



HALF YEAR PROGRESS REPORT 2023

UNICEF Maldives Country Office

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Cover: Maldives: A child and parent
walking to school in L. Hithadhoo

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1. Introduction

2023 is the second year of implementation of the UNICEF CPD 2022-2026. It is also an election year in Maldives during which a new Government will be ushered into office in the fourth quarter of the year. In the first half year, the Maldives CO experienced a lot of changes in both the office structure and its programmes. These included the appointment of a new Representative, retirement of the Deputy Representative and appointment of his replacement in September 2023, completion of the recruitments for 4 new positions approved by the PBR, transitioning existing staff into new roles and aggressive introduction of internships.

The office also prioritized the creation of a common ground for accelerated implementation of the country programme including developing the flagships, agreeing business owners, developing a framework for programme convergence, and refining the programme structure and portfolio to improve coherence and alignment in design and implementation. This half year report captures achievements, lessons learnt and priorities for the rest of the year and beyond, in each of the CPD outcome areas.



2. Survive & Thrive

2.1 Health System Strengthening

Policy influence:

UNICEF Maldives prioritized the completion of investment case and costing of PHC as part of efforts to advocate for PHC system strengthening including health financing and PHC policy implementation in Maldives. The office will continue to advocate for strengthening PHC platforms to ensure quality health and nutrition services at health facilities. The office will also undertake a mapping of the community health system to provide a snapshot of the community health ecosystems, services and profiles, as well as entry points to strengthen community engagement.

Immunization systems strengthening:

UNICEF Maldives in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Health Protection Agency prioritized capacity building for vaccine and cold chain management and vaccine safety surveillance. This included:

- **Vaccine procurement:** UNICEF MCO procured routine vaccines for the national EPI programme to avert vaccine stockouts.
- **Cold chain management:** Installation and maintenance of Heat Recovery Ventilation (HRV) system – at the central level as part of strengthening the immunization cold chain system

of the country as well as supply of waste management system and dry ice machine to the central level vaccine store as part of strengthening the immunization cold chain system. Several capacity workshops were organized including:

- UNICEF in collaboration with HPA conducted two-day capacity building workshop on vaccine and cold chain management in Abdul Samad Memorial Hospital in GDh. Atoll to strengthen the capacity of vaccine handlers to ensure effective vaccine management for delivery of high-quality vaccines. Health workers and nurses from four atolls were trained in key areas such as cold chain management, effective vaccine management, preventive maintenance of cold chain equipment, cold chain maintenance system, vaccine demand generation and AEFI management. A total of 34 healthcare workers from Addu, Fuvahmulah, Gaafu Dhaalu and Gaafu Alif were trained on cold chain and vaccine management.

- A total of 12 Government vaccine focal points from the central level, regional, atoll and island level attended the international training programme on Cold Chain Equipment Repair and Maintenance in Pune, India.
- UNICEF together with the Ministry of Health completed the installation and setup of Remote Temperature Monitoring Devices (RTMDs) at five sites (IGMH, ADK, Hulhumale' Hospital and Dhamanaveshi, Vilimale' Hospital). With this setup, SMS and email trigger mechanisms have been established in these facilities, enabling designated personnel to access the dashboard and monitor temperature levels effectively. Additionally, this will facilitate prompt notification in the event of any temperature fluctuation, allowing timely action, thereby safeguarding the integrity and potency of the stored vaccines.
- **Vaccine safety surveillance:** A National workshop to train 46 participants including doctors, nurses, and vaccine focal points on strengthening vaccine safety surveillance and causality assessment was completed on 13-16 March 2023.
- **Field monitoring:** UNICEF in partnership with MoH and Ambassador of Japan organized a high-level field monitoring and observation visit to B. Dharavandhoo and B. Eydhafushi.

UNICEF, together with MoH completed a field monitoring and cold chain assessment in B. and ADh. atolls. UNICEF also supported the Health Protection Agency to conduct a supportive supervision visit to GDh. atoll hospital to assess the cold chain and vaccine management at the subnational level.

Mental health and substance abuse:

UNICEF MCO prioritised the co-creation and elaboration of the mental and substance abuse flagship as well as roll out of key initiatives including:

- **Partnership with WHO:** Maldives CO signed a joint programming agreement with WHO on Children and Adolescents' Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing.
- **Helping Adolescent Thrive (HAT):** Helping Adolescent Thrive (HAT) Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) packages including the facilitator guides and monitoring and evaluation tools, were contextualized and adapted to Maldives working sessions with teachers and school counsellors. A school advocacy session was also conducted for principals and counsellors of 7 schools prior to the rollout of HAT sessions. The pilot is currently ongoing in 5 schools (Muhyiddin School, Ghaazee School, CHSE, Majeediyya School, Kaamil Didi Primary School) in the Greater Male' Area.

- **MHPSS Helpline:** MCO collaborated with the Ministry of Education to launch the school MHPSS Helpline and organized sessions to build the capacity of teachers and counselors on Psychological First Aid.
- **SBC on MHPSS:** The development of MHPSS communication plan for the rollout of the “Kihineh?” campaign as well as development of supplementary Mental Health IEC materials for incorporation into the existing ANC/PNC package.

In the next half year, UNICEF MCO will prioritize the rollout of HAT including caregiver sessions and adolescent focused school-based MH campaign focusing on SEL components from HAT modules. School-based activities will be considered such as school holidays and the availability of teachers and students for rollout of school-based interventions as well as capacity for monitoring and evaluation of HAT at MOE.

The mental health and substance abuse communication campaign “Kihineh?” will also be rolled out. Efforts will go into integrating Mental Health and Psychosocial Support into the work of IBAMA and in co-organizing with the Center for Mental Health (CMH) a mental health conference in Maldives. Priority will be given to establishing a coordination mechanism for the UNICEF-WHO Joint Workplan implementation.



2.2 Food System Strengthening

Policy influence: UNICEF Maldives, with support from South Asia conducted a landscape analysis and developed a policy brief on childhood and adolescent overweight and obesity in Maldives. A workshop was organized for key national stakeholders on 29 March to validate and disseminate the findings of the landscape analysis. A roundtable discussion on Adolescent and Childhood overweight and obesity in Maldives will be organized in the next half year as part of strategic advocacy efforts to position nutrition programmes and interventions targeting children and adolescents in the national agenda. The office will also advocate for strengthening multisectoral coordination and collaboration.

Feeding/eating practices: UNICEF Maldives collaborated with officials from government and academia to formulate the BMS action plan. The office also supported 5 officials, including participants from academia and government to attend a three-day regional workshop in Kathmandu on strengthening monitoring and enforcement of legal measures to protect breastfeeding in South Asia, and build capacity to lead the relevant authorities through the process of setting up a government-run monitoring system using the WHO-UNICEF NetCode protocol.

UNICEF Maldives also stepped-up communication, advocacy and awareness activities for nutrition including through

the development and dissemination of human-interest documentary and photo album in Sh. Milandhoo, on the food environment and triple burden of malnutrition in children, the adolescent girls' nutrition fact sheet, and a recipe book to inform parents and caregivers of children under 2 years on age-appropriate nutritious recipes with locally available ingredients. The office also collaborated with the Ministry of Education to conduct nutrition awareness and promotion targeting parents of five selected schools and supported Health Protection Agency to develop, print and disseminate resources on nutrition promotion for infants and young children including complimentary feeding booklet, growth monitoring Standard operating procedures, Job Aids flowcharts to health workers, Child Health record booklet and breastfeeding booklet.

In the next half year, the office will prioritize the advocacy, communication and support for government leadership and adoption of food systems approach to nutrition programming and interventions focusing on breastfeeding and nutrition protection and promotion including rollout of first 1000 days of life strategy on maternal and child nutrition and implementation of the BMS Code action plan.

Efforts will go into the development of DHIS-2 nutrition module with the Government and leveraging the latest innovations in remote learning, including e-learning tools to build nutrition capacities of healthcare workers. A roundtable discussion workshop on Adolescent and Childhood overweight and obesity in Maldives with relevant stakeholders.



3. Learning, Protection & Participation

3.1 Education System Strengthening

Effective Teaching & Learning across the life course: UNICEF Maldives prioritized the roll out of UPSHIFT, an initiative to provide young people with 21st century skills. In February 2023, UPSHIFT was launched by the Vice President of the Maldives in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and National Institute of Education. Today, over 3100 students from 45 schools have enrolled into UPSHIFT. An UPSHIFT Monitoring framework has been finalized and a study visit to Telangana, India was organized for UPSHIFT champions.

UPSHIT implementation is facing several systemic challenges including inadequate working devices (tablets/computers) and weak internet connectivity in schools, limited access to information in the UNISOLVE portal from challenges with the partnership with INQUILAB, weak government ownership of UPSHIFT and trained UPSHIFT mentor teachers not being assigned responsibility for UPSHIFT implementation in schools. In the next half year,

MCO will prioritize the refinement of UPSHIFT operational model in 10 USHIFT prototype schools including collaborating with MOE to address challenges with internet connectivity and devices in schools and pedagogy experts on how to strengthen the UPSHIFT methodology in schools. A second round of training for mentor teachers will be organized and efforts will go into improving communication ICO/ INQUILAB regarding accessing back-end data.

Youth Development & Engagement:

Maldives CO developed and institutionalized the youth development and engagement flagship and finetuned the youth engagement methodology including the design thinking methodology.

The office provided orientations for the first cohort of 40 youth in Male' on the MCO flagships and second cohort of 25 youth in Kulhudhuffushi on climate action. Meetings were held with the Ministry of Higher Education to explore a partnership for collaborative work on youth development and engagement. In the next half year, Maldives CO will explore and evolve innovative approaches for youth outreach and visibility. Priority will be given to identifying and expanding potential partners to expand, build capacity, retain, and leverage the pool of young people, amplify their voices and visibility of their activities. ImaGen bootcamps will be organized and training of Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) facilitators will be undertaken. The Youth Reference Group will also be established



3.2 Child Protection System Strengthening

Child rights oversight and monitoring:

UNICEF Maldives strengthened its partnerships with the Children's Ombudsperson Office to improve oversight and monitoring of child rights. With support from ROSA the office co-organized with the Children's Ombudsperson's Office the first Regional Conference of National Human rights Institutions in South Asia to share experiences, challenges, and opportunities for cross-regional collaboration to strengthen child rights monitoring mechanisms in the region, which led to the development of a regional action plan. The office also supported the Children's Ombudsperson Office to conduct awareness sessions for parents and teachers on child rights, orientation sessions for stakeholders on audits of childcare institutions and 'Kudakudhinge Rauyu fora in 4 atolls this year. In the next half year, Maldives CO will consolidate its partnership with the Children's Ombudsperson's Office while exploring opportunities support the functioning of the Child Rights Council.

UNICEF Maldives also supported Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services (MoGFSS), Maldives Police Service (MPS), Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Judiciary to align guidelines and standards for provision of services for children services the Child Rights Protection Act (CRPA) and the Juvenile Justice Act.

This included Advance Child Interview Techniques training for investigation officers, and training on protection of children from online abuse and grooming. MCO also held numerous discussions with MoGFSS and the Child Rights Council on the formal adoption of the SOP on Multi-Sectoral Case Conferencing, which was developed last year, to enable all agencies to work together in responding to cases of violence against children.

In the next 6 months, the office will support the development of an in-service training programme for social service workers in both physical and online modalities; and a specialized child safeguarding and child protection training programme for all stakeholders working with children, which will also be incorporated into the pre-service training for police investigation officers. MCO will also support the review and revision of community conferencing training module for all stakeholders working with children.



Children in contact/conflict with the law:

UNICEF Maldives prioritized the implementation of the Child Rights Protection Act and Juvenile Justice Act. The office supported the Department of Juvenile Justice to develop a new procedure manual and the Family and Child Protection (FCP) of Maldives Police Service to develop a new SOP, to align with the Child Rights Protection Act and Juvenile Justice Act. The capacity of FCP investigation officers was built on online abuse and exploitation of children. MCO also supported DJJ to develop new SOP outlining procedures for dealing with at-risk children and children in conflict with the law in line with the Child Rights Protection Act and Juvenile Justice Act, as well as the new SOP for Family and Child Protection Wing of MPS. In the next half year, the Office will prioritize the development of diversion and rehabilitation programmes for children in conflict with the law, including multi-sectoral child safeguarding and child protection training for all stakeholders dealing with children in contact with the law. The office will also prioritize capacity building of the staff of the Victim Support Unit of PGO and MPS, building on the initial discussions and advocate for child friendly practices in repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration of children and women from conflict zones and inclusion of child protection in pre-service training for Maldives Police.

Violence against children: UNICEF Maldives is working with the Ministry of Gender Family and Social Services (MoGFSS) to develop a National Action Plan and a National Conference for



prevention and responding to violence against children.

A multi-sectoral steering committee including state actors, civil society organisation and children/young people has been established to guide the drafting of the National Action Plan during third quarter, which will later be endorsed in the National Conference planned for quarter 4 of the year.

3.3 Family & Community Systems

Positive parenting: UNICEF Maldives has developed a concept note to guide the positive parenting flagship, which explores the principles of positive parenting, with a focus on the life course approach, and examines various factors that influence its effectiveness. The office also commissioned the Institute for Research and Innovation (IRI) of Villa College to undertake a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) study to determine the parenting behaviours prevalent in the Maldives. Concurrently, the CO has engaged the services of Society for Health Education (SHE) to develop the positive parenting package (based on the lifecycle approach) which includes three key modules – universal parenting module, module for parents with children using drugs, and module for parents with children in conflict with the law/children at risk. In the next half of the year, prioritize implementation of parenting sessions in 25 islands.

IBAMA roll out: UNICEF Maldives collaborated with the MoGFSS to prioritize the establishment, training, and roll out of IBAMA in 112 islands and undertake vulnerability mapping and development of action plans in 17 islands. Office also initiated a ToT programme for IBAMA with the training of 15 staff. In the next half year, UNICEF Maldives will continue its support to the roll out of IBAMA with priority to launching IBAMA groups in the remaining 75 islands, making existing IBAMAs more functional, rolling out a campaign to make IBAMAs more visible and building a knowledge management and learning platform for IBAMAs.



4. Sustainable Environment, Policy & Financing

4.1 Social Policy

Social sector analysis, planning, M&E: UNICEF Maldives led in the process of undertaking social sector analysis, which was completed and validated, leading to the development of social sector plan including a monitoring and evaluation plan. In the next half year, Maldives CO will prioritize the support to the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services to develop an implementation plan for the rollout of the social sector plan along with social sector budget.

Public Finance for children: UNICEF Maldives started a process of conceptualizing and design a programme on public finance for children. As part of this process, ROSA organized a PF4C mission to Maldives, and provided orientation to the programme team in the office. The office also sponsored a team of government officials - one from the Ministry of Finance and another from the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services - to participate in the regional knowledge exchange on Public Finance Management (PFM).

In the next half year, MCO will explore how to apply a child lens to the government budgeting process.

Data and evidence: UNICEF Maldives supported the Maldives Bureau of Statistics to complete the 2022 Census data and advocated for the inclusion of children and disability in the census. The office held an internal reflection on the implications of the structure and distribution of the Maldives including the child population on UNICEF's programmes. During the next half year, MCO will support a detailed analysis of the census from a child perspective as well as a disability analysis. Maldives CO supported two government officials to participated in a six-day MICS7 planning, implementation and analysis training that was carried out for SA and EAPRO region. The team was able to develop that will allow relevant MICS modules to be incorporated into the planes DHS will be carried out.

Decentralized governance for children:

UNICEF Maldives initiated discussions with the Local Government Authority on potential partnerships on how UNICEF can leverage Island Councils and relevant governance institutions towards a vision of child friendly and climate resilient islands. The next half year, the office will prioritize engagement with the 10 islands on the island development plans and Land Use plans.



4.2 Environment & Climate Response System: Climate Action for, and with Young People

Policy influence: UNICEF Maldives prioritised the evidence generation and advocacy for climate action. The Office used the opportunity of the Regional Director's visit to launch the UNICEF South Asia 'Respond Today for Tomorrow' report on 1st March 2023, at an event held at MNU main auditorium. The launch was followed by a panel discussion on the findings of the report. On 5th March 2023, UNICEF Maldives Representative Edward Addai met with the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Technology; key discussion carried out advocate for:

- Building a cohort of young climate smart Maldivians: Collaborate to rollout the training of students in climate SMART actions using didactic and design thinking methodologies to leverage agency of young people in implementing climate smart actions.
- Climate resilient social infrastructure: Work at the policy level to influence building codes and support to develop prototypes and facilitate application and compliance mechanism, focusing on the most vulnerable schools in the country.
- Convening SIDS: Collaborate on organizing a Pre-COP event, with a proposal to guide mobilization of countries and recourses towards convening a youth climate conference in the Maldives.

The UNICEF Maldives Representative also spoke at the 5th Workshop under the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation by the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where he highlighted the need to place children at the heart of Climate Action.

Cohort of young and smart climate guardians: UNICEF Maldives has been convening and building capacity of young people as part of efforts to create a cohort of young and smart climate guardians. On 26th February 2023, UNICEF Maldives organized an intergenerational dialogue between young people and the UNICEF Maldives Representative, the UNICEF Regional Director for Asia Pacific region, and the President's Special Envoy on Climate Change Ms. Sabra Noordeen. On 1st May 2023, UNICEF Maldives organized an orientation session for 40 young people who were supported by UNICEF to take part in the Space for Island Nations Conference (SINC) organized by the Maldives Space Research Organization (MSRO) from 2 to 5 May 2023.

SINC 2023 was the first ever space conference to be held in the Maldives, where the organizers shared valuable information on programs, technical approaches, and policies, as well as to work towards solving and understanding the issues island nations face through an earth observation and space technology as a lens.

Community Emergency Response Teams: UNICEF Maldives supported NDMA to train the CERTs in Kendhoo (Baa Atoll) and Komandoo (Shaviyani Atoll) on how CERTs can work more closely with communities to plan and respond to emergencies more effectively.



5. Programme Effectiveness

5.1 Managing for Results

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation:

The process of recruiting and onboarding the new M&E Officer was completed. The office organized two POG meetings and initiated the programme structure and midyear review processes. In the next half year, MCO will prioritize the roll out of e-workplan, strengthen POG meetings and prepare for end year review, reporting and planning for 2024. The IMERP will also be developed and a light touch formative assessment of UPSHIFT will be commissioned in collaboration with the ROSA Evaluation Office.

Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer:

HACT implementation was sustained with the office completing one round of HACT training for partners and undertaking five Spot Checks of partners and six Programme Visits. In the next half year, the office will prioritize implementation of eZ-HACT 2.0, start implementation of eTools including orientation of all staff on eTools, conduct Round 2 of HACT training for partners and complete reports for Spot Checks which have been conducted.

Programme Convergence and Equity:

UNICEF Maldives has been evolving a strategy and approach to programme convergence. As part of this approach, multi-sectoral Atoll Child Ambassadors have been established to coordinate UNICEF's work in 10 islands, the concept of child friendly and climate resilient island is being elaborated to provide a vision for programme convergence, a programme convergence workshop focusing on the seven flagships as levers making island child friendly and climate resilient islands was organized, and the first scoping mission on programme convergence to HDh. Kulhudhuffushi has been completed. The next half year, other Atoll Child Ambassadors will undertake programme convergence scoping missions to increase the Office's collective understanding and approach to programme convergence.

5.2 Social Behavioral Change

Social listening: UNICEF Maldives implemented social listening to gauge public sentiments on key trending topics and decisions by the government. The office recruited a private firm to help the Ministry of Health understand public sentiments on COVID-19 (including vaccination), mental health and nutrition. Through this engagement, MoH also has received technical guidance through a training workshop on engaging the public through social media messaging.

Awareness raising and programme campaigns: UNICEF Maldives supported HPA to develop and launch the MHPSS communication campaign “Kihineh?” which premises on using SBC to engage children and young people as well as their family and friends to promote positive mental health and prevent mental illness. Planning to mark the World Breastfeeding Week (1-7 Aug) also started and will be implemented in the next half year.

5.3 Innovation and Technology

Innovative solutions: UNICEF Maldives has identified innovation and technology has a key flagship and elaborated its key element including the generation of the innovative solutions for programme delivery. In the next half year, the office carry out will the following innovations: Hackathon for mental health, zero waste and education, vaccine storage monitoring system, roll out of Rapid Pro, and support for UPSHIFT implementation. Internet safety will be rolled out in 2024.



5.4 Communications, Advocacy, Partnerships & Resource Mobilization

Communication and Advocacy: UNICEF Maldives developed a communications and advocacy plan, capturing key events and initiatives of the office for the year. In line with the plan. The office prioritized the use of social media platforms to increase visibility, amplify programme activities and invested in building following and engagement on social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Some notable strategic events which helped to amplify key messages and mobilize high-level stakeholders for action so far this year include:

- Collaboration with the First Lady, H. E. Fazna Ahmed and the Maldives Police Service to celebrate National Children's Day in Gaafu Alif Atoll
- Launching of UPSHIFT by the Vice President of Maldives, H. E. Faisal Naseem in Male'.
- Organizing the parenting Month in June 2023 in collaboration with digital and social media outlets such as Sosal and MV Plus.

The office also developed key communication content and products to enhance visibility of our programme areas and the 7 Flagship Programmes (2022 – 2026). As such, a brief of the 7 Flagships were developed and finalized including collaboration opportunities for partners. Further, the office supported two content creation missions, one supported by the HQ Nutrition team and

one by UNICEF USA to develop content for advocacy and resource mobilization purposes in the areas of childhood overweight and obesity and the impacts of climate change on children and communities, respectively. Routine content development including photography, videography, branding and messages in support of our programme areas such as IBAMA and Mental Health and Substance Abuse are ongoing.

UNICEF Maldives also prioritized the overall visibility of the office including amplifying two visits of the Regional Director for South Asia to Maldives in March and June 2023 through a series of events and media engagement including interviews with the Public Service Media (PSM) and Sosal. The office also worked closely with the relevant teams at the Regional Office for South Asia and UNICEF HQ to facilitate participation of Maldives' stakeholders, children and young people in regional and global advocacy content.

In the next half year, the office will continue to implement activities in the advocacy calendar, sustain and expand the following and engagement on social media, and strengthen monitoring, documentation and dissemination using photo and video documentation.

Partnership and resource mobilization:

UNICEF Maldives kicked off the partnership and resource mobilization programme for the year by organizing a roundtable event for selected private sector partners to introduce the 7 Flagship Programmes (2022 – 2026) and possible areas of collaboration, during the Regional Director’s visit in February. Following the event, a bilateral meeting was held with Maldives Association for Tourism Industry (MATI) to discuss the potential behind tapping into the tourism sector for resource mobilization, given that it is the biggest industry in the economy. With guidance from MATI, and their interest to partner with UNICEF and with support of the Regional Office, a consultancy is currently ongoing to assess the viability and scalability of mobilizing resources through the tourism sector and a proposal is planned to be presented to the MATI board, which consists of the pioneers of the industry and high-net worth individuals of Maldives within August 2023. Additionally, UNICEF is in discussion with Trans Maldivian Airways (TMA), Raffles Maldives and Ooredoo Maldives to explore potential non-financial shared value partnerships to support our flagship programmes.

The office has also been investing in building partnerships with the UNICEF National Committees, and as such has hosted a visit of the UNICEF USA NatCom on a mission to collect content to showcase the impacts of climate change on children and families, which could potentially lead to resource mobilization for UNICEF Maldives.



Additionally, UNICEF Maldives has built connections with the French and Spanish NatComs, and a media engagement of the UNICEF Maldives Representative Dr. Edward Addai was facilitated by the Spanish NatCom for one of Spain’s leading news outlets EFE on World Environment Day 2023.

UNICEF Maldives also leads and contributes to the different working groups under the broader UNSDCF, including chairing Outcome Group 2 on the social sector and the Monitoring and Evaluation Group. Further, the office coordinates with other UN Agencies in the UN Communications Group (UNCG) to implement the UN Maldives Joint Communications and Advocacy Calendar 2023.

In the remaining half of the year, UNICEF Maldives will prioritize moving forward with the resource mobilization plan for the tourism sector with MATI as a key partner and finalize the shared-value proposals with the private sector currently in discussion. Additionally, the office will explore partnering with the diplomatic community to further enhance visibility and mobilize resources for our programme areas, while strengthening its engagement with UNCT.



5.5 Operational Effectiveness / Cross-sectoral

Finance and Administration: UNICEF Maldives maintained a robust financing and financial management system in support of the efficient programme delivery. This included financial planning including cash flow forecasting, timely RTGS payments and accurate back reconciliation and PO statements. The office also facilities 37 internal travels worth MVR 155,939 and 44 international travels worth USD 42,996. Protocol and other administration supported services including immigration letters were provided to 20 visitors including consultants. In the next half year, the office will continue to prioritize implementation of efficient financial and administration support. Efforts will go into improving cash forecasting, early booking of tickets for travel at least two weeks prior to travelling and diversifying sources of ticket procurement.

Human resources: UNICEF Maldives prioritized the recruitment, onboarding and performance management of staff, consultants, and interns. Specifically:

- Four Staff were recruited and onboarded - Programme Associate, Education and Child Protection Programme Officer, Monitoring and Evaluation officer and ICT & T4D Associate.
- Two interns were recruited and onboarded for Communications and for Youth Engagement in Climate advocacy.
- Three individual consultants were recruited:
 - Maeedh Mohamed Zahir for Climate Resilience,
 - Ahmed Zaidhan for technical assistance to the MH Campaign,
 - Robin N Haarr for technical support to the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) study on the parenting and childcare practices; and
 - Nina Baijens to assess the viability and scalability of engaging the tourism sector to generate new income sources for the Maldives

The ePAS/ACHIEVE of all staff was completed within the global benchmarks and deadline, and the country office was adjudged to be one of the best-performing offices in the region. As part of the learning and development, the office supported three colleagues to complete stretch assignments– Saleema, Naeem and Yasir, and one colleague – Shahula on an exchange program with Bhutan Country Office (Indrani).

In the next half year, the office will aim to improve the speed and quality of recruitment, roll out a comprehensive learning agenda and programme, improve management of leave and travel to ensure business continuity for the core office functions and improve management of consultants.

Mid-year and end year performance review conversations between staff and supervisor will be implemented.

ICT and infrastructure: UNICEF

Maldives implemented the preventive maintenance programme.

Collaborative working online has been implemented, NetMotion has been updated for all staff and a new all in one calendar introduced to the office. The office was selected as the pilot country for MS Office upgrade. Office automation programs will be implemented alongside a shift to CLOUD ONE by the end of the year.

6. Conclusion

The first half year has been a period of change for the office and the second half year will be a period of change for the country. UNICEF Maldives has handled the office change very well and has put in place a robust office wide infrastructure and team to confront the changes in the countries effectively. The office progressed substantively in its programmes, operations, and partnerships. It has defined flagships, is evolving an approach to programme convergence, and working incrementality on business continuity and collective impact. If this year had an internal character, the next half year will be a period which will focus on outreach and partnerships.



For every child

Whoever she is.

Wherever he lives.

Every child deserves a childhood.

A future.

A fair chance.

That's why UNICEF is there.

For each and every child.

Working day in and day out.

In more than 190 countries and territories.

Reaching the hardest to reach.

The furthest from help.

The most excluded.

It's why we stay to the end.

And never give up.



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