

# UN Maldives Annual Results Report 2024



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Community in motion - A vibrant cycling event bringing people together to advocate for a healthier lifestyle  
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A bird resting peacefully in the tranquil wetlands of Fuvahmulah island  
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## Foreword by the Interim UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Niels Scott

Interim UN Resident Coordinator  
Mr. Niels Scott  
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As we reflect on the progress made in 2024 and look forward to 2025 and beyond, I am pleased to present the UN Country Team (UNCT) Annual Results Report for the Maldives.

In 2024, the UN in the Maldives reinforced its commitment to a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future in line with Agenda 2030. Key milestones this year include major policy endorsements, capacity-building initiatives, and innovative partnerships that have collectively strengthened national systems and improved the lives of the people.

A significant achievement was the endorsement of the National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in September 2024. This milestone establishes a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to child protection nationwide. Alongside this, the development of the Population Policy has integrated demographic trends into national planning, setting a clear course for future growth and sustainable development.

Inclusion was a primary focus, highlighted by the creation of a disability registry that now benefits 13,000 individuals, thereby expanding social protection coverage. The UN also enhanced national security by training over 400 criminal justice practitioners in counterterrorism, maritime security, and legal frameworks.

Disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience received robust support throughout the year. A nationwide risk and early warning assessment engaged 250 representatives from all atolls and directly informed the Hurushiya campaign. Moreover, the activation of 282 Climate Guardians across seven islands and the establishment of Community Emergency Response Teams on 10 islands have bolstered preparedness for climate-related challenges. Complementary awareness programmes reached community members and students, reinforcing resilience at the grassroots level.

In the health sector, collaborative efforts led to the establishment of 19 new healthcare waste management facilities and the deployment of 65 electric vehicles, contributing to a more sustainable waste management system. Over 600 healthcare professionals received training, while telehealth services and medical supply drones extended critical care to remote communities. Health financing reforms also reduced medicine procurement costs by 50–70%, easing the financial burden on the population.

Youth empowerment and education remained central priorities. The mobilization of 369 young people for initiatives on climate change, gender equality, and disaster preparedness, along with Wellbeing Hangouts reaching over 5,900 adolescents, demonstrated a strong commitment to youth development. Additionally, the Helping Adolescents Thrive program, which trained 1,239 teachers and school counsellors, created supportive environments for young people. In education, the THAIBA initiative mobilized USD 6.5 million from the Global

Partnership for Education, directly benefiting 81,000 students and 10,000 teachers, ensuring quality learning for all.

Finally, the UN supported Blue and Green Economy initiatives by piloting hybrid vessels and modernizing agricultural markets to enhance food security and livelihoods. The Asia-Pacific Blue Economy Forum further mobilized USD 517,647 to support micro, small, and medium enterprises, reflecting a multi-stakeholder approach to sustainable development.

These achievements made possible through strong partnerships with the Government of Maldives, development partners, and the UN Country Team, lay a solid foundation for a more resilient and inclusive future. As we move forward, the commitment to leaving no one behind remains at the heart of our mission.



**Niels Scott**

Interim UN Resident Coordinator, Maldives

# UN Country Team in Maldives



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## Chapter 1

# Key Developments in the Country Context





In 2024, the Maldives saw the commencement of a new policy agenda following the election of H.E. President Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and a change in government in November 2023. The early months saw the government's policy agenda take shape as outlined in the President's manifesto and the 'Hafthaa 14' or 14-week plan for the government's first weeks in office. The policy agenda focused on longstanding priorities such as housing, infrastructure, environment and introduced an emphasis on Maldivian nationalism and efforts to curb irregular migration. Subsequently, the ruling political alliance led by the People's National Congress (PNC) secured a supermajority in parliament in the April 2024 parliamentary elections. This completed the consolidation of the new government and its ability to execute its wide-ranging policy and legislative agenda.

The Maldivian economy, closely tied to its highly successful tourism sector reached new milestones in 2024. Notably, the country recorded over 2 million tourist arrivals for the first time in history, surpassing the previous year's high of 1.87 million. Despite these positive developments, the country continues to face challenges including the effects of climate change, a high debt burden and limited economic diversification.

A major coral bleaching event in May prompted the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to call for a temporary halt to activities such as dredging, reclamation, and sand pumping to prevent further stress on coral reefs. High public debt also poses challenges for the country in the coming years, with 2024 seeing two credit rating downgrades by rating agencies. The reduced fiscal space limits access to financing for development and climate adaptation. Subsequently, the government has called on international partners to place greater emphasis on climate financing, including at the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) 4 Conference. The government also announced new revenue and expenditure reforms through the 2025 budget to enhance

fiscal sustainability. Key revenue-generating measures included increase in tobacco taxes, airport taxes and fees, and taxes associated with the tourism sector. A new Foreign Currency Act introduced new obligations for the tourism sector to facilitate a greater flow of foreign currency into the domestic banking sector. The government also took new policy measures and initiated new investments to promote economic diversification including through the launch of new institutions, a new Foreign Investment Act, announcing its first bilateral free trade agreement, and establishing international offshore bunkering services in the north of the country.

In addition to many legislative changes linked to economic reforms, the government also introduced notable policy changes including new provisions on territorial modification, presidential powers, and the requirement of public referenda for certain constitutional changes and introduced a new Urban Development Act. As a country that has already developed widespread internet access despite its dispersed geography and population, digitalization has also remained in the forefront of policy agendas. The Maldives has consistently highlighted the need for both capacity development of SIDS and rapid digitalization at both SIDS4 and the Summit of the Future held in September. A broad digitalization agenda for the government has included efforts in cybersecurity, expansion in digital services and greater integration across public services. To promote long-term national planning, a 20-year National Development Plan has also been proposed with public consultations inaugurated by the President in November.

# UN Development System Support to National Development Priorities through the Cooperation Framework



## 2.1 Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for the Maldives defines the strategic partnership between the Government of Maldives and the United Nations (UN) system, guiding collective efforts to advance the nation's sustainable development aspirations.

As the central framework for UN engagement, the UNSDCF is implemented through a series of Joint Work Plans (JWPs), ensuring a results-driven approach aligned with national priorities and the UN's global commitments. The Cooperation Framework is structured around four strategic outcomes, with a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track progress and impact.

Throughout the implementation period, the UN in the Maldives has played a pivotal role in driving progress across all outcomes, leveraging technical expertise, policy advisory support, and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts are tailored to the Maldives' development trajectory as an Upper Middle-Income Country (UMIC) and its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This report highlights key achievements under each priority area of the Cooperation Framework, providing a financial overview and an assessment of the UN Country Team's (UNCT) contributions to coordination, coherence, and operational efficiencies. It also reflects on challenges faced, lessons learned, and strategic priorities for the upcoming year.



## 2.2 Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes, and Outputs

**Outcome 1: By 2026, youth, women, and others at risk of being left behind, contribute to and benefit for more inclusive, resilient, sustainable economic and human capital development, fostering innovation, entrepreneurship and decent work.**

### Supporting SDGs



### Contributing Agencies



International Labour Organization



IOM  
UN MIGRATION



UNODC  
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Funding Required

**\$1.8 M**

Funding Available

**\$1.9 M**

Expenditure

**\$1.6 M**



A man getting vaccinated for better protection and health  
© WHO Maldives

## Feature Story

# Swift Action, Lasting Impact: Maldives and WHO Unite to Combat Lymphatic Filariasis Resurgence

Responding to the re-emergence of the eliminated lymphatic filariasis in the Maldives the previous year, in 2024 WHO focused on the target for getting disease-free certification. The 32 cases, all among migrant workers located in Kulhuduffushi island, underscored the need for continuous vigilance. The Government of Maldives, with swift support from WHO, launched an urgent nationwide response. Within hours, WHO mobilized resources of 25,000 rapid test kits and thousands of anti-filarial medicines to contain the spread. Training sessions empowered healthcare workers, while multilingual awareness campaigns ensured migrants had access to vital health information. This response was a powerful reminder of the need for resilient health systems. By acting decisively, WHO and the Maldivian Government not only controlled the outbreak but reinforced long-term disease surveillance, safeguarding both migrants and local communities. This effort showcased a shared commitment to keeping the Maldives free from lymphatic filariasis for generations to come.

In 2024, various initiatives were undertaken by the UN Agencies to support Outcome 1 of the Cooperation Framework. The main initiatives are highlighted under this section.

The UN supported the Government of Maldives in enhancing tax revenues through improved compliance and by transitioning disaster risk financing from public funds to private sector insurance solutions. Collaborating with all five insurance providers and regulators, these actions addressed immediate fiscal needs and fostered sustainable financial management amidst uncertainty.

The UN assisted in developing essential regulations, evaluating the country's insurance protection gap, and assessing asset vulnerability to climate change. These initiatives aimed to expand the insurance market, manage fiscal risks, and safeguard the Maldives' natural assets, which are critical for economic stability.

The UN's support during the economic challenge contributed to enhanced social security through public financing reforms for health systems. This led to significant efficiency gains, reducing medicine costs by 50-70% through bulk procurement and reforming the national health insurance system.

In fostering resilience and innovation, the UN facilitated a regional Digital Stewardship Workshop, paving the way for a National Digital Readiness Assessment. This assessment will guide the national digital strategy, enabling strategic investments and addressing fragmented approaches.

The UN contributed to reducing vulnerabilities and supporting livelihoods through green and blue value chains, including piloting low-emission hybrid vessels and modernizing agricultural markets, thus enhancing food security and creating economic opportunities for vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

The UN collaborated with the Ministry of Economic Development to convene the Asia-Pacific Blue Economy Forum, facilitating knowledge sharing among over 100 regional stakeholders and mobilizing USD 517,647 for an entrepreneurship program targeting MSMEs in the blue economy sector.

In collaboration with the Capital Market Development Authority (CMDA), the UN co-financed the Maldives' first Sustainability Reporting Framework for listed sectors. Additionally, UN Maldives strengthened the MSME ecosystem by launching a Client Management System (CMS) for the Business Center Corporation (BCC), engaging over 200 SMEs.



**Crafting with care - weaving palm leaves for thatching of roofs**

© United Nations Maldives / Nonna Aishath



A young person reflects on growth, challenges, and the path to success  
© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari

## Feature Story

### *Firas' Journey: Embracing Alternative Education with UNICEF's Support*

*Firas' journey is a powerful example of how alternative educational paths can lead to success. Initially, Firas followed a traditional academic route, but the demands of his studies and extracurricular activities took a toll on his mental health. With the support of UNICEF Maldives, he attended a youth cohort orientation and leadership workshop, where he developed crucial skills in leadership and civic engagement. This experience inspired him to become an active member of UNICEF's youth reference group, where he continues to contribute to the organization's initiatives. Realizing that the traditional education system wasn't aligned with his aspirations, Firas shifted to vocational training in ICT. This hands-on, practical approach provided him with valuable skills, internships, and real-world experience. UNICEF's guidance and support helped Firas find a career path that balanced his passion for technology with his personal growth, proving that success can come from exploring new and flexible educational opportunities.*

The Maldives joined the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), promoting a shift toward private insurance markets for disaster risk financing, thereby reducing reliance on public budgets. The UN provided technical support to the Ministry of Finance to develop the Climate Change Budget Integration Index, integrating gender and climate considerations into budget practices.

The UN invested in environmentally sustainable solutions, including piloting a low-emission hybrid transport vessel in Laamu Atoll, benefiting 14,699 residents by improving food security. Support was also provided for a modern farmers' market in Alifu Alifu Thoddoo and an urban farm in Greater Malé.

Through the Small Grants Programme (SGP), the UN supported projects such as the Nalafehi Meedhoo initiative, which planted 2,000 coconut palms, creating livelihoods for 720 individuals, of whom 47% were women. Another SGP initiative introduced organic composting and a Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) model farm, benefiting 44 individuals.





The co-financed Sustainability Reporting Framework by UN and CMDA, incorporating ESG indicators, enhances CMDA's capacity to formulate sustainable finance policies and positions the Maldives as a socially responsible investment destination. This initiative has also inspired broader private sector participation, with entities like the Hulhumalé Development Corporation seeking alignment with national sustainability priorities.

The UN initiated a Technical Cooperation Programme to evaluate the structural design of Anchored Fish Aggregating Devices (AFADs) in the Maldives. This project aims to develop improved AFAD designs that enhance durability and support sustainable marine resource use.

The UN facilitated the involvement of three Maldivian government officials in the South Asia Information and Knowledge Sharing Event focused on Labour Law Reforms and International Labour Standards. This event brought together leading global experts in labour law, allowing participants to exchange experiences regarding international practices, compliance with labour standards, thematic legislation development, and challenges in implementing labour law reforms.

The UN provided technical support to the Ministry of Higher Education, Labour and Skills Development for the preparation of reports required by ILO supervisory bodies. In 2024, the Maldives submitted these reports on Conventions Nos 87 and 98 concerning freedoms of association, as well as the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006. The MLC report was an out-of-cycle report prompted by previous assessments of the Maldives' compliance.

A dedicated Training of Trainers (ToT) session was conducted for a female official from the Ministry of Transport, focusing on the application of the MLC, 2006. This training aimed to enhance reporting and compliance capabilities regarding maritime labour regulations.

The UN assisted the Maldivian government in developing the Seafarers Identity Document (SID) in alignment with the ILO SID Convention, 2003 (No. 188). The SID was successfully released in 2024 and is now being utilized for Maldivian seafarers.

In alignment with the UNSDCF's vision for inclusive economic growth, UN Maldives initiated the establishment of the Migrant Worker Resource Centre (MWRC), focusing on planning and stakeholder engagement to roll out its services effectively. Consultations were held with key stakeholders to define the operational framework and ensure alignment with national priorities. The MWRC is expected to begin offering services in the first quarter of 2025.

UN also facilitated immigration training programs focusing on passenger risk assessment and document verification. In 2024, essential equipment was delivered to both Velana International Airport and Gan International Airport, culminating in a high-level donor handover event. These efforts have significantly strengthened border health safety, security and immigration capabilities.

Additionally, UN Maldives supported the Government of Maldives in strengthening border measures at points of entry to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, ensuring preparedness for the revitalization of human mobility. The organization also contributed to enhancing the government's capacity to respond effectively to the health needs of migrant workers, strengthening migrant health data in the tourism sector, facilitating evidence-based policymaking and service provision.

**Outcome 2: By 2026, people in the Maldives especially the most vulnerable and marginalized benefit from increased access to and use of quality, equitable, inclusive, and resilient social and protection service and have enhanced relevant skills and live fulfilled lives and wellbeing and dignity.**

**Supporting SDGs**



**Contributing Agencies**



**Funding Required**

**\$ 32.8 M**

**Funding Available**

**\$ 4.6 M**

**Expenditure**

**\$ 9.9 M**



UN Maldives reached several milestones under Outcome 2 of the Cooperation Framework, some of which are highlighted under this section.

UN Maldives prioritized immunization, sustaining high coverage levels across the Maldives. The Office supported government vaccination campaigns and prepared for the introduction of the PCV and Rotavirus vaccines in 2025. A workshop in early 2024 addressed vaccine misinformation, equipping healthcare professionals and school health officers with tools to build vaccine confidence. The “Humanly Possible” campaign during World Immunization Week, was organized in collaboration with the Health Protection Agency (HPA), to raise awareness on the importance of timely vaccinations.

UN continued its work of advocating for health sector reforms guided by Primary Health Care (PHC) principles. Technical assistance provided to the Ministry of Health (MoH) was pivotal in enacting the Food Act and amending the Health Service Act to include preventive health and a ban on vape. UN also contributed to consultations on the draft Mental Health Bill, addressing gaps in mental health legislation to make it children and adolescent friendly.

A key milestone was the preparation for the establishment of an oxygen plant to improve healthcare infrastructure at the sub-national level, complemented by training sessions on integrated oxygen systems for health professionals. UN’s commitment to health security included participation in outbreak response coordination, risk communication, and vaccine logistics management, including COVID-19 vaccine rollout support.

UN advanced mental health awareness and stigma reduction through "Kihineh?" the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Flagship, reaching thousands of children and young people and generating demand for the National Mental Health Helpline. Wellbeing Hangouts provided safe spaces for 5,916 adolescents and young people to engage in conversation on mental health, in schools and in the communities. UN trained 1,239 teachers and school counsellors to deliver mental wellbeing sessions under the Helping Adolescents Thrive (HAT) programme in 31 schools. Additionally, 20 mental health professionals from the National Centre for

Mental Health (NCMH) were trained in group facilitation techniques to enhance mental health services for children, adolescents, and their families. UN also developed a network of 20 trained volunteers to foster community-based mental health support and promote social engagement and recovery for young adults. With NCMH, UNICEF developed and launched two resources—the "Resilient Friends" storybook and the "Parents and Carer Edition" card pack—focused on emotions and challenges faced by young children (4 - 10 years).



**Dialogue is key for promoting mental well-being**  
© UNDP Maldives



UN Maldives has been promoting nutrition and healthy lifestyles, particularly for children aged 6 to 23 months, and addressing the double burden of malnutrition in children. Advocacy and training on breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding (IYCF) enhanced healthcare professionals' capacity to provide expert support. A notable achievement was the improvement of health care providers' skills in breastfeeding counselling through a 3-day workshop co-organized with HPA and the Reproductive Health Centre of Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH).

UN Maldives, in partnership with the MoH, HPA, and the NGO Advocating the Rights of Children (ARC), launched the "Minheyo Kaanaa" a recipe book for parents, offering practical nutrition guidance for the first 1,000 days of a child's life. These programmes are expected to improve responsive feeding, reduce micronutrient deficiencies, and improve diversity among young children.

In 2024, UN forged new partnerships to promote healthier lifestyles for children. A total of 28 swimming coaches were trained on integrating health, nutrition, and mental wellbeing messages into swim training sessions. The 3rd National Health and Nutrition Roundtable, organized with key partners, discussed policies for sustainable health practices. UN also organized the World Cancer Day Run to raise awareness on healthy lifestyles and supported advocacy and communication addressing smoking and vaping, advocating for "smoke-free" spaces and increased cigarette taxes. Following the amendment to the Tobacco Control Law including the ban on vapes, UNI and HPA convened stakeholders to deliberate on enforcement aspects of the legislation, towards creating a tobacco free environment for children and young people.



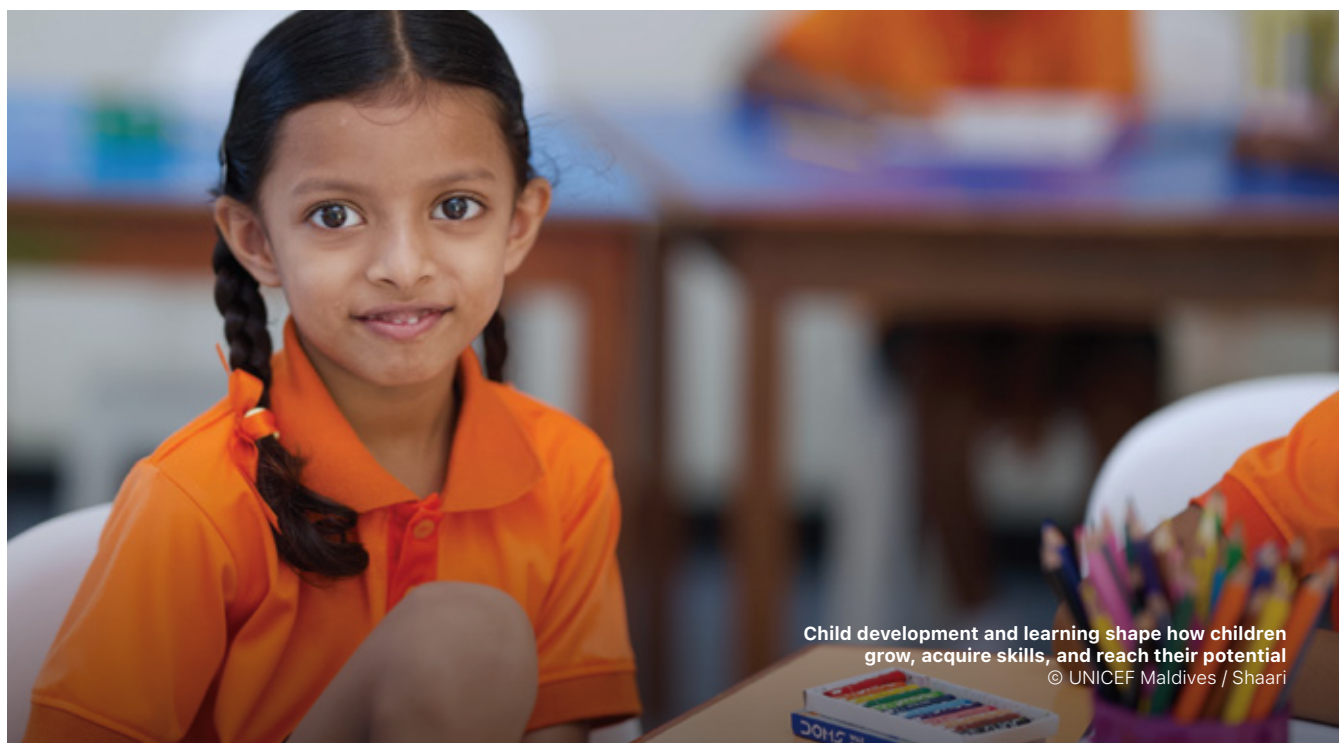
ICT in Education Master Plan 2 paves the way for a digital transformation in Maldives  
© UNESCO



## Feature Story

### ***Transforming Education: UNESCO's Key Role in Maldives' ICT Master Plan***

*The ICT in Education Master Plan 2, developed through the support of UNESCO is a significant milestone to digitalise education and apply innovative technologies in the sector. As the world becomes increasingly digital, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into education is essential for equipping students and teachers with the learning and lifelong skills. UNESCO's expertise and knowledge networks in the area helped to ensure the alignment of this plan with global standards and best practices. In this initiative, UNESCO ensured that the relevancy of the plan to the country by contextualizing the plan, especially given the socioeconomic and geographic realities of the country as well as the intricacies of the Maldives' national curriculum. This collaborative effort, which also involved the Ministry of Education, UNICEF, higher education institutions, and NGOs, has resulted in a forward-thinking strategy for ICT integration. The ICT in Education Master Plan 2, strengthened by UNESCO's support, sets the stage for a transformative shift in education across the Maldives.*



**Child development and learning shape how children grow, acquire skills, and reach their potential**  
© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari

UN Maldives has been pivotal in advancing the Maldives' education transformation agenda, THAIBA, by successfully mobilizing USD 6.5 million from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to support the initiative, which emphasizes equity and inclusion. This agenda aims to reach a total of 10,000 teachers and 81,000 students across the country, including 6,600 students with disabilities. Additionally, in partnership with Google for Education and the Ministry of Education (MoE), UN launched the TechPath initiative to improve access to quality education through a digitally enabled learning ecosystem. By the end of the 2025 academic year, this initiative aims to initially reach 1,500 students across 15 schools, equipping them with 808 Chromebooks, 90 Micro: bits, and enhanced teaching capacities in using Google Workspace, Chromebooks, and computational thinking and coding.

The Adolescent Girls Action Plan and the Collective Impact Platform for Adolescent Girls were launched in October 2024 to enhance coordination. Training in disability inclusion was provided to 55 participants

(including UN staff and government and civil society partners) through the CBM Global Disability Inclusion Group. UN supported vulnerable populations through the Nikamethi Naazuku Kudhin initiative, with plans to expand Baaruveri, Climate Resilient Actions, Kihineh? Kaigen Hin'gamaa, and Beleniveriyaa Flagship Programmes in 2025.

In 2024, UN cooperated with the Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Maldives and supported final stages of implementation of the Maldives COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project and Emergency Procurement of Critical care Equipment and Supplies projects. Funded by the World Bank (WB), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the initiatives focused on addressing critical gaps in healthcare infrastructure, mitigating the spread of the virus, and improving the nation's preparedness for future public health emergencies.

UN delivered a comprehensive range of medical resources and equipment: over 2,966,035 units of personal protective equipment (PPE), 1,152 medical devices, 222 units of ICU equipment such as ventilators and bedside monitors, 244,208 pieces of laboratory equipment, 401,427 consumables, and 780 pieces of medical and laboratory machinery. A telehealth system was also implemented, enabling remote healthcare services across the country's dispersed islands.

Additionally, UN procured two drones for the Ministry of Health to improve the delivery of critical medical supplies across the islands. These drones are capable of carrying a 3kg payload of essential medical supplies, helping overcome logistical challenges in remote areas. These efforts have significantly strengthened the Maldives' ability to provide critical care and address ongoing health challenges.



Medical drones in the Maldives provide faster access to essential healthcare for remote island communities  
© Mihaaru / Nishan Ali

### Feature Story

## Drones in the Maldives: Redefining Healthcare from the Skies

*For island communities where urgent medical supplies can mean the difference between life and death, medical drones are bridging the gap between the need and care. UNOPS, in partnership with the Maldives Ministry of Health and the Islamic Development Bank, has introduced medical drones to deliver critical supplies to remote hospitals near Malé. With the first successful test flight, this initiative is already changing lives, bringing essential medicine faster than ever before to the 2,000 people it aims to serve. For a nation spread across vast ocean waters, these drones are more than technology. They are a lifeline, ensuring that even the most isolated communities receive timely care.*



The projects contributed to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 5 (Gender Equality), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Resources were equitably distributed to ensure equal access to healthcare for male and female patients. By fostering international partnerships, the project also strengthened collaborative efforts to combat health crises.

UN prioritized building local capacity by providing training for end-users and biomedical engineers in operating and maintaining advanced medical equipment. This focus on skill development ensured the sustainability of the project's outcomes and reinforced the long-term resilience of the healthcare system.

In October 2024, a step-by-step guide and toolkit for Primary Health Care (PHC) reorganization, was developed and launched by UN Maldives based on insights from the Faafu Atoll demonstration site. This toolkit serves as a roadmap for scaling up the successful model.

The collaborative efforts aim to strengthen the PHC system's capacity to deliver quality, equitable, and accessible health services, ultimately improving the health and well-being of the Maldivian population. Encouraged by the success of the demonstration site, the government is working on expanding the model nationwide. As part of this effort, initial trainings have been conducted in 10 atolls in 2024.

As part of the efforts for capacity building in cancer prevention and treatment, UN partnered with the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, to organize a comprehensive training program on colposcopy and Loop Electrosurgical Excision Procedure (LEEP) for six Maldivian doctors. This training equipped two doctors from Hulhumale Hospital and four from Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) with advanced skills in diagnosing and treating cervical precancerous lesions. By enhancing their expertise in these areas, the Maldivian healthcare system will be better positioned to provide timely and effective interventions, potentially reducing the risk of cervical cancer and improving women's health outcomes.



The Maaharaa Portal, developed by the Ministry of Health with UN Maldives' technical support, has enhanced public accountability and service quality by enabling individuals to report healthcare service concerns. This initiative strengthens transparency, builds public trust, and supports evidence-based improvements in healthcare delivery.

The Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs), developed with UN Maldives' technical assistance, have improved healthcare consistency and quality, particularly in atoll health facilities serving a large expatriate workforce. The adoption of STGs has strengthened patient care outcomes and facilitated the seamless integration of standardized protocols within the Aasandha national health insurance scheme, ensuring cost-effective, evidence-based healthcare reimbursements.

UN Maldives has strengthened the Maldives Food and Drug Authority (MFDA) as the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) by conducting a comprehensive benchmark assessment against international best practices. This assessment identified key regulatory gaps and informed targeted interventions to improve risk identification, prioritization, and mitigation strategies. As a result, MFDA has enhanced its ability to regulate pharmaceuticals, ensuring greater access to safe, effective, and high-quality medicines. Additionally, UN Maldives facilitated access to specialized laboratories abroad for medicine testing and confirmatory diagnostics, further strengthening regulatory oversight. Capacity-building efforts, including technical training and guideline development, have ensured a robust and sustainable regulatory framework for pharmaceuticals and medical products in the Maldives.



**Bringing fresh produce to the community -  
a day in the life of a market vendor**

© UNDP Maldives



**Raising awareness on Thalassaemia - empowering communities through knowledge and prevention**  
© Maldives Thalassaemia Society

The launch of the 10-Year National Master Plan on Thalassaemia Prevention, Control, and Management on October 15, 2024, marked a milestone in improving health outcomes for individuals affected by thalassaemia. Developed through a collaboration between the Maldives government, UN Maldives, and WHO regional and country offices, the plan was informed by field assessments, technical consultations, and stakeholder engagements. The Master Plan sets a clear roadmap to reduce the disease burden, enhance access to quality care, and strengthen the healthcare system's response to thalassaemia. Its implementation is driven by multi-sectoral partnerships, ensuring sustainable progress toward universal health coverage and improved well-being for affected populations.

UN has significantly contributed to the development of Maldives' Digital Health Architecture by providing technical expertise and aligning national efforts with global and regional digital health priorities. Through a stakeholder convergence workshop, the UN supported the near finalization of a costed

digital health strategy, ensuring the integration of digital solutions into the health system. This initiative has enhanced service delivery, strengthened health information systems, and advanced Universal Health Coverage (UHC) through technology-driven approaches.

Maldives is modernizing its public health sector by digitalizing health information systems through the Maldives Integrated Health Information System (MIHIS), built on the District Health Information System 2 (DHIS2) platform. With UN support, the public portal of MIHIS was launched in 2024, empowering citizens with easy access to their health data from birth to old age. This milestone enhances individual and family health management by offering access to critical health records, including vaccination data, growth monitoring, developmental milestones, and primary healthcare records.



The portal expands on the 2022 National Electronic Immunization Registry (EIR), which centralized and secured vaccination records for all children. By enabling parents to track vaccination schedules and download digital records, the platform strengthens preventive healthcare and supports the government's reorientation of primary healthcare services. Future expansions will integrate reproductive health, maternal health, and disease surveillance, further enhancing self-management and disease prevention efforts.

The UN's support for MIHIS has also strengthened health data management and decision-making capabilities. A comprehensive capacity-building initiative trained system designers to customize and secure the DHIS2 platform, enabling rapid adaptation to Maldives' needs, such as the development of a Lymphatic Filariasis Screening module for real-time data collection. Over 100 individuals received in-person and online training, equipping the health workforce with the skills to effectively manage and utilize health data.

Through strategic guidance, technical assistance, and resource development, UN has bolstered Maldives' digital health infrastructure, improving surveillance, reporting, and response to public health challenges. These efforts have enhanced the resilience and efficiency of the country's health system, ensuring data-driven decision-making and improved health outcomes.

UN Maldives, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and key stakeholders, is strengthening the country's health financing system to improve efficiency and equity. A qualitative assessment using the UN's Health Financing Progress Matrix (HFPM) identified key strengths and gaps, informing priority policy directions for system improvements. HFPM assessments also complement the monitoring of service coverage and financial protection indicators under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing actionable insights for policy development.

In parallel, UN Maldives is supporting the production and utilization of National Health Accounts (NHA) data to enhance evidence-based decision-making. NHA data provides a comprehensive analysis of health expenditure flows, including government, private, and out-of-pocket spending, enabling policymakers to assess system efficiency and equity. Through technical guidance, training, and data analysis support, UN Maldives is strengthening national capacity to generate high-quality NHA data, track health financing progress, and optimize resource allocation. These efforts contribute to a more sustainable and equitable health system in the Maldives, ensuring informed policy reforms and improved financial protection for all populations.

In January 2024, the Maldives was recognized by the UN for achieving hepatitis B control through immunization, joining an elite group of countries in the South-East Asia Region. This milestone reflects the country's sustained commitment to high vaccination coverage, with infant hepatitis B immunization rates consistently exceeding 90%. The UN-supported school-based hepatitis B serosurvey confirmed zero prevalence among children, validating the effectiveness of national immunization programs. This achievement significantly enhances public health outcomes and reinforces the Maldives' leadership in disease prevention.



An interactive session on Communicable Disease Surveillance system with engaged participants  
© WHO Maldives

A routine screening campaign in the Maldives identified 32 cases of lymphatic filariasis among migrant workers from endemic countries, triggering an urgent public health response. UN mobilized resources across UN Maldives, WHO Regional Office, and Headquarters to ensure a swift and coordinated intervention. Key actions included a rapid delivery of diagnostic test kits and anti-filarial medications (Albendazole, Ivermectin, and Diethylcarbamazine), training healthcare workers and providing technical guidance for effective disease management and developing multilingual Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to engage and inform migrant communities.

In partnership with the Ministry of Health, the UN supported the design and implementation of a nationwide filariasis screening program to assess disease prevalence among local and migrant populations. This response underscored the importance of continuous surveillance in countries that have eliminated lymphatic filariasis, preventing potential reintroduction. The timely and coordinated efforts between WHO's country, regional, and global teams demonstrated the effectiveness of proactive public health interventions in safeguarding national health security.

Recognizing the unique mental health challenges faced by adolescents, UN is providing crucial support to the national psychosocial support helpline, enhancing its capacity to provide timely and effective assistance to young people in distress. Additionally, UN has conducted a comprehensive assessment of Homes for People with Special Needs (HPSN), identifying critical areas for improvement in health and psychosocial support. Based on these findings, UN is actively supporting the development of a comprehensive plan of action to strengthen health and psychosocial support services within these settings, ensuring that individuals in this facility receive the care and support they require.



The Maldives conducted its second Joint External Evaluation (JEE) in September 2024 to assess progress since 2017, evaluate National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) implementation, and integrate COVID-19 lessons. Led by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) with UN support, the process engaged 17 international evaluators and national experts from multiple sectors. Results will inform a revised NAPHS to address gaps, enhance prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery capacities, and strengthen the resilience of the health system.

The first Strategic Toolkit for Assessing Risks (STAR) workshop in the Maldives, facilitated by UN Maldives, supported risk profiling to inform health emergency preparedness and update the Health Emergency Operations Plan (HEOP). HEOP incorporates

hazard-specific response plans, emergency coordination mechanisms, and logistics frameworks, ensuring readiness for climate, disease, and disaster-related risks. Multi-sectoral engagement, including government, healthcare, NGOs, tourism, and communities, is enhancing coordinated emergency response capacities.

HPA, with UN support, launched the National Action Plan on Field Epidemiology to build outbreak investigation and surveillance capacity. The inaugural Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) workshop introduced core skills, with ongoing field placements and a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach to ensure sustainability. The UN supports surveillance digitalization through the DHIS2 platform, improving real-time data collection and rapid response capacities.



Teamwork and learning on Disease Surveillance and Field Epidemiology capacities  
© WHO Maldives

As part of the Faafu Atoll Demonstration Project, UN is supporting the development of a Health Resilience Plan to strengthen primary healthcare, emergency preparedness, disease prevention, and community engagement. The plan addresses climate change risks and ensures equitable access to quality healthcare during emergencies.

Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (PIP) funds have strengthened respiratory pathogen surveillance through supply procurement, sample analysis, and workforce support. Expansion of the DHIS2 platform has improved data integration and real-time disease surveillance, enhancing detection and response to influenza and COVID-19.

The Maldives launched its second National Action Plan (NAP) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) (2024-2029), adopting a One Health approach to address antimicrobial resistance across human, animal, and environmental sectors. Priorities include raising awareness, promoting rational antibiotic use, strengthening surveillance, and enhancing governance frameworks. UN

continues to support implementation, positioning the Maldives as a regional leader in AMR response.

Through multi-sectoral collaboration, digital innovation, and sustained capacity building, the Maldives is enhancing its public health security, ensuring resilience against current and emerging threats.

The Food Act was endorsed in Maldives, in June 2024. This legislation establishes a comprehensive framework for regulating food safety across the nation, encompassing locally produced, imported, and exported food products. By setting clear standards and procedures for all stakeholders in the food industry, from production and packaging to distribution and trade, the Act aims to ensure that all food items are safe for consumption and free from harmful substances. The UN played a key role in supporting countries like the Maldives in developing and implementing such legislation by providing technical guidance, promoting international food safety standards (like the Codex Alimentarius), and raising awareness about foodborne illnesses.



**Women preparing a nutritious homemade meal, promoting healthy eating**  
© UNFPA Maldives



The Codex Trust Fund (CTF) is playing a vital role in enhancing food safety in the Maldives. This fund, managed by UN, supports countries like the Maldives in strengthening their food safety systems and implementing Codex standards. In the Maldives, the CTF supported a three-year project (2022-2024) with a budget of USD 210,000, with USD 150,000 provided by the CTF and the rest coming from the Maldivian government and the UN. This project aimed to improve the capacity of the Codex Contact Point (CCP) and the National Codex Committee (NCC) in managing Codex activities, developing national food safety standards, and engaging with stakeholders. The project also included training programs, awareness campaigns, and the development of information materials to promote food safety in the country.

The integration and piloting of the reproductive health module within the national Health Management Information

System (HMIS) increased the system's capacity to track critical Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) indicators from 44 to 72. This advancement has strengthened evidence-based decision-making and improved service delivery, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Mobile clinics, conducted in partnership with the Society for Health Education (SHE) and Hulhumale' Halfway House, provided essential sexual and reproductive health consultations, counseling, and contraceptives to highly marginalized female drug users. These services addressed unmet needs through culturally sensitive and gender-responsive care. However, the abrupt relocation of the group halted these monthly services. The UN is actively engaging with the government to restore service continuity and ensure sustained support for vulnerable groups.





The partnership with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Maldives (SOGM) has expanded technical expertise on reproductive health issues such as PCOS and endometriosis, which contribute to low fertility rates. Additionally, UN and the Maldives National University (MNU) are conducting a study to identify the drivers of low fertility in the Maldives. Findings, expected in 2025, will inform advocacy efforts for integrating these insights into the Population Policy under the National Development Plan and the RMNCAH strategy, driving policy reforms to address reproductive health challenges.

Under the Emmena Engey Bodu Sirru initiative, the UN established a network of trained community educators, enhancing local ownership and grassroots advocacy. This initiative contributed to national efforts to eliminate single-use plastics by promoting sustainable menstrual products such as menstrual cups and reusable pads, reducing plastic waste, and advancing eco-friendly menstrual health practices.

The initiative also facilitated cultural shifts in reproductive health education by addressing menstrual taboos, fostering open dialogues, and empowering women and girls to make informed health and hygiene choices. Innovative educational tools, including the localized Menstrupedia comic book, the Siththaa mobile app, and the Engeytha video series, provided adolescents—particularly those with disabilities and from remote islands—access to life-skills-based reproductive health information. These resources created safe spaces for dialogue, ensuring youth-friendly and inclusive education across the Maldives.

The Vision 2050 Youth Manifesto, anchored by the narratives of Aimi and Yoosuf, amplified youth voices and informed future policy directions on key issues such as education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. By integrating youth perspectives into policy discussions, the initiative strengthened advocacy efforts and positioned young people as key stakeholders in shaping the nation's future.

UN is also supporting the Government through a Technical Cooperation Programme to build capacity of the Government to test for pesticides residue in locally produced and imported food. Once completed, this will also enable the government to implement its Maldives Good Agricultural Practices certification scheme, enabling access to nutritious and safe food for all.

A key milestone in 2024 was facilitating the Migration Health Policy dialogue with stakeholders to finalize the draft Migration Health Policy and Action Plan. This policy

aims to address the healthcare needs of migrants and ensure they receive adequate and equitable healthcare services. The draft policy has been approved by the President's Office Social Committee and will be taken to the President's Office Economic Council for approval prior submission for Cabinet approval. The Migrant Workers Research Centre is planned to be operational in the first quarter of 2025, marking a significant step towards improving migrant welfare and integration into society.



**Migrant workers endure harsh conditions to manage our environmental footprint, often at the expense of their own health.**

© UN Maldives / Mahin Fayaz

**Outcome 3: By 2026, national and sub-national institutions and communities in Maldives, particularly at-risk populations are better able to manage natural resources and achieve enhanced resilience to climate change and disaster impacts, natural and human-induced hazards, and environmental degradation, inclusively and in a sustainable manner.**

**Supporting SDGs**



**Contributing Agencies**



**Funding Required**

**\$15.1 M**

**Funding Available**

**\$9.3 M**

**Expenditure**

**\$5.6 M**



An aerial view of a Maldives island  
© Dhathuruveri Zuvaanaa

## Feature Story

### ***Building Resilience: Empowering the Maldives Against Climate Change***

*In the face of climate change, the Maldives is battling rising sea levels and extreme weather. Over 80% of its islands sit just a meter above sea level, making them highly vulnerable to flooding and storm surges. To address this, the UN ESCAP and UNDP, in partnership with local stakeholders, launched a capacity-building workshop to enhance the country's disaster risk resilience. A significant part of the initiative includes the ESCAP Risk and Resilience Portal, a data-driven tool that helps local communities prepare for climate hazards. The portal, combined with training programs, equips stakeholders with essential skills in disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation. Participants of the workshop highlighted the potential of the portal in guiding better decision-making for long-term sustainability. By empowering local communities and providing essential tools, these efforts are helping the Maldives move towards a safer, more resilient future amid climate challenges.*

In 2024, government institutions and local councils strengthened their disaster risk management (DRM) capacities with the launch of the centralized Disaster Damage and Loss Data (DALA) Platform, a collaboration between UN and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The platform enables real-time disaster damage reporting and relief requests, reducing response times to 24–48 hours. By providing reliable, evidence-based data, it has enhanced disaster preparedness and response planning across all island councils.

A key achievement under Disaster Risk Reduction was the development of an updated risk profile for the Maldives using high-resolution climate projection data and geospatial techniques. The Risk and Resilience Portal now provides critical resources, including land use maps, climate projections, and population distributions, supporting island-level disaster management and vulnerability assessments.

UN Maldives also contributed to the Strategic Action Plan by integrating disaster risk management, climate adaptation, and mitigation into the Environment, Energy, and

Sustainable Development chapter. These efforts emphasized a gender-responsive approach and the principle of leaving no one behind.

A major milestone was the endorsement and publication of the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) Roadmap, making the Maldives the first in the region and among the first globally to establish a framework for universal, inclusive, multi-hazard early warning coverage. Building on the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) Roadmap, UN piloted the Inclusive EW-EA Checklist to assess and enhance accessibility, actionability, and feedback mechanisms in the national early warning system, prioritizing persons with disabilities, gender inclusion, and migrant populations.

To further improve risk communication, UN supported NDMA in conducting a nationwide risk and early warning assessment, gathering input from 250 representatives across all atolls. These insights informed the Hurushiya campaign, led by NDMA and MRC, to enhance public preparedness and response capacities.



Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Indian Ocean Tsunami, UN collaborated with the government to organize an art exhibition at the National Art Gallery, illustrating the impact, recovery, and resilience-building efforts over the past two decades. This event also marked the official adoption of the National DRR Strategy, developed with UN's support and input from over 20 ministries, community organizations, and UN agencies.

At the local level, UN supported urban resilience through the Making Cities Resilient 2030 initiative. UN trained Male' City and national officials in applying the framework and is supporting Male' City in developing its Island Disaster Management Plan, covering 40% of the country's population. Additionally, the UN facilitated Kulhudhuffushi City's participation in national and international urban resilience dialogues, reinforcing city-level disaster preparedness and response strategies.

UN supported NDMA and local authorities through the Making Cities Resilient 2030 initiative including training Male City Council and National officials on using this tool.

Following the training, UN begun and continues to support Male City Council in writing their Island Disaster Management Plan to cover the 40% of the population who resides in the capital region. Beyond Male' City, UN supported Kulhudhuffushi City in joining national officers at the APMCDRR and various other international engagements on urban resilience.

Support to the Waste Management Corporation (WAMCO) enabled the deployment of six PET collection vehicles, integrating renewable energy solutions into waste management operations across four islands. In partnership with the Ministry of Health, UN facilitated the construction of 19 healthcare waste management facilities and provided 65 electric vehicles, two autoclaves, and digital equipment, improving healthcare waste disposal efficiency. A nationwide training program on infectious waste management, conducted in collaboration between UN Agencies, enhanced the capacities of 545 health facility staff, strengthening public health and environmental protection.



**Overwhelmed by plastic – a man attempting to collect plastic for recycling**  
© UN Maldives / Mahin Fayaz



Progress in hazardous waste management included the handover of the Addu Interim Hazardous Waste Management Facility to WAMCO, along with Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and operational manuals. Additionally, customs and environmental enforcement officers received specialized training to enhance waste inspection and regulatory enforcement. The safe disposal of 24 tonnes of PCB-containing equipment further improved hazardous waste management and strengthened regulatory compliance, ensuring safer environmental and public health outcomes.

With technical support from UN Maldives, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with support from the Government of Canada, and the Government of Japan, a nationwide training program on healthcare waste management was conducted. Over 600 healthcare professionals from various cadres were trained, enhancing their knowledge and skills in safe waste handling and disposal practices across healthcare facilities. This initiative contributes to

strengthening infection prevention and control measures and improving environmental health standards in the Maldives.

In climate adaptation and natural resource management, the UN supported the review and drafting of National Biodiversity Targets, contributing to the development of the updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), reinforcing national commitments to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), UN successfully implemented eight community-led projects, advancing conservation, environmental protection, and sustainable livelihoods while promoting gender equity.

A major milestone was the establishment of the Maldives' first legally enforceable Community Conserved Area (CCA) in Laamu Hithadhoo, protecting 583 hectares of coral reefs and seagrass habitats. This initiative



safeguarded critical ecosystems, including endangered species and grouper spawning sites, while strengthening community-led resource management under the Decentralization Act. The project directly benefited over 1,000 community members, including 350 women and 311 children, through awareness programs and training. Among them, 31 individuals were trained in citizen science monitoring, with two securing employments as Environment Officers. Women played a central role, representing 45% of trainees and actively shaping the CCA management plan, ensuring inclusive decision-making and equitable access to resources.

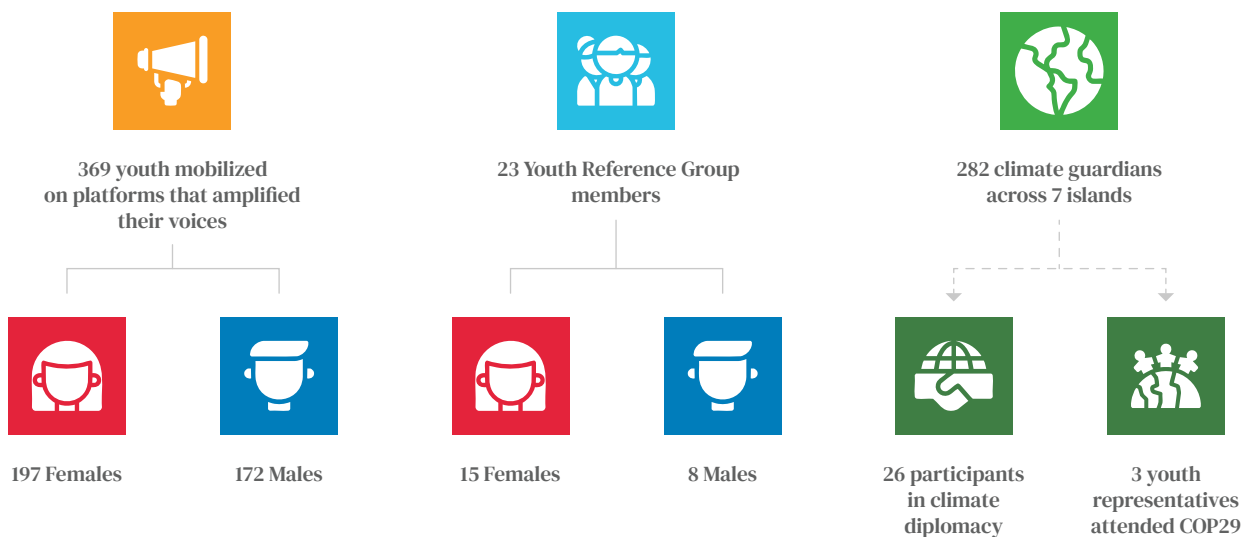
The initiative demonstrated the ecological and economic benefits of CCAs, creating income-generating opportunities for local development. Additionally, through another SGP initiative, UN supported Community Empowerment Linkage (CEL) in distributing water filters, leading to a 45-tonne monthly reduction in plastic waste and an average 98% decrease in household spending on bottled water.

In 2024, UN Maldives advanced the implementation of the UNICEF Sustainability and Climate Action Plan through the Climate Resilient Actions Flagship, strengthening youth engagement, disaster preparedness,

and environmental stewardship. Youth engagements were strengthened by mobilizing 369 young people (197 females, 172 males) through platforms that amplified their voices on climate change, youth development, and gender equality. Through initiatives like UPSHIFT and ImaGen Ventures, UN equipped youth with design-thinking skills and 21st-century competencies, enhancing employability and fostering inclusive participation. The Youth Reference Group (YRG), comprising 23 young members (15 females, 8 males) from across the country, played a key role in shaping UN's programming and actively contributing to national, regional, and international forums. These efforts reinforced meaningful youth participation in decision-making and policy dialogue.

A key achievement was the activation of 282 Climate Guardians across seven islands, empowering youth to take climate action and represent the Maldives at international forums, including COP29. The Youth Track to COP29 introduced 26 young participants to climate diplomacy through mock negotiations and policymaker engagements, culminating in the development of policy recommendations for national and global leaders. As a result, three youth representatives were supported to attend COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

**Diagram 1 - Youth engagement across different flagship programmes**



UN Maldives also contributed to climate resilience by planting over 230 trees and organizing beach clean-ups that integrated waste segregation education and environmental stewardship under the Kudhinnaa Gaathun missions. These activities strengthened youth awareness and community engagement in sustainable environmental practices.

In disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency preparedness, the UN developed a contingency plan for an economic crisis, outlining sectoral responses across different scenarios. Additionally, UN partnered with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Maldives Red Crescent (MRC) to establish Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) across 10 Kudhinnaa Gaathun islands, aligning with the Climate Guardians initiative to enhance local disaster response capacity.

Since 2017, the Maldives has advanced environmental statistics in line with the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), piloting accounts for water, solid waste, land, and natural capital in Laamu Atoll. To strengthen data-driven policymaking, the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), in collaboration with key government agencies and UN, developed a comprehensive roadmap for environmental-economic statistics. Endorsed on 5 June 2024, the roadmap outlines short-, medium-, and long-term priorities, detailing institutional mechanisms for compiling and utilizing SEEA accounts.

In January 2024, the E-Mobility Roadmap was completed as part of the National Mobility Plan to drive the adoption of electric vehicles in the Maldives. Progress has been made toward ensuring a gender-sensitive approach to sustainable, low-emission transport, with the Gender Strategy under development.



**A man and a young child sit together on a three-wheeled vehicle, sharing a warm and joyful moment**

© Sophia Nasif



To enhance coordination, an Interdepartmental National Mobility Task Force (INMTF) was established in January 2024. Key reports have been finalized, including the Stock-Take and Design Option Report on Institutional Arrangements for the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory, the Report on Gaps and Needs for Monitoring Mitigation Actions (highlighting legal barriers to data collection), and the Stocktake Report on Adaptation Monitoring. Additionally, a detailed methodology for conducting climate risk and vulnerability analyses and updating climate projections has been developed and endorsed in consultation with the Government.

Institutional arrangements for the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory have been prepared and are under consultation for adoption, strengthening transparency in climate change mitigation and adaptation actions in the Maldives. Reports on gaps, needs, and institutional arrangements for monitoring mitigation actions, including legal barriers to data collection, have been completed. Additionally, a stocktake report on adaptation monitoring has been finalized. The enactment of the Climate Emergency Act has provided a clear legal mandate for the Climate Change Department to collect necessary data and report to the UNFCCC, enhancing national climate governance and accountability.

In January 2024, UN engaged with the Government of Maldives to support the inclusion of climate-induced displacement in the agenda of the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS4), co-chaired by Maldives in May 2024. One such engagement was, the provision of a technical paper, 'SIDS4 – Key Messages', to inform the Government's preparations and shared it with the Permanent Missions of Maldives and New Zealand for further deliberation.

In response to climate-related vulnerabilities, UN Maldives has been instrumental in promoting disaster preparedness and adaptation strategies. Awareness programs engaged 45 community members and 87 school participants, equipping them with knowledge and skills to mitigate climate risks. Moreover, six displaced individuals received settlement solutions, ensuring their safe and dignified reintegration into society. In collaboration with stakeholders, UN Maldives disseminated critical information on climate-related hazards to over 130 individuals, reinforcing efforts to build a more resilient and informed community.

**Outcome 4: By 2026, Maldives has strengthened decentralized and accountable governance under the rule of law where people are empowered, meaningfully participate in transparent and transformative processes for public policy and fully enjoy access to justice, public services, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment in a tolerant and peaceful society.**

**Supporting SDGs**



**Contributing Agencies**



<p><b>Funding Required</b></p> <p><b>\$ 5.2 M</b></p>	<p><b>Funding Available</b></p> <p><b>\$ 5.0 M</b></p>	<p><b>Expenditure</b></p> <p><b>\$ 8.9 M</b></p>
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Embracing the calm of the evening, a mother and her children finding peace in each other's company  
© UNFPA / Sikundi Corporation

## Feature Story

### *Empowering the Future: UNFPA's Vision for Sustainable Development in the Maldives*

*The Maldives is confronting challenges posed by low fertility rates and an ageing population, necessitating policies that address the needs of both the elderly and the youth. UNFPA is focused on empowering young people by providing comprehensive reproductive health services and life skills education, helping them prepare for adulthood and the workforce. Recognizing the unique circumstances of smaller islands with populations under 1,000, UNFPA advocates for tailored strategies to ensure equitable healthcare access across the nation. Through strong partnerships with local organizations and the government, UNFPA is working toward sustainable development that centers the needs and voices of the Maldivian people. By investing in youth and promoting inclusive healthcare, UNFPA envisions a future where every individual, regardless of age, can lead a healthy and productive life.*

In 2024, significant strides were made in advancing child rights and protection. A key accomplishment was the endorsement of the National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children (NAP-PRVaC) in September 2024, aiming for a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach.

UN's collaboration with the Children's Ombudsperson's Office (COO) advanced child rights education and participation. Key initiatives included the 2nd Child Rights Symposium – Vuna, focusing on strengthening the juvenile justice system, Kudhinge Rauyu Forum, and awareness sessions for teachers and parents across island communities.

UN, in partnership with the Maldives Police Service (MPS) and Ministry of Education (MoE), organized activities for National and World Children's Day, engaging hundreds of

children. The nationwide photo exhibition Kudhin Bunanee: Maldives Through Children's Eyes, showcased children's perspectives on various issues.

Community-based protection mechanisms included strengthening existing IBAMA groups, developing a prevention programme targeting children in conflict with the law in Fuvahmulah and Hulhumalé Phase 2, and a Training of Trainers programme conducted for 16 staff of the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSFD).

UN, in collaboration with local island councils, developed 10 comprehensive Island Workplans for 2025, focusing on child-friendly and climate-resilient governance. This initiative addresses child rights and environmental sustainability in islands.



UN, with the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), completed and launched a child analysis report using Census 2022 data, providing a foundation for action plans in education, disability, employment, and child protection. This was enhanced by a Social Protection Budget Analysis, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance (MoF). Moreover, a tool to identify the impacts of different scenarios of social protection subsidies was developed and presented to MoF and the World Bank. These analytical products aim to support informed decision-making in providing and protecting social services to children and families. Additionally, 187 island profiles were developed, and 16 government officials were trained in data analysis to enhance evidence-based policymaking.

The release of the 2022 Population and Housing Census results marked a transformative milestone in 2024, laying the foundation for evidence-based policymaking on critical issues such as population ageing, urbanization, migration and youth engagement. These results, presented in innovative formats like Island and Atoll Cards and the profiles of Aimi and Yoosuf

(representing the average 17-year-old girl and boy in the Maldives) informed high-level dialogues and informed strategic discussions on demographic shifts and national priorities. Aimi's profile served as a powerful advocacy tool to thread through UN's work in data dissemination, youth visioning and social norm change. This age was specifically selected to highlight the unique challenges faced by Maldivian adolescents, as 17 is a pivotal year when many young people face uncertainty about transitioning from O-Levels to A-Levels or the workforce. By focusing on this critical period, UN aims to advocate for policies and programs that better support the Maldivian youth in successfully navigating this transitional phase, ensuring they can achieve their full potential. Census insights were also integrated into key reports such as the Common Country Analysis, the UN report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Voluntary National Review, ensuring alignment with global commitments.



Children enjoying the sea and sunshine  
© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari

In 2024, UN also commenced a Technical Cooperation Programme to carry out first agricultural census of the Maldives. This would improve national capacity to regularly produce and analyse agricultural statistics, including sex-disaggregated statistics.

UN is also supporting Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSFD) in establishing a comprehensive Vulnerability Information Management System which is essential for tracking and supporting vulnerable populations. This system aims to ensure that no child is left behind, particularly those with disabilities and complex learning profiles. The system is currently in its pilot phase and will help identify and track vulnerable populations across the country. A disability registry with over 13,000 beneficiaries was also developed with UN's support to ensure coverage by social protection schemes.

Policy dialogues were conducted with various stakeholders, covering child welfare, population dynamics, social protection, and the economic situation, urbanization, youth engagement of the Maldives.

These engagements, with the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS), Maldives Pension Office, and Maldives National University contributed to bridging data gaps, particularly on SDGs and child indicators, while also highlighting the urgency of addressing demographic transitions.

The Maldives reaffirmed its commitment to long-term, people-centered national development planning through the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) and a 20-year National Development Plan, which incorporated an inclusive monitoring and evaluation framework. UN provided technical expertise to ensure these processes were participatory, inclusive, and gender responsive. Notably, progress in gender equality was marked by a record 43 women candidates running in the Parliamentary Elections, a 3% increase from 2019. UN is also working with the Ministry of Housing, Land, and Urban Development (MoHLUD) to ensure the plan is child- and youth- sensitive, accounts for their needs and includes their voices.



**Empowering voices - Persons with Disabilities advocating for inclusion and accessibility.**

© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari





Exploring the challenges and opportunities  
for a more inclusive society  
© UNDP Maldives

## Feature Story

### *Advancing Disability Inclusion in the Maldives: A Major Step Forward*

*In 2024 UNDP Maldives, in partnership with the Ministry of Social and Family Development and the Maldives National Bureau of Statistics, has completed a comprehensive situation analysis on disability inclusion funded through the UNPRPD. This global initiative brings together UN entities, governments, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and civil society organizations to advance the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and disability-inclusive Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by providing baseline data and policy recommendations for duty bearers and stakeholders in multiple sectors.*

*A key milestone in this effort was a six-day training in 2024, which brought together government officials, service providers, and disability rights organizations to enhance their understanding of the CRPD and SDGs, supporting the development of more inclusive policies. Organizations such as the Maldives Deaf Association, Blind and Visually Impaired Society of Maldives (BVISM), Maldives Association of Persons with Disabilities (MAPD), Mental Health Support Group MV, and ARC Maldives played a crucial role in shaping the analysis.*

*More than just data, the analysis captures the lived experiences of persons with disabilities and the collective push for greater inclusion. Compiled through extensive collaboration, its findings will serve as a roadmap for future policies. Set for release in 2025, the analysis aims to drive meaningful policy changes, ensuring disability inclusion remains a national priority.*



UN Maldives enhanced programme convergence through the Kudhinnaa Gaathun initiative, integrating child-focused priorities into workplans across 10 islands. The Kudhinnaa Gaathun Forum facilitated collaboration among city and island leaders as well as agencies at the central level. Nine islands now implement at least 3 flagship programmes, with long-term child-friendly development plans being developed in R. Meedhoo and V. Felidhoo.

In 2024, UN Maldives continued to advance its mission under the 7<sup>th</sup> Country Programme, focusing on achieving the three transformative results of zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices. These goals are integral to the Maldives' national priorities, which emphasize addressing demographic shifts, promoting gender equality, enhancing sexual and reproductive health systems and building resilience in the face of climate change.

## Diagram 2 - Kudhinnaa Gaathun Initiative



**Integrated child-focused priorities in 10 islands**



**9 islands with 3+ flagship programmes**



**Long-term plans in R. Meedhoo and V. Felidhoo**

Grounded in evidence-based approaches and strategic partnerships, UN prioritized interventions that empowered women, adolescents and marginalized groups while addressing the interconnected challenges of population dynamics, reproductive health and social norm change. These efforts collectively supported the national and global commitments to leave no one behind.

UN's advocacy efforts culminated in the Government's commitment to the development of a Population Policy, integrating population dynamics into the National Development Plan. Key indicators from the Census are now accessible through a Geographic Information System, further enhancing national capacity for analysing and addressing population-related challenges. Ongoing initiatives, including population projection exercises, life table

revisions, and the calculation of disability-adjusted life years, are poised to contribute to robust, evidence-based policy formulation in the upcoming year.

Efforts to advance gender equality and foster social norm change in 2024 achieved significant milestones. At the forefront was the Hattah program, piloted as the "For Every Age" initiative in Nadhee; the senior citizens centre in Male' and in N. Kudafari. This comprehensive lifestyle program emphasized intergenerational engagement and healthy aging, creating a replicable model to strengthen resilience and inclusion for older persons. By integrating insights on social inclusion, economic participation, and domestic roles, the program enhanced the quality of life for older persons, exemplifying UN's commitment to leaving no one behind.



A grandmother and grandson bond over a traditional game of 'Ohvalhugondi'  
© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari



Men and women collaborate and learn with equal participation  
© WHO Maldives

UN also strengthened its role as a key technical partner in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) through strategic partnerships with Dhiraagu, the Maldives' largest telecommunications provider. A notable milestone in 2024 was the localization of PSEAH training materials to the Maldivian context, tailored to scale up sensitizing efforts, enable uptake by stakeholders, including the private sector to address harmful gender norms at workspaces as a prevention opportunity on SEAH. Additionally, continued policy advocacy efforts led to the revision of national Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Case Management guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), ensuring adherence to minimum standards and a survivor-centred approach. These updates have strengthened inter-agency collaboration and accountability within the GBV response system, contributing to a more robust national framework to address violence against women and girls.

In collaboration with the Women's Football Club and Aloha Club, UN implemented wellness programs targeting female drug users, leveraging sports as a tool for physical and mental well-being.

Through these targeted interventions, UN Maldives demonstrated its commitment to empowering women and girls, strengthening systems, and advancing sustainable development while ensuring that no one is left behind. These results reflect the collective impact of partnerships, data-driven approaches, and innovative programming in addressing the Maldives' unique challenges as a Small Island Developing State.



Promoting nutritious eating habits for a stronger, healthier community  
© UNFPA Maldives

With UN's support, the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS) published its first national vital statistics report in November 2024, providing insights into birth and death registration completeness and demographic trends. This milestone, achieved through two technical capacity-building workshops in 2023, strengthens the Maldives' civil registration and vital statistics system. UN also supported the digitization and analysis of marriage and divorce records, enabling their use for statistical reporting for the first time. Additionally, UN, in partnership with UNSD Global Platform team, supported the launch of the Maldives' first statistics data portal in October 2023, enhancing national data reporting and exchange using the international SDMX standard.

In 2024, UN in collaboration with the National Centre for Information Technology (NCIT), launched the Maldives' AI Readiness Assessment Methodology (RAM) through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder National Steering Committee. By December 2024, the RAM process collected inputs for 70 out of 98 indicators through secondary

research, 3 focus group discussions, and 10 key informant interviews, engaging representatives from government, industry, academia, civil society, and the UN. The findings were reviewed and validated during the second National Steering Committee meeting, strengthening national ownership and ensuring alignment with Maldives' digital development priorities.

In 2024, UN provided technical expertise to the Government of Maldives and the UNCT to ensure asylum seekers and refugees, among the most marginalized groups, were not left behind in SDG implementation. UN supported a family of three from Uganda who sought protection in the Maldives, conducting remote registration, refugee status determination, and resettlement interviews. In close coordination with national authorities, the family was protected from refoulement, and with support from the UN and civil society, their basic needs were met until their resettlement. This strengthened national capacity to respond to international protection needs in line with global commitments.

Additionally, three stranded Somali migrants were supported with assisted voluntary return to Somalia in September 2024. These movements were coordinated in collaboration with key government stakeholders, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Maldives Police Services, and Maldives Immigration, ensuring the safe and dignified return of these individuals.

UN, in collaboration with the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness, conducted a desk review on statelessness risks in the Maldives, analysing laws, policies, and birth registration practices, and consulting secondary sources and key stakeholders. The findings will inform the development of a national strategy to reduce and prevent statelessness in 2025. Additionally, UN secured the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs' commitment to conduct training programmes for immigration, law enforcement, and other relevant authorities, enhancing national capacity to address refugee protection, mixed migration, trafficking, smuggling, and nationality issues, with trainings planned for early 2025.

In 2024, UN strengthened the capacity of over 400 Maldivian criminal justice practitioners — including police, customs, coast guard, correctional services, prosecutors, and judges — to prevent and counter terrorism, violent extremism, and related crimes on land and at sea. Technical assistance also enhanced the capacity of civil society organizations to address issues such as Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and build community resilience to violent extremism.



Engineers and safety officers assess operations inside the control room  
© UNODC Maldives

To enhance maritime security, UN provided specialized equipment such as underwater and aerial drones and trained maritime law enforcement agencies to detect and respond to terrorist activities at sea, including the use of improvised explosive devices. UN further supported the establishment of a Prison Management Database System to counter radicalization in detention facilities and trained correctional officers in its use.

Through these efforts, UN promoted information sharing and intelligence exchange among law enforcement agencies, fostered interagency and regional cooperation, and strengthened the capacity of police and prosecutors to request and gather electronic evidence from abroad, contributing to more effective investigation and prosecution of terrorism-related crimes.

UN in collaboration with the Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology (MoHST), supported the establishment of a policy and legislative unit to strengthen financial investigation and law enforcement capacities to counter maritime crime. This included developing draft operational guidance, outlining the unit's structure and inter-ministerial coordination through a draft MoU, and providing technical equipment such as scanners and hard disks to enhance investigative capabilities. UN also initiated the procurement of specialized analytical

software to further strengthen the unit's capacity for financial investigations linked to maritime crime.

In 2024, UN strengthened the capacity of 415 officers from Maldives' Maritime Law Enforcement (MLE) agencies through specialized training on preventing and countering illegal activities at sea. Training covered Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS), Pier-side Vessel Search Techniques (PVST), boat engine maintenance, evidence handling, vessel rummage, and other specialized maritime operations.

### Diagram 3 - Capacity building on Maldives Maritime Law Enforcement



**Trained 415 Maritime Law Enforcement officers**



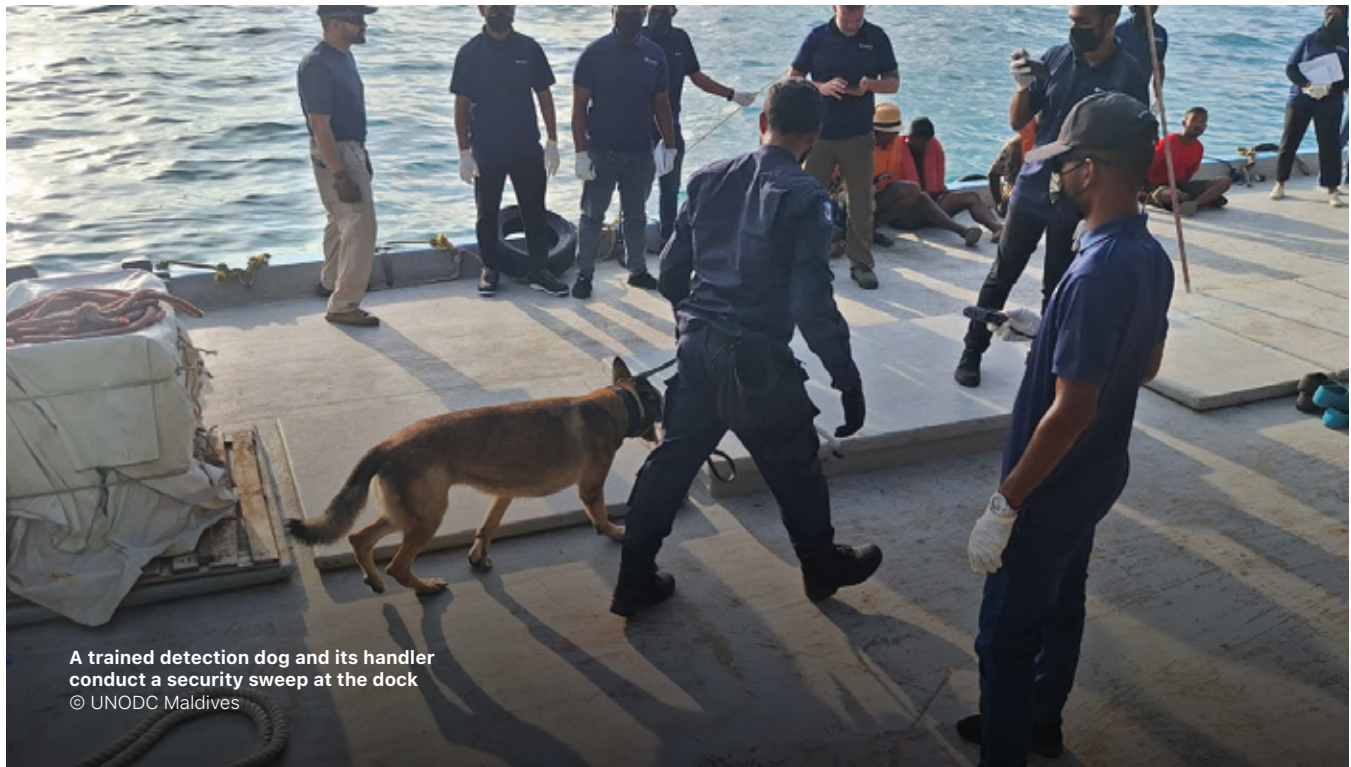
**Covered VBSS & PVST techniques**



**Covered maintenance, vessel rummage, and other maritime operations**



**Embracing innovation and technology for a smarter digital future**  
© Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology



UN also enhanced national capacities on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), AI-enabled maritime surveillance, crimes in the fisheries sector including Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, and the protection of submarine cables. Training further promoted inter-agency coordination and intelligence sharing at national and regional levels to combat organized crime.

In parallel, the UN built the capacity of 250 correctional officers on managing violent extremist prisoners, applying the Nelson Mandela Rules, and supporting reintegration and rehabilitation. Support was also extended to 21 judges and legal officers, and 59 prosecutors to strengthen legal frameworks and responses to marine pollution, environmental crimes, terrorism, drug trafficking, and the admissibility of electronic evidence, with a focus on international legal instruments including United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and United Nations Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).

#### Diagram 4 - Capacity building for Correctional and Legal Officers



Trained 250 correctional officers



Applied Nelson Mandela Rules, and supported reintegration & rehabilitation



Supported 21 judges & legal officers, and trained 59 prosecutors



Enhanced legal frameworks for environmental crimes, terrorism, drug trafficking, etc.



In 2024, UN strengthened Maldives' capacity to detect and respond to maritime crime, particularly drug smuggling, by providing specialized equipment and software to law enforcement agencies. This included handheld narcotic analyzers, UN produced drug and precursor testing kits, CCTV cameras to enhance island security, and maritime surveillance tools such as Marine Traffic, Skylight, and Airbus satellite imagery credits to detect suspicious vessels.

UN also facilitated international exposure for government officials on prosecution systems and drug analysis in the US and EU, alongside participation in regional and international events, maritime exercises, security dialogues, and visits to Regional Information Fusion Centre's to strengthen operational and strategic capacities.

Further, UN supported the construction of a four-storied Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) for the Maldives National Defense Force Coast Guard to enhance search and rescue operations and overall maritime security. To strengthen inter-agency coordination, the UN supported

the establishment of a National Information Fusion Centre (IFC) by providing equipment, training, and facilitating collaboration among national agencies to enhance information sharing once the IFC becomes operational.

In 2024, UN supported the Maldives' National Drug Agency by providing expertise on gender and age-responsive drug prevention, treatment, and recovery, based on science and human rights principles. This included contributing to the revision of the National Drug Policy and Strategy and supporting activities for the commemoration of National Drug Day.

UN also enhanced the capacity of the Maldives' National Integrity Commission (NIC) by providing specialized training on detecting and investigating unlawful conduct by law enforcement. This included sessions on applying the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and identifying and prioritizing unlawful conduct within places of detention, strengthening NIC officers' investigative skills and effectiveness.



Security personnel examine a package during an inspection exercise  
© UNICEF Maldives / Shaari

In 2024, the Maldives upheld democratic principles with a high voter turnout and an electoral process that was largely free, fair, and transparent, with minimal conflict. This was supported by UN’s technical assistance to the Elections Commission, including the development of a Communications and Advocacy Strategy, website modernization for better public engagement, and the integration of an electronic Complaints Module, which enhanced transparency and accountability.

UN’s Practice Parliament Series and capacity-building initiatives contributed to increased female political participation, with four women from previous cohorts running for office, demonstrating the long-term impact of UN’s collaboration with women’s groups.

Advancements in the digital transformation of the justice sector improved access to justice, with UN enhancing the digital capacities of the Prosecutor General’s Office and the Judiciary. This strengthened national capabilities to address harmful social norms and support victims in accessing protective services. Additionally, the implementation of Universal Periodic Review tracking matrices has bolstered the Maldives’ ability to monitor

human rights obligations, fostering effective collaboration between government and civil society stakeholders.

In 2024, UN supported the Family Legal Clinic (FLC) to enhance its technical capacities, resulting in 628 pro bono legal consultations on family matters, such as divorce, custody, and domestic violence — a 214% increase from 2023. This initiative directly benefited 103 individuals, including 97 women.

### Diagram 5 - Support through Family Legal Clinic



UN also provided technical support to the Prosecutor General's Office, introducing a victim-centered user experience on its digital platform, allowing victims to track real-time case progress until the verdict. In collaboration with the Korean National Police Academy, the UN launched the e-monitor+ tool enabling partner civil society organizations (CSOs) to identify harmful online content, map hotspots, and refer victims to support services.

UN played a pivotal role in strengthening human rights mechanisms in the Maldives, providing technical assistance to the Attorney General's Office on the National Mechanisms for Implementation, Reporting, and Follow-up (NMIRF). As a result, the state cleared all pending reports due over the last decade. UN further supported the successful

reporting on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Additionally, UN facilitated evidence-based policymaking by developing key knowledge products, including assessments on Women in Local Governance, Civil Society, and the Situation Analysis on Disability Inclusion, funded by UNPRPD, advancing inclusive governance.

UN Maldives assisted the government on strengthening governance and human rights protections by assisting in the development of the National Anti-Human Trafficking Action Plan for the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Office (ATO).



**A hardworking migrant worker standing tall amidst the struggle of daily livelihood**  
© UN Maldives / Samhaan Hameed

## 2.3: Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

The partnerships formed in 2024 with a wide range of national and international stakeholders have been essential in contributing towards progress on several priorities for the Maldives, including sustainable development, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and renewable energy transformation. These partnerships demonstrate the UN's ongoing commitment to supporting the Maldives in its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while addressing both current and future challenges.

UNDRR worked closely with relevant authorities to further strengthen the disaster risk reduction framework, in the context of the initiatives outlined in the Early Warnings for All (EW4All) roadmap, aimed at creation of an inclusive, multi-hazard early warning

system that is accessible to all, particularly vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, women, and migrant workers. In 2024, the efforts focused on risk communication, including the Hurushiya campaign, which was jointly led by the Maldives Red Crescent (MRC) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). This campaign aimed at improving disaster preparedness and resilience across the atolls. The partnership between UNDRR, the NDMA, and other key partners, such as UNICEF and IOM, expanded the scope of national risk communication efforts, strengthening the Maldives' resilience to future disasters. UNDRR and partners also supported NDMA and partners to mark the 20th anniversary of the Asian Tsunami of 2004.



In 2024, UNESCO led the establishment of the National Steering Committee for the AI Readiness Assessment Methodology (RAM) in partnership with the National Centre for Information Technology and 15 other members representing the government, industry, UNESCO academic community, civil society, and the United Nations which includes, UNDP Maldives, Ministry of Education, World Bank Project, Communication Authority of Maldives, National Cybersecurity Agency, Maldives Bureau of Statistics, State Electric Company (Stelco), Hulhumale Development Corporation Board, Maldives National University, Villa College, Info Tech Maldives, Womenintechmv, Sollarelle Insurance Pvt Ltd Maldives, Association of Persons with Disabilities (MAPD), and Forloop Coding Academy. This initiative aimed at strengthening the Maldives' preparedness for a digital future, with a focus on artificial intelligence's role in driving socioeconomic transformation. Through this partnership, both secondary and primary research were conducted to assess the AI landscape in the country with further review of the key findings in 2025.

WHO Maldives has been instrumental in transforming the country's health sector through various collaborations. Key initiatives include partnering with the Ministry of Health to revitalize primary healthcare systems and integrating Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) and mental health services into primary healthcare, supported by the Asian Development Bank and other development partners. WHO also facilitated a training program in cancer prevention for Maldivian doctors in collaboration with the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences.

WHO continued its support to the Maldives Food and Drug Authority (MFDA), strengthening its role as the National Regulatory Authority through initiatives like the Maaharaa public complaint portal, clinical treatment guidelines, and a benchmark assessment to improve risk management strategies. Additionally, WHO is aiding the digital transformation of the health sector with the Maldives Integrated Health Information System (MIHIS), launched in 2024, providing citizens access to their health data.



**Embracing the Elderly - promoting engagement, care, and mental well-being for Maldives' aging population**  
© UNFPA Maldives / Hussain Yameen Ali

In mental health, WHO is enhancing the national psychosocial support helpline and assessing Homes for People with Special Needs (HPSN) to improve health and psychosocial services. WHO is also building local expertise in field epidemiology with support from WHO SEARO and the Thai FETP program, strengthening influenza surveillance with PIP funds, and expanding DHIS2 for better respiratory pathogen surveillance.

Through the WHO-UNICEF Joint Programme, WHO is addressing mental health challenges among children and adolescents, and in partnership with the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada and UNDP, WHO is improving healthcare waste management in the Maldives.

WHO Maldives, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with support from UNDP, the Government of Canada, and the Government of Japan, spearheaded an extensive training program on health care waste management across the country. This program reflects a strong commitment to enhancing safety standards in healthcare practices across the Maldives.

In the area of sustainable energy, at the request of the former Minister of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (currently the Ministry of Environment and Tourism) a team of experts from UNCDF and UNDP's Energy and Sustainable Finance Hub visited the Maldives to scope out potential financing solutions to address Maldives renewable energy needs. Furthermore, UNDP partnered with UNCDF to co-develop a pilot joint programme aimed at addressing fiscal and institutional barriers to the Maldives' renewable energy transition. Through this collaboration, USD 250,000 was successfully mobilized from the Joint SDG Fund to support the creation of a pilot programme. This initiative aligns with the Maldives' climate action and green growth goals and serves as a key driver for the country's transition to a sustainable energy future.



**Waste management is a critical urban issue for Male'**  
© Mihaaru / Fayaaz Moosa



**A woman growing cucumbers in a greenhouse**  
© IFAD Maldives

Meanwhile, IFAD, through its support for the Maldives Agribusiness Programme (MAP) led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Welfare (MoAAW) provided technical training, introduced new crop varieties, and augmented agricultural information systems during 2024. The program, with its gender-transformative approach, empowered women and youth in the agricultural sector while boosting productivity and market access for small-scale farmers. Through close collaboration with government ministries, local authorities, and farmers, MAP has contributed to building a sustainable and resilient agricultural environment in the Maldives.

In 2025, ESCAP supported the Maldives Bureau of Statistics (MBS) in producing the first national vital statistics report to strengthen the country's data infrastructure, which is essential for informed policymaking. In addition to this, ESCAP supported the MBS in collaboration with key government agencies to develop a comprehensive roadmap for environmental-economic statistics. This roadmap outlines priorities for implementing SEEA accounts by 2024–2025 and 2030, helping the Maldives integrate environmental data into sustainable development policies. The roadmap was endorsed on 5 June 2024, during World Environment Day, highlighting the country's commitment to using environmental-economic statistics for national policymaking.



UN Maldives and partners planting trees to contribute to a greener city  
© UNFPA Maldives / Sikundi Corporation

UNFPA's efforts in the Maldives focused on empowering women, adolescents, and marginalized groups through strategic partnerships. Collaborating with the Maldives Pension Office, Maldives National University (MNU), Society for Health Education (SHE), and other key stakeholders, UNFPA addressed challenges in population dynamics, reproductive health, and social norm change. Notable initiatives included integrating reproductive health modules into the national Health Management Information System (HMIS), providing mobile clinic services to marginalized women, and partnering with the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Maldives (SOGM) on reproductive health issues. UNFPA also worked with Soneva Namoonaa and Zero Waste Maldives to improve reproductive health education for young people, particularly those out of school. In the area of Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH), UNFPA partnered with Dhiraagu, the largest telecommunications provider in the country. Additionally, collaborations with the Women's Football Club, Aloha Club, and Malé City Council furthered advocacy on gender equality, women's health, and environmental sustainability. Through resource mobilization, UNFPA hosted a Donor High-Tea event to strengthen partnerships with the diplomatic community and private sector.

In 2024, UNDP forged strategic partnerships with international and regional stakeholders to drive sustainable development initiatives in the Maldives. Key collaborations included a partnership with the Korean National Police Academy, piloting an innovative project to address technology-facilitated gender-based violence (GBV) with USD 70,200 in financing. This initiative strengthened CSOs' capacity to combat online GBV and raised awareness of its prevalence in the digital space. Another partnership with UNDP, UNRCO, and UNCT mobilised USD 70,000 to conduct a situational analysis on disability inclusion using the UNPRPD framework, providing critical baseline data and advocacy tools to

ensure persons with disabilities (PWDs) are fully included in development policies. UNDP also partnered with the EU on the USD 5.2 million MIP initiative to enhance accountability, governance frameworks, and transparency, contributing to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Additionally, a regional partnership with the US-International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs secured USD 200,000 for anti-corruption and judicial integrity efforts. Through collaborations with Ireland, TCCF, Australia, FCDO, and UNCDF, UNDP mobilized resources for climate action, sustainable energy, and innovative financing, driving progress on SDGs 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and 13 (Climate Action) and supporting transformative development in the Maldives.

### Diagram 6 - Key partnerships with international and regional stakeholders



**EU Partnership's USD 5.2 million MIP initiative for SDG 16**



**US-INL's USD 200,000 for anti-corruption and judicial integrity**



**UNPRPD's USD 70,000 for disability inclusion analysis**



**Korean National Police Academy's USD 70,200 for tech-facilitated GBV project**



**Australia, FCDO, Ireland, TCCF, UNCDF and UNDP for climate action, sustainable energy, innovative financing.**





An aerial view of a Maldivian island, surrounded by clear waters and coral reefs  
© UNDP Maldives

## 2.4 Results of the UN Working More and Better Together: UN Coherence, Effectiveness, and Efficiency



**Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, ESCAP, Director of Subregional Office, South & South-West Asia**

"Maldives is now equipped with data using advanced satellite imagery and climate scenarios to forecast hazards and sea-level rise risks at the granularity needed for its small islands and atolls. The data can be used by policy makers and communities for land-use planning, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction. This was a fruit of collaboration among ESCAP, UNDP, National Disaster Management Authority, Maldives Meteorological Services and Maldives National University under the Joint UN SDG Fund programme. Maldives' learning has since been shared with other climate vulnerable countries in Asia and the Pacific."



**Mr. Enrico Gaveglia, UNDP, Resident Representative**

"In 2024, UNDP working alongside the UN Resident Coordinator spearheaded policy dialogues and support for fiscal reforms opening avenues for blended finance solutions in Maldives in the health sector as well as a just energy transition and blue economy. Concrete actions, including the launching of the first Maldives' Sustainability Reporting Framework, an SDG climate finance tagging facility are opening new opportunities of alignment with private capital towards strategic priorities for Maldives. In a country in which the grant space has shrunk and a downstream programme offer is lacking traction, strategic policy options across stakeholders can be equally transformative."



**Ms. Shadiya Ibrahim, UNFPA, Head of Office**

"Sustainable development in the Maldives thrives on collaboration with UN agencies. By pooling resources and breaking silos, we can create 21st-century solutions that address multiple sectors and align with the joint results expected from the UNSDCF and global megatrends, requiring collective action from all."



**Dr. Edward Addai, UNICEF, Representative**

"In 2024, we made significant strides in advancing the rights of children and young people in the Maldives, working closely with partners and UN agencies. Together, we accelerated efforts in youth engagement and development, collaborated on the 16 Days of Activism to prevent violence against women and girls, and initiated vital conversations on addressing challenges faced by children and persons with disabilities. By prioritizing disability inclusion, we are ensuring that every child in the Maldives has the opportunity to thrive."



**Ms. Payden, WHO, Representative**

"In 2024, WHO, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with support from UN agencies, developed a model for integrated Primary Health Care. Today, we are proud to see this model expanding nationwide to ensure that every individual, no matter where they live, has access to essential health services. This marks a significant step towards achieving Universal Health Coverage and strengthening the foundation of equitable and resilient healthcare in the country."

## 2.5 Evaluations & Lessons Learned

There are existing and emerging barriers to the work of the United Nations with its partners that maybe tackled to provide greater cohesiveness, efficiency and sustainability of our developmental interventions.

**Developmental Priorities:** Currently the Government of Maldives is finalizing the 5-year medium term Strategic Action Plan, and it will be formulating the 20-year National Development Plan. Therefore, until the adoption of these documents, the UN development system will need to rely on sectoral plans and extensive stakeholder consultations to ensure programmatic alignment to national priorities.

**Coordination:** Greater cohesiveness coupled with information sharing will lead to synergies being created from joint work and duplications removed for greater developmental impact. This is an area that can be improved across UN's interagency programming along with the partnership and collaborations with the government, civil society, and other relevant stakeholders.

**Capacity Constraints:** Limited local capacity and expertise along with high turnover of human resources within UN, government and CSOs remain a challenge for preserving institutional memory and ensuring sustainability of developmental interventions.

**Evidence-based decision-making:** The culture of using of data and statistical analysis for formulation of policies and regulations need to be further fostered in all levels of the society. This will enable the linkages of the developmental services and its benefits to the populations, without leaving any vulnerable groups behind.

**Data disaggregation:** While on one hand, primary data collection on a frequent basis for socio-economic and environmental indicators need further attention, there is a greater need to address the absence of disaggregation in terms of gender, age, geographic areas, population groups, income levels, and other relevant characteristics.

**Resource Mobilization:** As an Upper Middle-Income Country, the developmental interventions need to be further geared to financing initiatives in comparison to funding from bilateral and multilateral sources. There is untapped potential in the private sector engagement via financing for development, including those from high-network individuals and philanthropists.



**Multi-sectoral approaches:** For cross-cutting themes of gender equality, human rights-based approaches, environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, the mandated entities take forward the agenda. However, mainstreaming of the implementation of these principles in other sectors could help to bring acceleration of the results through tackling of developmental challenges in a multi-pronged approach.

**Results-Based Management:** Integration of the full cycle of planning, monitoring, and evaluation functions in the planned development will enable the clear articulation of the theory of change and linking of the problems/root causes to solutions and achieving desired results.

**Community Engagement:** While participatory implementation and planning is endeavoured in principle, the focus on upstream policy formulation can result in more centralized and top-down approaches being adopted. Therefore, at planning stages community engagement process need to be clearly articulated and subsequently implemented as a core principle.

## 2.6 Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

### UN Agencies Financial Contribution for the Year 2024

	Outcome 1: Livelihoods and Productivity	Outcome 2: Human Development and Wellbeing	Outcome 3: Natural Resource Management, Climate Resilience and Environmental Sustainability	Outcome 4: Transformative Governance, Justice and Human Rights
				
<b>FAO</b>	200,000.00	324,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
<b>ILO</b>	39,723.00			8,488.00
<b>IOM</b>	674,753.00	89,313.00	21,615.00	
<b>UNDP</b>	708,623.42		3,543,773.15	2,919,986.53
<b>UNDRR</b>			250,000.00	
<b>UNEP</b>			505,884.00	
<b>UNESCO</b>		21,226.00		20,278.00
<b>UNFPA</b>		237,782.58		280,943.41
<b>UNHCR</b>			39,447.00	39,447.00
<b>UNICEF</b>		2,164,234.47	352,816.25	1,044,077.50
<b>UNODC</b>				4,443,371.00
<b>UNOPS</b>		5,821,262.82		
<b>WHO</b>		1,241,802.00	772,742.00	
<b>Total per Outcome Area (USD)</b>	<b>1,623,099.42</b>	<b>9,899,620.87</b>	<b>5,586,277.40</b>	<b>8,856,591.44</b>



A father and toddler share a joyful moment on a beach swing  
© UNDP Maldives

## Chapter 3

# UNCT Key Focus for Next Year



The Government of Maldives is working towards finalizing the national priorities via the medium-term Strategic Action Plan 2024-2028 and will be carrying out the formulation of the 20-year National Development Plan (NDP) in 2025. UN in Maldives, led by the UNDP have supported the SAP formulation process and will look forward to supporting the national development planning processes of the Government of Maldives. A focus of the United Nations will be to ensure a participatory process that accounts for the voices of all the population groups so that the developmental priorities of the vulnerable groups are factored in the developmental planning and budgeting processes. The United Nations in Maldives will also advocate to ensure that the commitments of the Maldives for the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the international conventions to which the country is party to are factored in these national development frameworks.

The year 2025 is the penultimate year of the current United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF aka UN Cooperation Framework) 2022-2026 and hence the roadmap for the new UNSDCF 2027-2031 will be formulated and its implementation commenced during the first quarter of the year. The key steps in this roadmap will include: (1) Evaluation of the UNSDCF 2022-2026 with participation from implementing partners, participatory UN agencies and civil society, (2) Preparation of Country Analysis (aka Common Country Analysis) as the analytical base for development of programmatic interventions. The assessment and analytical report will be used internally by UN to develop the UNSDCF, and (3) Prioritization and design of new UNSDCF. The first of these two steps will be carried out to a large extent in 2025 with the remaining work to be completed in 2026.

To ensure contribution to the national priorities, the new UNSDCF will be aligned to the 20-year National Development Plan (NDP) and the Strategic Action Plan 2024-2028 of the Government of Maldives [Note: Both these documents are being formulated and will be published in 2025]. The programming documents of the relevant UN agencies, funds and programmes will be derived from the UNSDCF (and their cycles sequenced with the Cooperation Framework formulation process) to ensure that the UN development system operations in-country focus on common results. The final roadmap will be endorsed and implemented through close collaborations by the Co-chairs of the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee: the UN Resident Coordinator and the Secretary Multilateral of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The process will be quality assured through the regional bodies and entities of the UN development system.

The year 2025 will commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the United Nations (on 24 October) as well as the 60th Anniversary of Maldives becoming a member of the United Nations (on 21 September). This twin anniversary will be an important opportunity to reflect on the history of the United Nations and take stock of its enduring achievements in the Maldives. It will also be an opportunity to spotlight where the United Nations, and the international community, can focus its efforts to meet current and future challenges across the three pillars of our work: peace and security, development, and human rights. The Government of Maldives and UN in Maldives have agreed to jointly commemorate the twin anniversary through key events which will be held between April to December 2025.

Maldives will undergo three treaty body reviews (The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination [CERD], United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [CRPD], Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC], in 2025 as well as Maldives fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Maldives also plans to submit their first report for International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). United Nations in Maldives will engage in these human rights mechanisms and processes to provide the normative support and capacity building for the stakeholders along with advocacy for the duty bearers to strengthen the human rights mainstreaming in the country.



**UNITED NATIONS  
MALDIVES**



**United Nations in Maldives**

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