted to the UNCT for review and comments
5. Final report

The basic table of content for the final report should include minimally and i) Executive Summary, ii) introduction and rationale iii) evaluation methodology iv) country context v) findings vi) conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations and vii) annexes

Phases and timeframe

The assignment will be both home and field based. The place of assignment is Male', Maldives. The consultant will have a temporary office in the UNRCO with access to relevant staff and documentation from other resident UN agencies. The duration of the assignment will be six weeks, from July to 20 October 2014. The Evaluation will be developed, presenting the findings of the assessment, in line with the scope as detailed in these terms of reference.

Timeline for the evaluation process

	Phases/deliverables	Dates (2014)
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1	Drafting of the ToR	By 1 May
2	Feedback on ToR from agency regional offices/HQ	By 20 May
3	Finalization of the ToR and	By 1 June
4	Recruitment of evaluators	By 30 June
5	Design phase	July
6	Submission of the design report	By 7 July
7	Field Phase (3 weeks)	August
8	Synthesis phase	August - September
9	1 st draft final report	By 1 September
10	2 nd draft final report	By 5 November
11	Dissemination workshop	1 October
12	Final report	9 October

Design phase: Development of methodology for the assessment; Home based review of relevant documents provided by EMG. Analysis of assessment and evaluation documents with interim reporting to the QA/ Reference group

Data collection phase: In-country consultations, interviews, collection of other relevant documents and preparation of preliminary findings.

Reporting phase: Feedback from EMG/QA and Reference Group on preliminary findings of the review; completion of the report and presentation of review findings to the EMG;

Expertise and Qualifications of Evaluation Team

General considerations

- The selected consultants should have experience in conducting international development evaluations and demonstrated ability to show work with local consultants in conducting evaluation.
- Members of the evaluation team should be independent from UN agencies and organisations that participated in the design and implementation of the UNDAF in Maldives
- The evaluation team should include at least one national consultant who will have a better understanding, knowledge and experience with the national development frameworks, especially Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and can enhance national ownership

Technical and analytical skills

- Experience in planning and managing development related evaluations
- Experience in specialised technical knowledge, including in data collection and analytical skills, mainstreaming the HRBA to programming and gender equality and women's empowerment considerations;
- Excellent communication, interpersonal skills, teamwork and adept at working with people of diverse cultural and social backgrounds;
- Excellent knowledge of the UN system and UN joint country programming processes (CCA/UNDAF);
- An understanding of and ability to abide by the core values of the United Nations.

Competencies

Education

An advanced university degree or equivalent in social sciences, project/programme management or other relevant disciplines, with specialised training in areas such as evaluation, social statistics

Experience

- At least 10 years of relevant experience and proven expertise with CCA/UNDAF processes, evaluations and reviews, including strong understanding of UN's relevant Programming Guidelines on Gender Equality, HRBA, Capacity Development, Environmental Sustainability and RBM;
- Excellent report writing skills, analytical skills as well as good computer skills;
- Previous experience in UNDAF or related evaluation process and practical experience in the middle-income / South Asian / SIDS and/or knowledge of the development issues in these countries is an asset; (Proven experience in carrying out and leading independent evaluative exercises for the UN system, such as UNDAF and CPD evaluations and reviews and experience in applying UNEG norms and standards.
- Experience in working with teams and team processes;
- Proven track record in evaluation and review writing.

Core competency of team leader

- The Team Leader must have proven track record in the management of an evaluation function
- Very strong organization and coordination skills
- Must be able to produce credible and compelling evaluation reports, with evidence-based findings and recommendations
- Must possess managerial skills for management of the evaluation process, planning and setting standards and team management and providing leadership
- Ability for strategic thinking
- Ability to bring together diverse stakeholders
- Language proficiency if both written and spoken English

Payment modalities and Administrative Arrangements

The assignment is expected to be completed within six weeks. The financial proposal shall specify a total lump sum amount, and payment terms around specific and measurable deliverables (qualitative and quantitative). The financial proposal must include a breakdown of this lump sum amount (including travel, per diems, and number of anticipated working days).

Payment of fees will be based on the delivery of outputs, as follows:

- Upon satisfactory contribution to the inception report: 30%
- Upon satisfactory contribution to the draft final evaluation report: 40%
- Upon satisfactory contribution to the final evaluation report: 30%

Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) will be paid per nights spent at the place of the mission following UN DSA rates. Travel costs will be settled separately from the consultant fees.

Evaluation of proposals

Documents to be included when submitting the proposals

Letter explaining why the consultant is the most suitable for the work;

Brief Description of Approach to Work/ Methodology;

Financial proposal;

Personal CV and P11 form

The award of the contract will be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:

Having received the highest combined score of the technical and financial scores.

Technical Criteria weight; 70%

Financial Criteria weight; 30%

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70 points out of 100 points at the technical evaluation will be considered for the Financial Evaluation.

Reference Documents

Situation Analysis

United Nations Development Assistance Framework, Republic of Maldives 2011 – 2015

United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UNDAF Action Plan, Republic of Maldives 2011 – 2015

UNFPA Fifth Country Programme Document, Republic of Maldives, 2011-2015

UNDAF Mid Term Review, Republic of Maldives, 2013

Millennium Development Goal (exact title)

National Human Development Report (exact title)

ICPD beyond 2014: Maldives Operational Review 2012, Department of National Planning

List of UN Agencies in Maldives

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

WHO World Health Organisation

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation

UN Women United Nations ...

OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights