

ASSESSMENT OF GENDER STATISTICS IN THE MALDIVES

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Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services
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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Acronyms and abbreviations.....	5
Glossary of key terms	6
1 Introduction	8
1.1. Methodology.....	8
1.2. Country context	9
2 Legal and policy framework for gender equality	11
3 Maldives Statistical System (MSS) and gender statistics.....	13
3.1. Legal framework for gender statistics	13
3.2. Key producers of gender statistics in the MSS.....	14
3.2.1. National Bureau of Statistics	14
3.2.2. Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services (MGFSS).....	14
3.2.3. Other producers of gender statistics.....	15
3.3. Provisions for gender statistics in previous National Strategy for the Development of Statistics.....	17
4 Assessment of gender data gaps	18
4.1. Methodological approach.....	18
4.2. Priority frameworks of gender indicators	18
4.2.1. Health Master Plan.....	18
4.2.2. Gender-specific SDG indicators in the Maldives.....	19
4.2.3. UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators	24
4.3. Key findings on data gaps	26
5 Assessment of MSS capacity to produce gender statistics.....	27
5.1. Systemic level.....	27
5.1.1. Legal framework.....	27
5.1.2. Coordination mechanisms.....	27
5.1.3. Statistical plans	28
5.1.4. Advocacy	28
5.1.5. Political support and culture of evidence	29
5.2. Organisation's level	29
5.2.1. Budget, human and IT resources and training.....	29
5.2.2. Data-sharing and production of gender statistics.....	30
5.2.3. Communication of gender statistics.....	32
5.3. Individual level	37
5.4. Key findings on gender statistics capacity.....	37

6 Conclusions	39
6.1. Recommendations for enabling environment at systemic level	40
6.2. Recommendations for data production at the level of MSS.....	40
6.3. Recommendations for MSS data accessibility and use.....	41
Bibliography	42
Annex 1. Organisational structure of the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services ...	46
Annex 2. Consolidated summary of availability of gender indicators in the Maldives, 2020 .	47
Annex 3. Summary of workshops and plenary meetings.	1
Consultation meetings, between 8 and 14 April 2019	1
Inception workshop, 9 April 2019.....	1
Validation workshop, 26 February 2020.....	2

Acronyms and abbreviations

ADAPT	Advanced Data Planning Tool
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CEEW	Council for Economic Empowerment for Women
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EDGE	Evidence and Data for Gender Equality
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
FPA	Family Protection Authority
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HLPF	High-level Political Forum
MGFSS	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NSCC	National Statistical Coordinating Committee
NSDS	National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
NSPA	National Social Protection Agency
MSS	Maldives Statistical System
NSO	National Statistical Office
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PARIS21	Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21 st Century
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SRM	Statistics Regulation of the Maldives
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WDC	Women's Development Committees

Glossary of key terms

Sex	“Sex describes the physical and biological characteristics that distinguish males and females” (UN Women, 2017 ^[1]). Considering that the characteristic of “sex” reported during censuses, surveys or in administrative records may in fact refer to “gender”, some countries in their data collection distinguish also “sex at birth”. ¹
Gender	“Gender refers to socially constructed differences in attributes and opportunities associated with being female or male and to the social interactions and relations between women and men. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in roles and responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken and access to and control over resources, as well as in decision-making opportunities. These differences and inequalities between the sexes are shaped by the history of social relations and change over time and across cultures” (UN, 2016 ^[2]). Certain countries legally recognise non-binary or third-gender classifications (UNECE, 2019 ^[3]).
Sex-disaggregated data	Sex-disaggregated data are data on individuals differentiated by sex. They are collected and tabulated separately for women and men. They allow for the measurement of differences between women and men on various social and economic dimensions and are one of the requirements in obtaining gender statistics. Sex-disaggregated data have the capacity to reveal differences in the lives of women and men that result from gender roles and expectations (UN, 2016 ^[2]).
Gender statistics	Gender statistics are defined by the sum of the following characteristics: a) Data are collected and presented by sex as a primary and overall classification; b) Data reflect gender issues; c) Data are based on concepts and definitions that adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; d) Data collection methods take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that may induce gender bias in the data (UN, 2016 ^[2]).
Gender indicators	Gender indicators serve to measure and compare the situation of women and men over time. Gender indicators can refer to quantitative indicators (mainly but not exclusively based on statistics differentiated by sex) or to qualitative indicators (based on women’s and men’s experiences, attitudes, opinions and feelings) (EIGE, 2015 ^[4]).
Gender mainstreaming in	Gender mainstreaming in national statistical system include activities that aim to apply gender perspective holistically at all stages of data production, statistical coordination, communication and statistics use.

¹ For example Canada: “Sex at birth and gender refer to two different concepts. Sex at birth refers to sex assigned at birth. Sex at birth is typically assigned based on a person’s reproductive system and other physical characteristics (Statistics Canada, 2019^[46]).

national statistical system²

National statistical system (NSS)

The national statistical system “is the ensemble of statistical organisations and units within a country that jointly collect, process and disseminate official statistics” on behalf of national government” (OECD, 2002^[5]). Official statistics compiled by national statistical system exist to provide information to the general public, governments, business and research communities in the economic, demographic, social and environmental fields. This information is essential for evidence-based decision making, for mutual knowledge of the States and peoples of the world (UN, 2015^[6]).

Data ecosystem

A data ecosystem includes the national statistical system along with the complex organisations of dynamic social relationships, which move and transform data/information (data infrastructure, tools, media, producers, consumers, curators and sharers) (PARIS21, 2018^[7]).

National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)

A National Strategy for the Development of Statistics is a country’s plan for developing statistical capacity across the entire national statistical system (NSS). Such a strategy sets out a vision of where the NSS should be over a five- to ten-year timeline and a roadmap for achieving this goal. It also presents a comprehensive and unified framework for the continuous assessment of users’ evolving needs and sets the priorities necessary to build capacity to meet these needs in a co-ordinated, synergistic and efficient manner. Furthermore, it provides both a framework for mobilising, harnessing, and leveraging national and international resources as well as a basis for an effective and results-oriented strategic management of the NSS (PARIS21, 2018^[7]).

National statistical office (NSO)

“The national statistical office is the leading statistical agency within a national statistical system” (OECD, 2002^[5]).

Source: (PARIS21, 2019^[8])

² In line with (UN, 2016^[2]), this document uses both terms “mainstreaming” and “integrating” in this context.

1 Introduction

This report provides a comprehensive assessment of the current state of play for gender statistics in the Maldives. It is the first of its kind, focusing on the production, availability and use of gender indicators that are key to the national goals. It is a result of a cooperation between the Maldives National Bureau of Statistical (NBS), the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services (MGFSS) as well as PARIS21 and UN Women, under the latter's flagship global programme "Women Count", which aims to bring about a radical shift in how gender statistics are used, created and promoted.

The assessment examined both data and statistical capacity gaps. It aimed at providing an overview of current production, coordination and communication of gender statistics in the Maldives Statistical System (MSS). The recommendations originating from this assessment were meant to facilitate the integration of gender statistics strategy in the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) designed over 2019-2020 for the period of 2020-2030. It is a timely contribution to SDG monitoring target 17.8, which calls for countries to increase the quality of gender statistics by 2020.

1.1. Methodology

This assessment report is structured around the PARIS21 "Framework and Guidelines for Assessing Data and Statistical Capacity Gaps for Better Gender Statistics" (PARIS21, 2019^[9]). It aims at providing a comprehensive overview of gender statistics produced across the MSS of the Maldives and used by different data users. It applies the PARIS21 concept of the holistic capacity development, which takes into account different levels and targets of data ecosystem.

This report was prepared based on a desk review of strategic documents, existing MSS-wide and sectoral assessments of statistics, questionnaires completed by key agencies and comprehensive information on data availability reported by the NBS. Feedback gathered through consultations and multi-stakeholder - workshops on gender statistics facilitated by PARIS21 in 2019 and 2020 are also reflected in the findings (see Annex 3).

The NBS reported on gender data availability using the PARIS21's ADAPT³ tool, providing information on sources, disaggregation and frequency of collection for the 53 sex-disaggregated and gender-related SDG indicators⁴, the UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, and a set of national health indicators.

The national stakeholders validated this assessment in February 2020 and additional comments were added in March and April. The extent of the impact of COVID-19 on the production and dissemination of gender statistics was therefore not fully analysed.

³ PARIS21 ADAPT tool, <https://paris21.org/advanced-data-planning-tool-adapt>

⁴ At the beginning of the assessment in 2019, the number of gender-specific indicators was 54, however following a comprehensive review by IAEG-SDG the indicator 8.9.2 was deleted in April 2020.

1.2. Country context

Maldives is an archipelago of over 1,192 small islands, 187 of which are inhabited. The country is divided into 20 atolls and the capital of Male', which is inhabited by 40% of the population. As of 2018, the estimated population was 512,038, of which 366,176 were Maldivian (Government of the Maldives, 2019^[10]).

The Constitution of the Maldives, ratified in 2008, is the supreme law of the country. It provides the legal foundation for the existence of the Republic of Maldives, sets out the rights and duties of the citizens of Maldives, and defines the structure of the government. The Maldives is a presidential representative democratic republic, with the President as the Head of Government. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament or the People's Majlis. A Bill passed by the parliament becomes a law on the signature of the President. A Bill may be vetoed by the President or referred to the parliament with recommendations for amendment. The framework laws give provision to the concerned Government departments to formulate and administer regulations on matters relating to the relevant laws (Government of the Maldives, 2008^[11]).

As one of the small island developing states (SIDS), Maldives faces economic, social and environmental challenges of a small population, geographical dispersion and isolation. The low-lying nation is vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events, suffering coastal erosion, flooding and the impacts of sea-level rise. There has been strong economic growth in recent times thanks to a successful tourism industry, and strong fisheries and services sectors. GDP per capita was US\$ 11,890 in 2018 (World Bank, n.d.^[12]). Sustainable management of marine resources and the natural environment has been central to the future of Maldives considering rising sea levels.

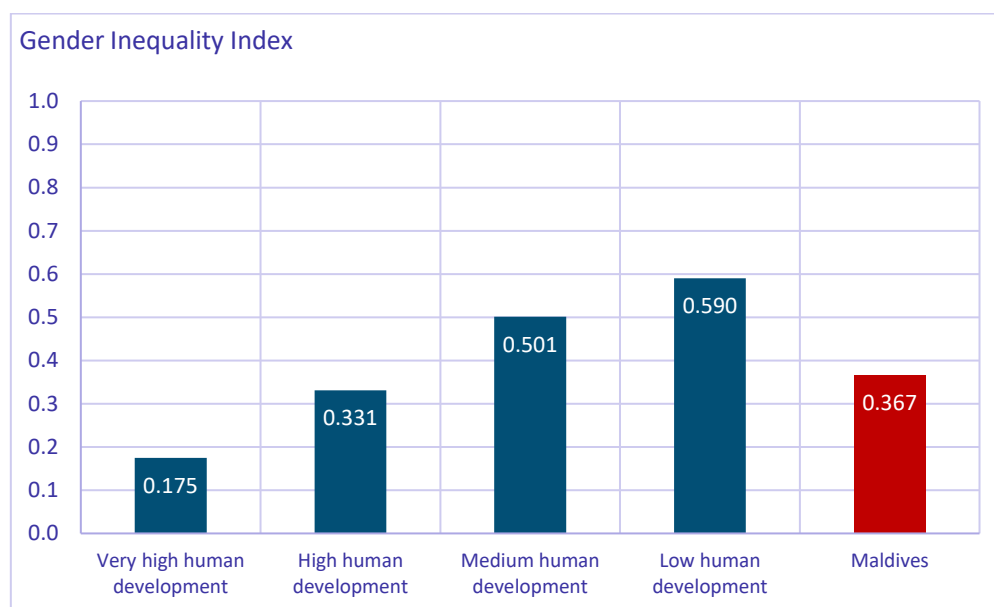
The economic growth brought an increase in life expectancy at birth for both men and women as well as a drop in the total fertility rate over the last decade with women on average having 2:1 children; child survival has improved significantly and the maternal mortality ratio has declined significantly since 1997. One third of the population is between the ages of 0 and 17. Primary school enrolment rates are now almost universal, with 96.6% of girls and 97.3% of boys enrolled in school as of 2017 (Government of the Maldives, 2017^[13]).

Despite these gains in human capital development, the Maldives reports slow progress in achieving gender equality. Strengthening the legal framework with new acts containing provisions and principles in international law and commitments was highlighted as the government's priority in 2017 in the context of the HLPF (Government of the Maldives, 2017^[14]).⁵ Gender analysis by the World Bank in 2016 found that women are not particularly discriminated against in education, health and survival, but gender inequality does exist (El-Horr J. and R. Prabha Pande, 2016^[15]). Maldives has a UNDP Gender Inequality Index of 0.367, which sees it ranked 81 out of 162 countries between the average for medium and high human development countries (Figure 1). However in 2020, the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report ranked Maldives 123 out of 153 countries, slipping back ten places

⁵ Republic of Maldives. 2017. Voluntary National Review for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017

in the rankings since 2018 (World Economic Forum, 2020^[16]). Some analysis pointed to increasing conservatism in the country (UN Maldives, 2019^[17]).

FIGURE 1 UNDP GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX FOR MALDIVES AND OVERALL DEVELOPMENT GROUPS, 2019



Source: (UNDP, 2019^[18])

Note: The Gender Inequality Index is a composite measure between 0 and 1 reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. A value close to 0 reflects low gender inequality (and therefore high gender equality) and closer to 1 is high gender inequality. See Technical note 4 at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019_technical_notes.pdf for details on how the Gender Inequality Index is calculated.

In 2008, the constitutional ban on women standing for president was removed. Although there are no quotas for women in local or national governments, multiple initiatives and policies attempt to increase women's political participation. The Decentralization Act of 2010 mandates that local councils have Island Women Development Committees (WDCs) as an integral part of local governance (El-Horr J. and R. Prabha Pande, 2016^[15]). The first Women's Forum was convened with Women's Development Committees (WDC's) from all areas of the Maldives, in partnership with Ministry of Gender and Family. This forum provided an opportunity to share experiences, voice grievances and highlight the structural difficulties faced by WDCs to implement their duties. The first Women's Forum was convened with WDCs from all areas of the Maldives, in partnership with Ministry of Gender and Family. This forum provided an opportunity to share experiences, voice grievances and highlight the structural difficulties faced by WDCs to implement their duties.

In terms of political participation, in 2018, 24 out of 99 political appointees (24%) and 38 out of 633 Local Councilors (6%) were women. There were four seats (out of 87) held by women during the 19th parliament. Finally, in 2019 35% of the President's office were women, which is significantly higher compared to previous periods (Government of the Maldives, 2020^[19]).

2 Legal and policy framework for gender equality

The Maldives made significant progress in the area of gender equality over the past 30 years, particularly by strengthening its legal framework to further align with relevant provisions and principles in international law, including those enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified in 1993 (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d.^[20])

In 2008 the President ratified the Constitution, which in its article 17 grants all citizens of Maldives “the rights and freedoms (...) without discrimination of any kind, including race, national origin, colour, sex, age, mental or physical disability, political or other opinion, property, birth or other status, or native island”. According to the article 18, “a citizen is free to engage in any conduct or activity restraint that is not expressly prohibited by Islamic Shari’ah or by law. No control or restraint may be exercised against any person unless it is expressly authorised by law. Every individual is equal before and under the law, and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law” (Government of the Maldives, 2008^[11]). The Constitution removed provisions barring women from being elected President or Vice-President.

In the same year, the Maldives adopted the Employment Act, which has laid down provisions concerning the maternity leave and unpaid parental leave (for both fathers and mothers) as well as non-discrimination provisions taking into account sex, marital status, and family obligations, among others (Government of the Maldives, 2008^[21]).

Significant progress in country’s legislative reforms that refers to gender equality took place through the adoption of the Prevention of Human Trafficking Act, in 2013, the Sexual Offences Act, in 2014 and the Sexual Harassment and Abuse Prevention Act, in 2014. In 2015, the Penal Code entered into force, establishing a definition of rape.

Other national efforts to improve its institutional and policy framework to accelerate the elimination of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality included the establishment of the Family Protection Authority in 2012 and the adoption of the Domestic Violence Prevention National Strategy (2014-2016) (CEDAW, 2015^[22]).

A gender equality diagnostic of 2014 found that limited government capacity (in terms of budget allocation and understaffing) to fully implement the 2009 National Gender Equality Policy and achieve the gender-related targets of the action plan. While the policy is comprehensive in scope, its implementation and monitoring have been weak due to limited budget allocation (ADB, 2014^[23]).

Following the adoption of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the government of the Maldives launched many actions that aimed at facilitating the process of achieving the 17 SDGs. These actions included establishment of the SDG Division under the Ministry of Environment and Energy in 2016 that acted as a secretariat for all SDG-related activities. In order to facilitate the inter-agency coordination and implementation of the SDG-reporting, the government set up the National Ministerial Coordination Committee and the SDGs Technical Committee (UN, 2017^[24]).

A Gender Equality Act was adopted in 2016 aiming to eliminate discrimination based on sex or gender, including ending violence against women. The Act, which came into force in 2017, promoted gender equality in all aspects of public and family life. It also outlined explicit duties and responsibilities on State and private parties, prohibited victimization and introduced remedies for gender-based discrimination.

In 2017, a Gender Action Plan (GAP) was developed with technical input from UN Agencies (UN, 2018^[25]). The GAP provides suggested entry points for gender-responsive actions of the project “Supporting Vulnerable Communities in Maldives to Manage Climate Change-Induced Water Shortages”. The progress on its adoption, however, has stalled (Rogers, 2018^[26]).

The 2019 sixth periodic CEDAW report submitted by Maldives under article 18 of the Convention highlighted a set of key challenges faced by the government in ensuring consistent application of laws and regulations. The report mentioned the following crosscutting challenges under all articles of the CEDAW relevant to gender statistics:

- An improving but still limited consistent and robust inter-ministerial coordination in the implementation of the rapidly changing national legal and regulatory framework, and ensuring that local authorities across the islands are informed and bought in;
- Lack of harmonised monitoring and data on the impact of policies;
- Lack of adequate technical and financial resources to implement the policies;
- High level of turnover of civil servants in the public sector, including among health personnel, a significant number of which are expatriates;
- Limited awareness among the society about their rights, in the face of rapidly evolving laws and policies (CEDAW, 2019^[27]).

The Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services (MGFSS) mandated with CEDAW reporting, describes its general mission as follows:

- “To improve the lives of children, women, elderly and persons with disabilities with programs and services that inform, educate and empower them;
- To provide immediate support and protection to those affected by neglect, abuse and violence;
- To strengthen legislative and institutional services by cultivating values of mutual respect, peace and equality; and to create and strengthen partnerships with local and international bodies to work towards the rights of vulnerable groups” (Government of the Maldives, 2020^[28])

In early 2019, the government prepared a revised National Gender Policy including five strategic goals: Leadership and Governance, Economic Empowerment, Institutional Gender Mainstreaming, Gender Based Violence and Access to Justice. The goal Institutional Gender Mainstreaming included a strategy to “revise national data collection systems to ensure disaggregation of national data by sex and age and the inclusion of gender perspectives to inform policy decisions” (Government of the Maldives, 2019^[29]). A Gender Equality Action Plan 2020-2025 was in the process of finalization in November 2019. The plan included a project to designate “Gender Focal Points” in each government ministry (Government of the Maldives, 2019^[30]).

In October 2019, the President launched the state's five-year Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for the years 2019-2023. The Action Plan was a central policy framework and planning document that guided the overall development direction of the Maldives and consolidated Government's manifesto pledges with existing sectoral priorities. The SAP contained five priority areas (Blue Economy, Caring State, Dignified Families, Jazeera Dhiriulhun, and Good Governance), with goals relevant to each area including policies, targets, strategies and actions. SAP included a "Gender Equality" subsector under the "Good Governance" sector. It recognized that "despite advancements in legal and policy framework including the passage of a domestic violence, a sexual harassment act and gender equality law, administrative, budgetary and human resource constraints restrict the implementation of these laws to achieve gender equality". The policy priorities of the Gender Equality subsector focused on "increasing women's representation in decision-making, minimizing sexual harassment, domestic violence, eliminating barriers for women to participate in economic activity including cultural barriers by promoting shared care work and household responsibilities". Gender-related policies were also present in other subsectors. One of the strategies of the "Caring State" priority area mentioned "Strengthening evidence-based policy making and building capacity of social protection service delivery institutions" (Government of the Maldives, 2019^[31]).

3 Maldives Statistical System (MSS) and gender statistics

3.1. Legal framework for gender statistics

The 2012 Statistics Regulation of the Maldives (SRM) provided a legal framework for the production of official statistics in the country, including for gender statistics. The Regulation stipulated that the MSS agencies shall "provide statistics on the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation of the country for policy making and monitoring the achievement of desired results" in accordance with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (Government of the Maldives, 2012^[32]). The SRM established the National Bureau of Statistics as the lead agency for official statistics in the Maldives. The SRM confirmed the role of the National Statistics Coordination Committee (NSCC), established in 2001, as the main mechanism for coordination of the MSS. The NSCC comprises all entities within the NSS and is established as a forum for oversight and coordination of statistics production.

The MSS is horizontally decentralized, with several Government agencies producing official statistics. This decentralized structure of the MSS emphasizes the importance of statistics coordination by the NBS.

A Statistics Bill was drafted in 2013 to strengthen the legal framework, but changes in government prevented its passing. A review of the MSS conducted in 2017 recommended that the draft be withdrawn and a new one be developed, presenting a clearer structure and addressing issues of professional independence and confidentiality (UN DESA; UN ESCAP, 2017^[33]). Particularly, the review found limitations in the NBS legal authority to efficiently coordinate the MSS.

3.2. Key producers of gender statistics in the MSS

3.2.1. National Bureau of Statistics

The NBS, defined by the SRM as the main data-producing agency of the MSS, leads the production of gender statistics in the country. The NBS is part of the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, the key government agency responsible for development planning. The NBS has Assistant Statistical Officers placed in four (previously five) of the twenty Atoll Council Offices, who report directly to the Statistics Coordination and Dissemination Division in the central office.

The SRM enlists the following responsibilities of the NBS related to gender statistics:

- Conducting Population and Housing Census;
- Maintaining information required for monitoring of poverty and vulnerability;
- Production of statistics required for monitoring the country's economic development;
- Development and implementation of statistical survey regulations, approval of statistical surveys conducted by government agencies and maintaining a register of such surveys at the national level.

At the level of MSS, the NBS coordinates collection and dissemination of gender statistics with the MGFSS and other data producing agencies. This coordination is, however, not fully institutionalized and relies on ad-hoc requests (see point 3.1).

There is no separate gender statistics entity in NBS. The Demography and Social Statistics Division overlooks the work on gender statistics, amongst its many other responsibilities. The Social Statistics Unit and the Deputy Statistician in charge lead the work. The Deputy Statistician is also part of the National Statistics Coordinating Committee.

The main data sources for generating gender statistics maintained by the NBS are:

- Population and Housing Census, organized every five years (last one in 2014);
- Demographic and Health Survey including a module on domestic violence, organized every five years (last one in 2016/17); and
- Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) including a labour force module with questions on time use, organized every five years (last one in 2016).

Based on the census and surveys carried out, the relevant sections of the NBS carry out the analysis from a gender perspective. Additionally, Demography and Social Statistics Division organizes trainings related to social statistics.

3.2.2. Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services (MGFSS)

Administrative data are an important source of gender statistics in the country. The MGFSS is the lead policymaking agency for gender equality in the Maldives.⁶ It compiles data from other agencies for international reporting (e.g. CEDAW), and produces their own statistics on gender issues such as gender-based violence.

⁶ The Organisational structure of the MGFSS can be found in Annex 1.

The Article 43 of the Gender Equality Act defines the following responsibilities of the Ministry, directly or indirectly referring to gender statistics:

- a) “Collecting and compiling gender segregated data that helps in understanding gender-based discrimination, with the objecting of preventing such discrimination.
- b) Collecting statistics and publishing relevant data that show the high prevalence of gender-based violence against women, the reasons behind such violence and the effects of such violence.
- c) Establishing a reporting mechanism to report those who act against the present Act.
- d) Formulating minimum standards for the complaints mechanisms established by employers under part (g) of Article 20 of the present Act.
- e) Providing guidance and information to legislators and policymakers” (Government of the Maldives, 2016^[34]).

The Gender Affairs Department of the MGFSS leads work to “promote women’s rights and improve the status and wellbeing of women in Maldives. The focus areas include women’s empowerment in social, economic and public life and protection from domestic violence” (Government of the Maldives, n.d.^[35]). MGFSS is also the secretariat for different councils, in particular:

- Disability Council, mandated to oversee and monitor the implementation of policies related to persons with disabilities.
- The Council for Economic Empowerment of Women (CEEW), established in 2014 with the objective of providing advice and research, and monitoring the implementation of government policies relating to economic empowerment of women (Government of the Maldives, n.d.^[35]).

As far as the government’s SAP is concerned, gender-related targets were integrated throughout the document within 28 action items across the sub-sectors. As of writing, work was underway to develop a costed action plan and identify the indicators needed for monitoring. The MGFSS reported that a lot of technical assistance would be required to support implementation of social sector activities, including the production and use of gender-sensitive statistics.

3.2.3. Other producers of gender statistics

The Family Protection Authority (FPA) is the government agency responsible for monitoring and implementation of the 2012 Domestic Violence Act. It receives data related to domestic violence against women and children and as such, maintains and coordinates a significant volume of administrative records. The following institutions report domestic violence cases to FPA: MGFSS, Maldives Police Service, Family Court and Magistrate Courts as well as Health Facilities (e.g. IGMH, Atoll and Island Hospitals and Health Centers). These institutions submit their data through an online form.

According to the assessment questionnaire, three full-time FPA staff deal with data collection. The FPA records are published as annual reports and quarterly data on their website (Government of the Maldives, n.d.^[36]). The FPA uses statistics produced by the NBS (e.g. surveys, monthly reports, desk reviews) available on the latter’s website. It also consults the NBS on definitions and methodologies for data collection and data analysis, as well as for research when developing programs, policy decisions, and advocacy.

The Department of Judicial Administration, functioning under the Supreme Court of the Maldives, is mandated to organize, implement and oversee all administrative matters of the Judiciary. The Department collects from the Superior and Magistrate courts monthly data on violence against women and child marriage. These data are disseminated in the Statistical Yearbook of the NBS. The Department also publishes statistics of marriages and divorces on their website, albeit with considerable time lag (Government of the Maldives, 2016^[37]). According to the questionnaire responses, one full-time staff member was dealing with gender data.

The Ministry of Health collaborates with the NBS on the collection of health-related gender data through the Demographic and Health Survey. The Ministry collects data on maternal health and maternal mortality. Sex-disaggregated statistics on morbidity and access to health services are also collected via the monthly Routine Health Information System (RHIS). According to the Ministry, 13 staff deal with the collection of gender data. The Ministry consults the NBS on data quality controls and data dissemination, in particular the annual population statistics to calculate indicators as well as annual life expectancy by sex for their publications. Since April 2020, the Ministry has been publishing daily sex-disaggregated statistics on COVID-19 cases on a dedicated online dashboard (Government of the Maldives, 2020^[38]).

The Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture maintains sex-disaggregated records on employment in agriculture as well as informal employment in their sector. With only two staff dealing with data collection, the Ministry regularly contacts the NBS to on data compilation, methodologies, quality controls and data analysis. When formulating projects and programs at island and regional level, the Ministry uses NBS Statistical Yearbook.

The Ministry of Education collects sex-disaggregated daily records related to education and labor force with help of 233 staff. While there is no specific collaboration with the NBS, the Ministry uses population data on school-age children published by NBS to calculate enrolment indicators.

The Ministry of Higher Education collects annual sex-disaggregated records to build higher-education statistics with help of one staff. They collaborate with the NBS on data compilation, quality control and analysis.

The Ministry of Economic Development collects sex-disaggregated data on business-ownership during business registration. It has a focal point for gender-related queries, but not specifically dealing with gender data collection. As a user, the Ministry demands gender statistics from the NBS for their long term planning at a 'granular' or disaggregated level, categorized by age group, socio-economic status and status in employment (including paid, unpaid and informal work).

Eight staff in the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Empowerment regularly collects data in counseling classes on sexual and reproductive health and violence against women and girls.

The Maldives Police with 397 staff keeps administrative records on crimes and investigations. The NBS is contacted when implementing projects to provide information on methodologies of surveys or censuses as well as specific data from other countries.

The National Social Protection Agency collects sex-disaggregated administrative records on disability based on applications received and submits them to the MGFSS.

The Maldives Pension Office collects gender-specific information from the Department of National Registration. The office provides gender statistics upon request by other public institutions.

Other institutions, apart from the MGFSS, that were pointed out by the NBS as producers of gender statistics include:

- Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
- Labour Relation Authority
- Health Protection Agency
- National Drug Agency

The Ministry of Tourism, while not yet producing gender-statistics plans to include sex-disaggregated data on employment in tourism industry.

3.3. Provisions for gender statistics in previous National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

The first National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) was prepared in 2010 with support from the ADB (Government of the Maldives, 2010^[39]). It covered a ten-year period (2010-2019) and was based on consultations and an assessment conducted in 2009. At that time, a major necessity of national statistical capacity was the need to improve MSS coordination as well as administrative data produced by line ministries.

The 2010 NSDS highlighted at that time that the leading agency for gender statistics was the Ministry of Health and Family. The NSDS document duly recognised that gender as a crosscutting issue and a necessity of “all stakeholders” to participate in development of gender-sensitive indicators. The document did not specify the role of other stakeholders beyond the Ministry of Health in this development. Stressing the importance of producing sex-disaggregated data was also missing, with only a single provision for the Ministry of Finance and Treasury to release “gender-disaggregated budget data” (Government of the Maldives, 2010^[39]).

4 Assessment of gender data gaps

4.1. Methodological approach

The PARIS21's ADAPT tool was used to document information from the MSS on production and availability of gender indicators. The United Nations Minimum Set of Gender Indicators (52 quantitative indicators and 17 qualitative indicators⁷), the 53 gender-related SDG indicators, and 9 national health indicators were used as the core set for assessing the availability of gender statistics in the Maldives. The reporting on the main policy document, the Strategic Action Plan, has not been assessed, mainly due to its lack of an adequate framework of indicators during the data gaps assessment.

There is overlap across these frameworks (e.g. 17 of the UN Minimum Set Indicators and 8 of the Health Master Plan indicators are also among 53 gender-specific SDG indicators) giving a total of 89 unique indicators that were assessed.

A consolidated summary of the indicators and their availability can be found in the Annex 2 with a summary of key findings below.

4.2. Priority frameworks of gender indicators

4.2.1. Health Master Plan

There are nine indicators in the Health Master Plan 2016-2025 important for gender statistics and analysis:

No.	Indicator	Correspondence to SDG indicator
1	Life expectancy at birth	-
2	Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status	SDG 8.8.1
3	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	SDG 5.2.1
4	Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	SDG 5.2.2
5	Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	SDG 5.3.2

⁷ UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators: <https://genderstats.un.org/files/Minimum%20Set%20indicators%20web.pdf>

6	Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months	SDG 11.7.2
7	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location	SDG 5.4.1
8	Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	SDG 16.9.1
9	Proportion of the population covered by social protection floors/systems by sex, and distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, new-borns, work injury victims, poor and vulnerable	SDG 1.3.1

Except for life expectancy at birth, these indicators correspond to SDG indicators. Reports from the NBS indicate they can all be produced at varying levels of disaggregation.

4.2.2. Gender-specific SDG indicators in the Maldives

SDG indicators are classified by tiers according to the following UN classification:

- Tier 1: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, and data are regularly produced by countries for at least 50 per cent of countries and of the population in every region where the indicator is relevant.
- Tier 2: Indicator is conceptually clear, has an internationally established methodology and standards are available, but data are not regularly produced by countries.
- Tier 3: No internationally established methodology or standards are yet available for the indicator, but methodology/standards are being (or will be) developed or tested. As of the 51st session of the UN Statistical Commission, the global indicator framework does not contain any Tier III indicators.⁸

As of April 2020, globally, 16 out of the 53 gender-specific SDG indicators are Tier I (30%), 34 are Tier II (64%), and 3 are under pending data availability review (6%) (Table1).⁹

⁸ IAEG-SDGs <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>

⁹ Adds up to more than 100% because some indicators are broken into two parts each with different tier classifications.

TABLE1. 53 GENDER-SPECIFIC SDG INDICATORS BY GOAL AND TIER CLASSIFICATION

IAG-SDG classification/SDG	SDG1	SDG2	SDG3	SDG4	SDG5	SDG8	SDG10	SDG11	SDG13	SDG16	SDG17
Tier I	1.1.1 1.2.1		3.1.1 3.1.2 3.3.1 3.7.1 3.7.2 3.8.1	4.1.1 4.2.2	5.3.1 5.3.2 5.5.1 5.5.2	8.5.2				16.1.1	
Tier II	1.2.2 1.3.1 1.4.2	2.3.2		4.2.1 4.3.1 4.5.1* 4.6.1 4.7.1 4.a.1	5.1.1 5.2.1 5.2.2 5.4.1 5.6.1 5.6.2 5.a.1 5.a.2 5.b.1 5.c.1	8.3.1 8.5.1 8.7.1 8.8.1 8.8.2	10.2.1	11.2.1 11.7.1 11.7.2		16.1.2 16.2.2 16.2.3 16.7.1 16.7.2	
Pending review	1.b.1								13.b.1		17.8.1

Note: * Indicator 4.5.1 is tier I/II depending on indice.

Source: Authors' representation of the 53 gender-specific SDG indicators, as of April 2020.

In the Maldives, the goals with the best coverage in terms of numbers of indicators that can be produced, are SDG 4 on education, SDG 5 on gender equality (also where the biggest gaps are), and SDG 3 on health (Table 2).

TABLE 2. AVAILABILITY OF INDICATORS OUT OF THE 53 GENDER-SPECIFIC SDG INDICATORS, MALDIVES 2020

IAG-SDG classification/SDG	SDG1	SDG2	SDG3	SDG4	SDG5	SDG8	SDG10	SDG11	SDG13	SDG16	SDG17
Tier I	1.1.1 1.2.1		3.1.1 3.1.2 3.3.1 3.7.1 3.7.2 3.8.1	4.1.1 4.2.2	5.3.1 5.3.2 5.5.1 5.5.2	8.5.2				16.1.1	
Tier II	1.2.2 1.3.1 1.4.2	2.3.2		4.2.1 4.3.1 4.5.1* 4.6.1 4.7.1 4.a.1	5.1.1 5.2.1 5.2.2 5.4.1 5.6.1 5.6.2 5.a.1 5.a.2 5.b.1 5.c.1	8.3.1 8.5.1 8.7.1 8.8.1 8.8.2	10.2.1	11.2.1 11.7.1 11.7.2		16.1.2 16.2.2 16.2.3 16.7.1 16.7.2	
Pending review	1.b.1								13.b.1		17.8.1

Note: Indicators highlighted in bold red are not produced. The tier classification in this table presents the global level and not the national availability of data and methodology.

Source: ADAPT, as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics in April 2020.

The Sustainable Development Goals with the biggest data gaps (i.e. largest share of missing indicators) for Maldives are:

- a) Goal 5 (Gender Equality) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex
 - 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence
 - 5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education
 - 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure
 - 5.a.2 Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control
 - 5.c.1 Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment
- b) Goal 16 (Peace Justice and Strong Institutions) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 16.1.2 Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause
 - 16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation
 - 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18
 - 16.7.1 Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions
 - 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group
- c) Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 11.2.1 Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
 - 11.7.1 Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities
 - 11.7.2 Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months
- d) Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age
 - 8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non- fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status
- e) Goal 1 (Ending poverty) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure

- 1.b.1 Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups
- f) Goal 2 (Zero hunger) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 2.3.2 Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
- g) Goal 10 (Reduced inequalities) with the following indicators currently not reported:
 - 10.2.1 Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities

Currently, 54% (26 out of 48) of gender-related Tier I and II SDG indicators can currently be produced from existing data sources (Table 3).¹⁰ The main data source for the gender-related SDG indicators are the Population Census and household surveys (18 indicators). Administrative sources, such as those maintained by the Ministry of Health and the Health Protection Agency, Ministry of Education, and the Police, are the source for the remaining eight indicators.

¹⁰ At the time of writing, the SDGs have not yet been domesticated to the Maldives context, which is necessary to ensure applicability of indicators to national context.

TABLE 3. DATA SOURCES FOR AVAILABLE AND MISSING SDG INDICATORS, MALDIVES 2020

Data Sources	Available indicators	Not available indicators
<i>Censuses and Sample Surveys</i>	<i>18 (in total)</i>	<i>6 (in total)</i>
2016/2017 Demographic and Health Survey	3.7.1, 3.7.2, 4.2.1, 5.2.1, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.6.1, 5.b.1	
2016 Household Income & Expenditure Survey	1.1.1, 1.2.1, 5.4.1, 5.5.2, 8.3.1, 8.5.1, 8.5.2	1.2.2, 5.a.1, 10.2.1
2014 Population and Housing Census	4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.6.1	
Agriculture survey or census		2.3.2
Violence against women survey		5.2.2
Labour Force Survey		8.7.1
<i>Administrative data</i>	<i>8 (in total)</i>	<i>12 (in total)</i>
Ministry of Education	4.1.1, 4.a.1	
Ministry of Health	3.1.1, 3.1.2	
Health Protection Agency	3.3.1	
National Social Protection Authority	1.3.1	
Maldives Police Service	16.1.1	
Maldives Parliament / Local Government Authority	5.5.1	
Administrative data source to be determined		1.b.1, 5.1.1, 5.6.2, 5.a.2, 5.c.1, 8.8.1, 8.8.2, 13.b.1, 16.1.2, 16.2.2, 16.7.1, 17.18.1
<i>Multiple sources / source to be determined</i>		<i>9 (in total)</i>
		1.4.2, 3.8.1, 4.5.1, 4.7.1, 11.2.1, 11.7.1, 11.7.2, 16.2.3, 16.7.2

Note: There could be multiple data sources for the indicators not currently available so the counts for the 'Not available indicators' column are not mutually exclusive.

Source: Authors' compilation from information reported by the NBS.

For the missing 28 indicators, administrative records are the intended data source for at least 12 (43%) of them. Household surveys, such as the DHS or the Population Census, would be the source for around six missing indicators. The following surveys or dedicated modules in existing data collections could address some of these gaps:

- An agricultural survey or census for indicator 2.3.2 on the income levels of small-scale food producers;
- A survey on the prevalence of violence against women for indicator 5.2.2 on sexual violence by non-partners; and

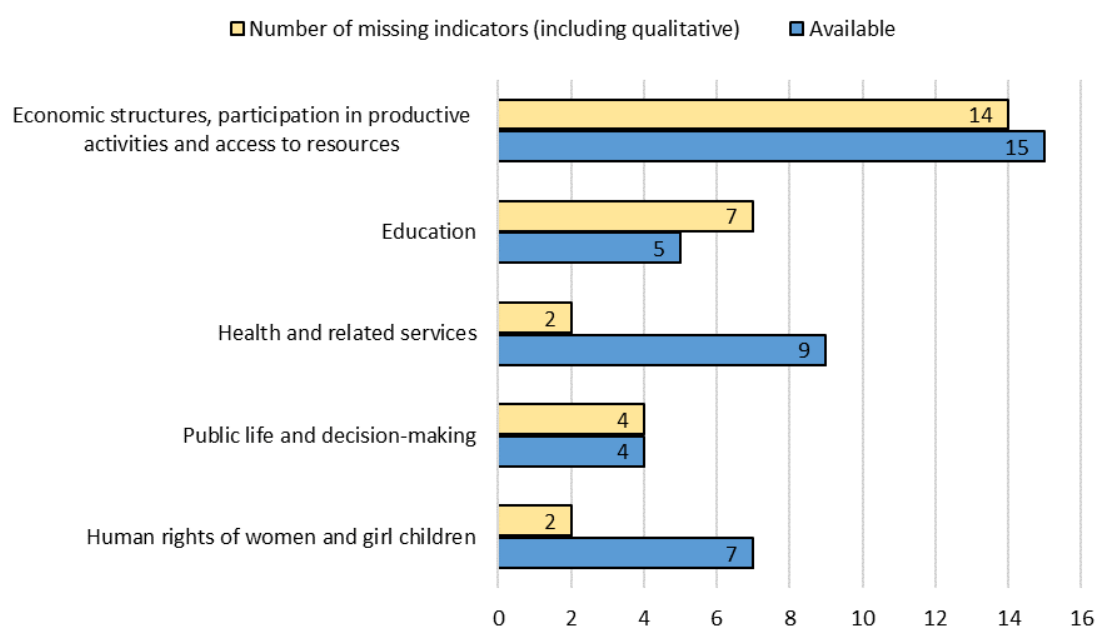
- A Labour Force Survey for indicators 8.7.1 on child labour (as well as being a potentially better source for a number of other indicators currently produced from the HIES or DHS).¹¹

4.2.3. UN Minimum Set of Gender Indicators

Of the 52 quantitative indicators in the UN Minimum Set¹², Maldives can produce 37 of them (71%). There are 17 qualitative indicators (e.g. length of maternity leave) and currently 5 can be produced (29%). Overall, 61% of the 69 UN indicators can currently be produced for the Maldives.

All five domains covered in the UN Minimum Set are subject to data gaps in the Maldives; health and related services are the most complete (9/11 indicators available) (Figure 2). Most indicators related to economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources are available (19 of the 29 indicators or 66%). Indicators related to education are the most lacking, with only 5 out of 12 available. These missing indicators mainly relate to tertiary education, but also to different measures of enrolment in primary and secondary education (e.g. adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education, primary education completion rate).

FIGURE 2. SUMMARY OF AVAILABILITY OF THE 69 INDICATORS IN THE UNITED NATIONS MINIMUM SET



Source: ADAPT, availability as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics, April 2020

¹¹ The advantage of a dedicated Labour Force Survey is that it could provide include more detailed questions relating to paid and unpaid work, allowing the issues to be explored without compromising data quality by overburdening respondents (such as may be the case when adding questions to the HIES). Such a survey would enable production of detailed, disaggregated statistics on the tourism sector and the prevalence and characteristics of child labour.

¹² United Nations Statistics Division. 2017. The United Nations Minimum Set of Gender Indicators: a product of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics.

The main data sources for producing these indicators are the DHS and HIES (32% of the 69 indicators in the set) (Table 4). Two are available from the population census, but the primary data source for 23% of the available indicators is administrative records (e.g. women in parliament, number of police officers and judges, etc.). For the missing indicators, most will come from administrative sources or existing surveys.

TABLE 4. DATA SOURCES FOR AVAILABLE AND MISSING UN MINIMUM SET INDICATORS, MALDIVES 2020

Data Sources	Available indicators	Not available indicators
<i>Censuses and Sample Surveys</i>	<i>26 (total)</i>	<i>1 (total)</i>
2016/2017 Demographic and Health Survey	11, 17, 18, 19, 32, 37, 38, 39, 48, 50, 51, 52	
2016 Household Income & Expenditure Survey	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 45	
2014 Population and Housing Census	20, 31, 41	
Agriculture survey or census		
Violence against Women survey		49
Labour Force Survey		
<i>Administrative data</i>	<i>15 (total)</i>	<i>27 (total)</i>
Ministry of Health	33, 34, 35, 36, 42	29, 40
Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	16, Q1, Q9	
Ministry of Education	22, 24, 30	21, 27, 28, 29
Judicial Service Commission	47	
Maldives Police Service	46	
Family Court	Q11	
Maldives Parliament / Local Government Authority	44	43
Administrative data source to be determined		23, 25, 26, Q1a, Q1b, Q2, Q2a, Q2b, Q2c, Q2d, Q3, Q4, Q5, Q6, Q8, Q10
<i>Multiple sources / source to be determined</i>		<i>4 (total)</i>
		7, 12, 14, 15

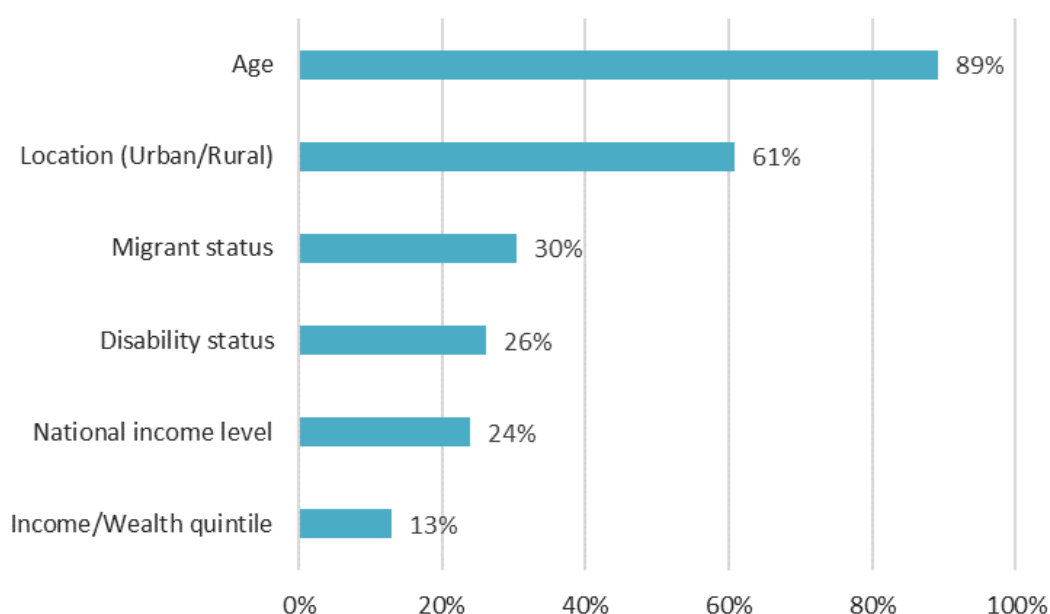
Note: there could be multiple data sources for the indicators not currently available so the counts for the 'Not available indicators' column are not mutually exclusive.

Source: Authors' compilation from information reported by the National Bureau of Statistics.

4.3. Key findings on data gaps

1. A well-defined priority framework of gender-relevant indicators from the Government is missing.
2. 51 out of 89 unique (57%) gender-specific indicators are currently being produced from existing data sources. This includes all nine gender-related indicators of the Health Master Plan.
3. The main gaps are in SDG data on ownership and control of land, sexual violence, child labour, occupational injuries and fatalities, public transport, human trafficking, and a range of qualitative indicators on gender integration in legal frameworks, among other things.
4. For the UN Minimum Set, the gaps are mainly related to education, economic structures, and qualitative indicators around public life and decision-making and human rights.
5. Gender statistics are not timely and are not frequently collected. While 60% of available indicators is supposed to be collected on an annual basis, half of these indicators has not been updated. The vast majority of available indicators (82%) refer to year 2017 or earlier;
6. From 46 available indicators including sex-disaggregation, additional disaggregation by age and location is available for more than half of indicators (Figure 3).

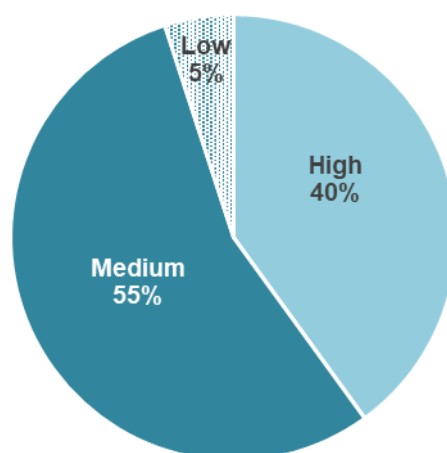
FIGURE 3. ADDITIONAL DISAGGREGATION OF SEX-DISAGGREGATED INDICATORS AVAILABLE



Source: ADAPT, as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics in April 2020.

7. The vast majority of indicators produced by the NBS and line ministries requires either high or medium external technical and financial assistance (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. EXTERNAL TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PRODUCTION OF AVAILABLE GENDER-SPECIFIC INDICATORS



Source: ADAPT, as reported by the National Bureau of Statistics in April 2020.

5 Assessment of MSS capacity to produce gender statistics

5.1. Systemic level

5.1.1. Legal framework

The Statistical Regulation of Maldives (SRM) establishes the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as the lead agency for official statistics in the Maldives. There is, however, some ambiguity in how the SRM defines the role and the authority of the lead agency (UN DESA; UN ESCAP, 2017^[33]). The SRM specifies the role of the NBS relating to statistics production, and there is no regulation establishing a gender statistics entity in the Maldives. According to the regulation, each government agency is expected to have a statistical unit, but this has only been partly implemented.¹³

As of writing, a new statistical law has been drafted and is anticipated for adoption in 2020. This is expected to clarify and strengthen the mandate and powers of the NBS, increasing its independence (in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) and facilitating production of data from administrative records and other sources.

5.1.2. Coordination mechanisms

The SRM established the NSCC as the main coordination body for official statistics in the MSS. It comprises members from all data producing agencies and is chaired by the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, represented by the Chief Statistician of the

¹³ Response provided by NBS to Questionnaire A.

NBS. The NBS provides secretariat support to the NSCC in terms of calling for meetings, setting the agenda and preparing minutes of meetings.

The NSCC meets at least annually and is meant to be a mechanism for discussing and agreeing on strategic issues such as technical standards, data quality assurance, and dissemination. In practice, NSCC has become an information-sharing network and tends to convene to discuss major upcoming collections such as household surveys (UN DESA; UN ESCAP, 2017^[33]). There was no specific discussions on MSS-wide gender statistics on the NSCC agenda so far. A Statistical Council for coordinating user-producer dialogue also exists and is discussed in section 6 below.

In April 2019, the NBS and MGFSS agreed to create and co-chair a specialized inter-agency working group on gender statistics to coordinate its production and promotion at the national level. Terms of reference have been developed with support from PARIS21 including the following general tasks:

- Setting-up a sustainable coordination mechanism for production of gender statistics in the MSS;
- Promoting gender statistics use in the country by policymakers, media and other users;
- Producing a written annual report on the activities undertaken and issues addressed with recommendations from the working group, for the submission to the NSCC.

As of writing, the group has not convened a meeting yet.

5.1.3. Statistical plans

The NBS envisages for the new NSDS to set out a plan with the following key milestones affecting gender statistics:

- passing a Statistics Act;
- increasing the staff of the NSO and introducing incentives to retain senior staff;
- shifting from a Population and Housing Census every five years to every ten years;
- strengthening statistical units in line ministries; and
- promoting the use of administrative data.

In the framework of the NSDS-development, the NBS aims to promote gender statistics across all sectors, starting with setting priority areas. The plan is for stakeholder agencies to develop gender-sensitive indicators to provide appropriate data for monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of policies implemented for the development of the country (Government of the Maldives, n.d.^[40]).

5.1.4. Advocacy

Development partners and civil society are the key advocates of gender issues in the country.

Since 2011, UN Women has supported the implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework Action Plan 2011-2015 with regard to gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women and other UN agencies assist the implementation of CEDAW recommendations and concluding remarks. A working group dealing with gender advocacy

was established in 2010 to promote awareness regarding gender-based violence through its Thinakun Ekeh Campaign, as well by organizing VAW-dedicated events.

Development partners like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, FAO and UNDP prepared dedicated reports on gender issues in the country featuring gender statistics produced by the NBS. However, the lack of a national gender action plan at the level of the government has hampered the efforts of promoting gender equality through data and evidence in the past.

According to the UNDP, only 6% of civil society organizations were active in the field of “gender equity, social justice and inclusion” a decade ago (UNDP Maldives, 2011^[41]). While this low score was justified by women’s low representation as leaders of such organizations, data shows that “evidence-based information provision” was the second most frequent strategy selected for conflict management of CSOs.

The consultations in 2019 revealed that a dialogue with civil society has been taking place in the NBS and in the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. There was a serious recognition of the CSOs role in development planning and implementation. During consultations, there was notable activity of CSOs advocating a wider use of evidence to measure the progress towards gender equality and greater economic empowerment of women. Some CSOs active in the field of gender-issues highlighted a need for NBS guidance in data collection and gender-data analysis.

5.1.5. Political support and culture of evidence

The assessment survey and consultations revealed that political support for gender statistics in line ministries was limited. The Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure expressed interest in having a more gender-oriented perspective of women’s contribution to the economy (especially tourism and fisheries) as well as data gaps in measuring female entrepreneurship. However, agencies expected to collect such data highlighted the lack of sex-disaggregated statistics on these topics. While there is a nascent culture of evidence-based policymaking in the Government, it does not yet translate into increased use of statistical data for designing programs. For example, during the consultations, the MGFSS divisions flagged that policy programming often fails to rely on evidence and interventions are not based on prevalent information. The crosscutting nature of gender statistics was not yet fully understood by senior officials across the President’s Office. Instead, it was perceived as a stand-alone activity under the sole responsibility of the NBS and the MGFSS. This has limited the NBS’s capacity to make progress in gender statistics, as doing so relies on the active contribution of all domains of statistics – economic, social, demographic and environmental, to name a few.

5.2. Organisation’s level

5.2.1. Budget, human and IT resources and training

There is no specific section or line item for gender statistics in the MSS nor a dedicated budget in the NBS. Rather, funds were available on an ad-hoc basis or projectised, with significant share coming from international development partners. For example, UNFPA provided

support for the 'Women in Maldives' publication based on 2014 Population and Housing Census. This dependence on external funding and technical expertise (consultants) is not confined to gender statistics, as several other surveys conducted by NBS are depending on full or partial funding coming from international organizations (ADB, 2011^[42]).

In the NBS, computer hardware and data processing software are lacking. Activities related to desktop publishing and data visualisation are often outsourced. Government agencies are using a combination of manual and electronic data collection methods and few have established databases. For example, many of the administrative records in the MGFSS are stored in Excel sheets. Lack of digitalized records has prevented the NBS from obtaining data for the international reporting from line ministries in the past. Internet connectivity in atolls is not reliable and affects timely submissions. Eventually, a comprehensive digital system of gender-related statistics and information should help streamline international reporting, including CEDAW.

According to the 2010 NSDS, high staff turnover across government has limited the development of official statistics; consultations found this is still the case today (Government of the Maldives, 2010^[39]). Ten years later, human resources management is still a challenge, with the NBS having no concrete incentives to retain staff and reduce turnover of employees. Moreover, NBS and line ministries found it difficult to recruit adequately skilled people to fill positions and knowledge gaps at the senior level. High staff turnover found in other government agencies as well calls for a regular and structured approach towards skills that are necessary for production, analysis and communication of gender statistics.

In the past, UNICEF undertook an assessment of training needs on the social sector. The MGFSS is preparing a report on this with an aim to add gender training needs module. The NBS also expressed plans to undertake an assessment of statistical training needs across the Government to identify the capacity needs and help prioritise technical assistance activities. The NBS expects this exercise to clarify capacity standards for different roles in the MSS and provide a basis for terms of reference, recruitment and performance management policies.

Training on gender statistics is not included as part of basic statistics training for government officials. The NBS highlighted plans for inclusion of gender statistics module in national training curriculum. Currently such training takes place on an ad-hoc basis. In April 2018, selected line ministries have participated in a training on gender statistics funded by OIC with an expert from Indonesia, who worked with NBS to develop the training content. In October 2019, UN Women conducted a national training workshop on gender statistics for users and producers.

5.2.2. Data-sharing and production of gender statistics

There is strong commitment to strengthening gender statistics among the top management of the NBS. In the past six years, the NBS has made efforts to integrate a gender perspective to the existing data collections and to improve the dissemination of gender statistics. Achievements included:

- Integration of a gender lens in the last Population and Housing Census of 2014 with support from the UNFPA and in cooperation with Nepal. The assistance consisted of reviewing the census questionnaire and training enumerators to capture accurate information on women's work and avoid gender bias;

- 2016 pilot of the UN Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE) Project on administering a gender module to the sample of households receiving the HIES Survey (UN, n.d.^[43]); and
- Launch of an annual flagship leaflet on gender statistics in 2016 on the International Women's Day, which provided key information on women in the Maldives.

Moreover, a module on domestic violence in the 2016/17 DHS and some questions on time use in the 2016 HIES have provided statistics on violence against women and unpaid domestic and care work that were previously unavailable.

Gender experts from line ministries, CSOs, international organizations, universities and research centers are involved in the production of gender statistics on an ad-hoc basis. International standards relevant to gender statistics that have been used by the NBS for their statistical activities include ICATUS 2016 and the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses. The NBS has not applied the UNSD Gender Statistics manual nor Guidelines on VAW Surveys in the development of data collections described above.

As far as administrative data is concerned, during consultations, the MGFSS highlighted the following issues affecting gender statistics:

- Collected gender-specific data were not analysed for the purpose of policymaking and/or program monitoring and evaluation;
- Poor coordination of data exchange between agencies – there was no proper inter-agency mechanism to address issues related to gender data;
- Lack of understanding of how data collected translates to measuring progress towards gender equality. Monitoring and evaluation of programs are lacking.
- Limited cooperation with the NBS statisticians on data collections;
- Senior management in line ministries understands the need to integrate a gender perspective in sectors. However, many agencies do not have statistical staff responsible for administrative data production, analysis and dissemination. Production of sex-disaggregated data and analysis are not a priority activity in many agencies and constitute only a small part of the regular tasks in the agency.
- Administrative data collected by line ministries are not quality-controlled and are not analysed from a gender perspective.

According to questionnaire responses, collaboration between most data producing agencies and the NBS was very limited. The Ministry of Economic Development recognized a very clear demand for sex-disaggregated data, specifically for the implementation of Government's mandate on social outcomes. However, the Ministry mentioned the lack of a Statistics Act as holding back the collection and dissemination of gender statistics.

The Labour Relations Authority did not perceive gender statistics as relevant to their mandate and did not cooperate with the NBS on its data collection, justifying it with confidentiality issues. The NBS has been receiving some information from crime statistics database maintained by the Maldives Police using special templates. However, a more comprehensive data sharing was not possible, with the Maldives Police also citing confidentiality as the main barrier.

The limited sharing of microdata and missing harmonization of classifications result from the lack of legal basis to frame such activities. Some agencies are sharing microdata for statistical purposes based on a memorandum of understanding. However, in many cases, the NBS is not able to obtain access to administrative data at a sufficient level of disaggregation. It neither can make use of these for statistical purposes nor assure the quality of the resulting statistics (UN DESA; UN ESCAP, 2017^[33]). The NBS shares the microdata from recent population census and HIES upon request. The current regulations for statistics are to be strengthened so that administrative sources can be exploited more for producing statistics, including gender indicators.

Inputs for CEDAW reporting has been the only request from international agencies for gender data received by the NBS before 2020. In April 2020, UN Women Asia Pacific Regional Office in collaboration with the NBS rolled out a phone-based survey on “Gender-Differentiated Consequences of COVID-19 on women’s and men’s economic empowerment in the Maldives”. As face-to-face data collection were impossible due to lockdown measures associated with COVID-19, UN Women APRO partnered with the private sector for the collection of evidence to inform policy responses to the pandemic (UN Women, 2020^[44]).

5.2.3. Communication of gender statistics

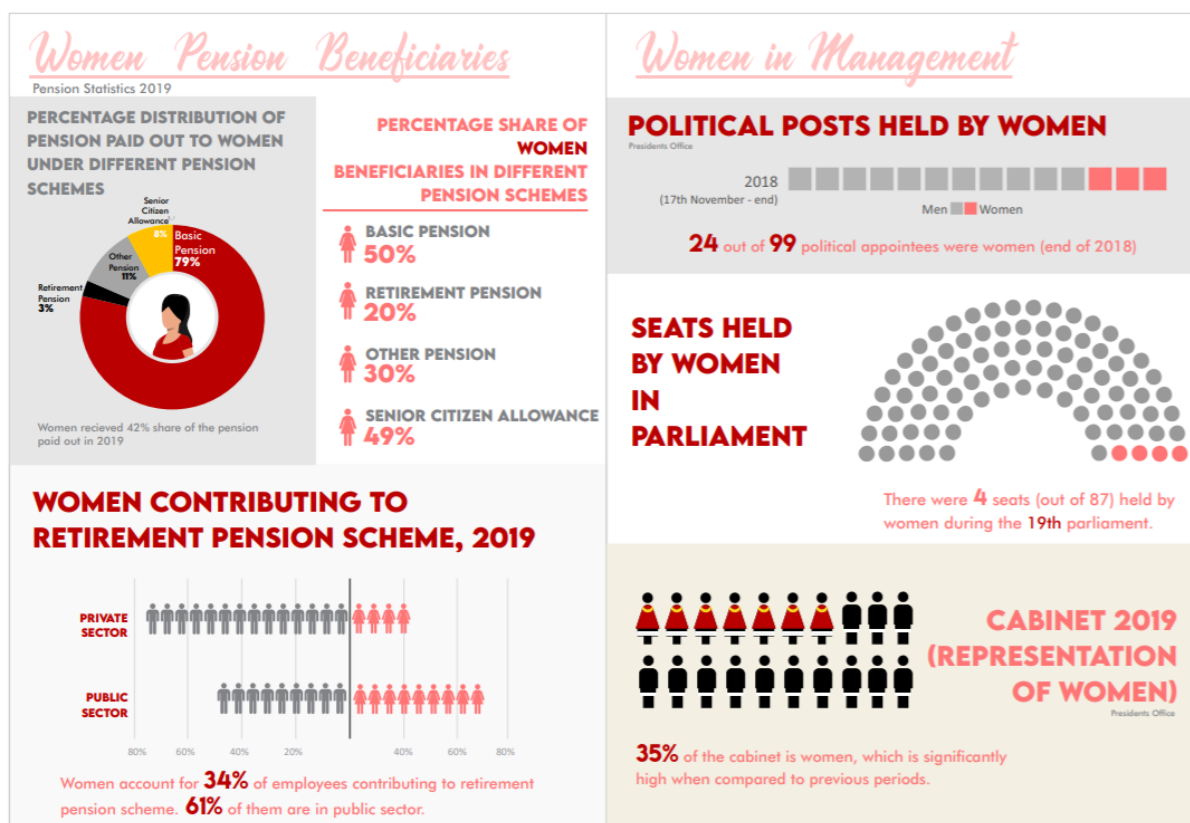
The main users of gender statistics identified by the NBS are:

- government ministries,
- international organizations,
- academia, and
- civil society organisations (CSOs).

Some members of the parliament, the People’s Majlis, who completed an assessment survey distributed to data users in 2019, highlighted limited or no use of gender statistics for their interventions.

While all gender-specific indicators marked as available in ADAPT are published on websites of different MSS institutions, they are most often published as part of the results from the main data collections such as the Population Census and DHS. There is no specific area on the NBS website for gender statistics. The only dedicated publication for gender statistics is the annual brochure on “Women in Maldives”, released on the International Women’s day. The release of March 2020 comprised eight pages of infographics summarising latest data from the population census and administrative sources, including education and health records, as well as data from the Civil Service Commission and the Maldives Police (Figure 5). NBS uses social media channels to share this brochure and findings with users.

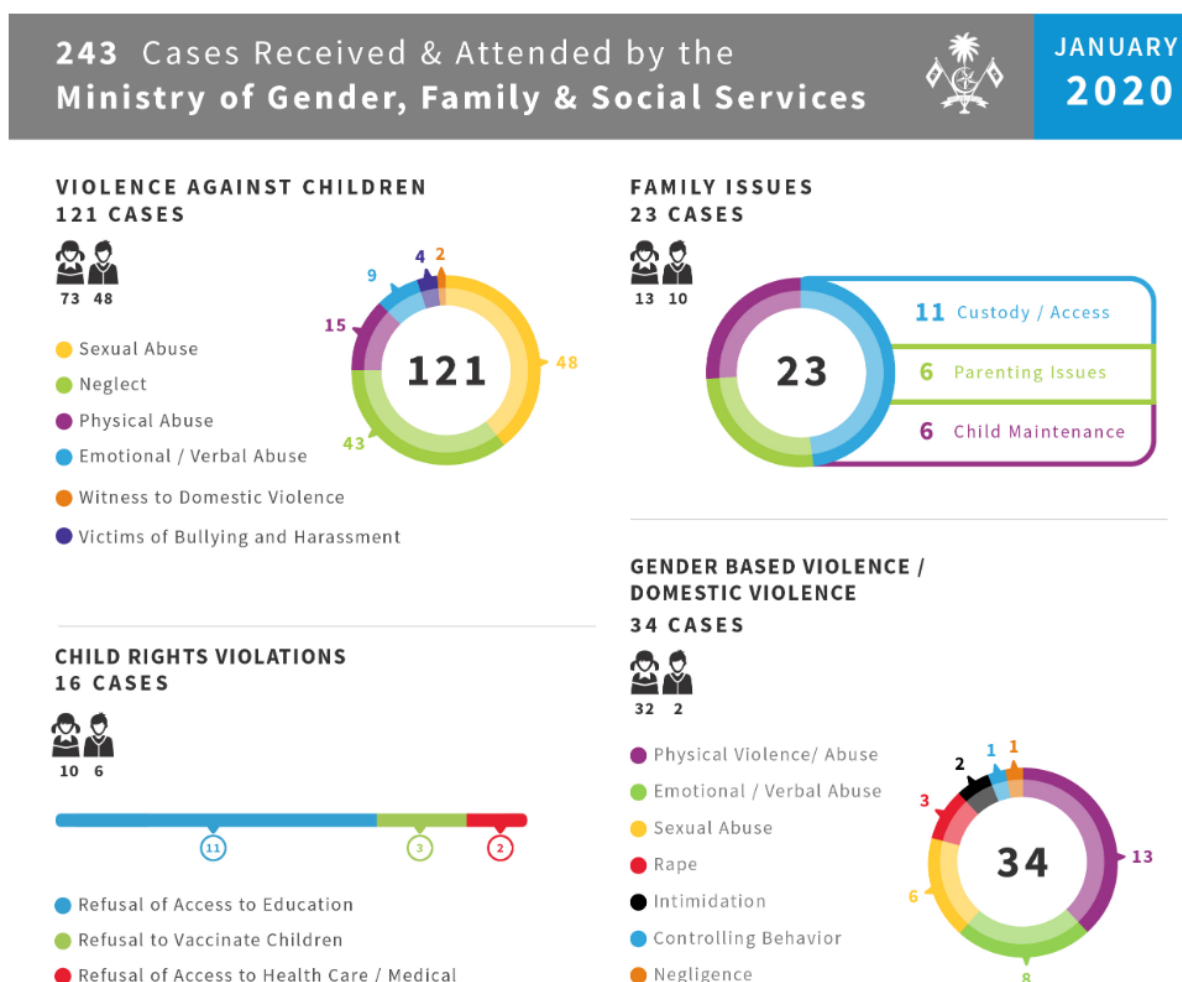
FIGURE 5 EXCERPT FROM THE ‘WOMEN IN MALDIVES’ BROCHURE, MARCH 2020



Source: National Bureau of Statistics. 2020 Women in Maldives. <http://statisticsmaldives.gov.mv/nbs/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Womens-Day-2020.pdf>

The MGFSS publishes a monthly statistical bulletin on the numbers of cases it processes relating to families, children, women, people with special needs and human rights (Figure 6). Data are presented as infographics on the website of the ministry as well as on the social media profile.

FIGURE 6 EXCERPT FROM THE MONTHLY STATISTICAL BULLETIN BY MGFSS, JANUARY 2020



Source: Cases reported to and attended by the Ministry in January 2020: <http://gender.gov.mv/en/?p=3911>

Selected ministries use the NBS gender statistics for the compilation of their publications (e.g. the Ministry of Tourism when compiling reports on tourism industry). Bilateral consultations with relevant ministries take place before censuses and surveys. Relevant ministries are also invited to participate in the launch and finalization of national reports and assessments.

The NBS is also actively engaging with users outside the MSS. The dialogue takes form of data user workshops conducted before each census and survey launch. There are also workshops accompanying validation and dissemination of results from national reports and assessments. The NBS highlighted plans to involve the private sector and researchers to a larger extent in the future.

Over the past three years, there was no request from non-governmental users of gender statistics (e.g. NGOs, media) addressed at the NBS, regarding an intervention relating to gender statistics. There are currently no awareness-raising campaigns based on findings from gender statistics. NBS noted that awareness raising and more dialogue between the agencies is needed for them to understand the basics of data collection and analysis with a gender lens.

Civil society organizations are a strategic partner for gender statistics in the country. Consultations with CSOs have highlighted the need for more support from NBS on gender data analysis and communication. The CSOs in the Maldives are actively advocating the use of gender statistics to inform policymaking. The consultations with CSOs before the preparation of this document revealed their strong emphasis on evidence-based policymaking, which is missing in the country, as well as the discontinuity of the MGFSS actions.

During consultations, CSO participants highlighted the possibility of complementing administrative gender data with CSO data, since CSOs are well represented in atolls. There was a request to the NBS from CSOs for guidance on ethical standards of data collection, as well as on how to collect data that would be fit for policy implementation. Many CSOs were interested to support the NBS in future data collections, for example, by providing enumerators and support in designing questionnaires. There are opportunities to facilitate better engagement between CSOs, the NBS and the MGFSS to improve gender statistics. Some examples could be the inter-agency (the NBS and the MGFSS) working group on gender statistics that could include consultations with the CSOs, or collection and exchange of citizen-generated gender data that could complement the official reporting on gender issues.

The MSS dialogue with users could be expanded to include more feedback from the latter. There has been no user satisfaction survey conducted looking specifically at gender statistics.

Government agencies involved in gender statistics were asked about their perception of data quality produced by the NBS (relevance, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility and coherence) (Table 5). Different ratings were used for each quality dimension with green indicating the highest rating was given, light blue for the middle rating and dark blue for the lowest (poorest) rating. Grey indicates a response of 'I don't know' and white (blank) reflects where no answer was given.

TABLE 5. ASSESSMENT OF NBS DATA QUALITY BY MSS AGENCIES

	Relevance	Accuracy	Timeliness	Accessibility	Coherence
Civil Service Commission		Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	I do not know	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	I do not know
Family Protection Authority	Gender statistics partially meet our needs	Gender statistics do not correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory		Data are coherent within datasets, across datasets, and over time
Maldives Police	I do not know	I do not know	I do not know	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	I do not know
Ministry of Education	Gender statistics partially meet our needs	Gender statistics do not correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics could be improved	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	Data are not always coherent within datasets, across datasets, and over time
Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture	Gender statistics partially meet our needs	Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	I do not know
Ministry of Health	Gender statistics fully meets our needs	Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	Data are coherent within datasets, across datasets, and over time
Ministry of Higher Education	Gender statistics fully meets our needs	Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	Data are coherent within datasets, across datasets, and over time
Ministry of Tourism	Gender statistics fully meets our needs	Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	I do not know
Ministry of Youth	Gender statistics fully meets our needs		The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on	

				the NBS website	
National Drug Agency	Gender statistics partially meet our needs	Gender statistics correctly estimate or describe the characteristics they are designed to measure	The timeliness of gender statistics is satisfactory	Gender statistics are easily accessible on the NBS website	Data are coherent within datasets, across datasets, and over time

The results suggest that overall ministries have a reasonably good perception of gender statistics produced by the NBS. The Ministry of Education and the Family Protection Authority are less satisfied with the quality of NBS gender data. The Ministry of Education identified some concerns over the coherence and frequency of NBS population figures used by the Ministry to calculate enrolment ratios. It highlighted that annual population estimates should be replaced by actual data. The Family Protection Authority perceived that the NBS does not have sufficient information about gender-based violence, adding that current information could be “improved with more specific indicators and gender variables to present in-depth gender and sex-disaggregated data”. They suggested accessibility could also be improved if the NBS provided microdata for further analysis and exploration.

5.3. Individual level

Consultations with the key MSS staff producing gender statistics revealed that some of them are trained to apply a gender lens to data collection and analysis. This training is however not part of regular training curriculum for national statisticians and is based on development partners’ activity.

Focal points (mainly women) perform their work related to gender statistics on top of other duties and their learning about gender-related subjects is often guided by their own motivation and personal interest. Working with gender statistics gives them an opportunity of external exposure and visibility, as they are oftentimes asked to participate in international expert meetings where they can exchange with peers from other countries and display their work-related challenges and successes. While dealing with statistics specific to gender increases their work satisfaction, it does not seem to have a direct impact on their salaries.

5.4. Key findings on gender statistics capacity

1. There is strong commitment to gender statistics in the NBS and several milestone achievements, but the capacity in terms of financial and human resources to embrace all standard data collections for gender statistics is not sufficient.
2. There is insufficient capacity and political will to support the production of gender statistics across the rest of the MSS and the domain is lacking as a result.
3. Gender statistics capacity and quality in the MSS is affected by understaffing and knowledge gaps due a high staff turnover, including senior staff. Government officers involved in producing and using statistics lack the needed skills and knowledge. A capacity model and training needs assessment would provide a baseline and priorities to focus development of skills.

4. IT resources are lacking. Most agencies do not have databases or statistical software for better data management. Problems in internet connectivity between islands/atolls affect the quality, particularly timeliness of data submissions.
5. Budget allocated to agencies is insufficient to improve data processes to increase data production frequency and assure quality. The key sources of gender statistics like surveys and censuses are dependent on external support.
6. There are limited surveys and censuses available for producing gender statistics and these and administrative data sources should be used more for producing statistics. There is a need to strengthen sex-disaggregated administrative data collection but also administrative data affecting women's empowerment, specifically related to land and house ownership as well as registered businesses.
7. While some ministries regularly use gender statistics (either their own or those collected by NBS) to design their policies and programs, there is a high number of government agencies that fails to recognize the importance of these data for their programming.
8. Perceptions of the quality of data NBS produce is relatively high but other findings suggest that many quality dimensions need improving (relevance, understandability, access).
9. Exchange of micro-data between NBS and line ministries is limited and many government agencies point to the lack of legislation and confidentiality issues as the major obstacles.
10. Available gender statistics products suggest that infographics are a valued presentation method and capacity exists in the Maldives to produce them. However, the number of current publications and products featuring gender statistics is limited.
11. Several ministries suggested a centralized gender statistics database is needed to improve data production and dissemination.
12. Civil Society Organizations represent a strong community of gender statistics producers and users in the Maldives. Nevertheless, they lack expertise on their own data collection and data analysis. Their potential as data producers has not been explored enough.
13. A new statistical law is being drafted and anticipated for adoption in 2020. This is expected to clarify and strengthen the mandate and powers of the NBS, increasing its independence (in line with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) and facilitating production of data from administrative records and other sources.
14. A clear mandate and support for gender statistics is needed to make progress. A national gender statistics strategy under the NSDS should illustrate links to the existing legal and policy framework for gender statistics, the priority indicators for gender statistics and the mechanisms to coordinate production, collaboration, analysis and dissemination. The inter-agency working group on gender statistics, that was set up in 2019 is the major step towards improved coordination towards production of gender statistics that answer users' demand.
15. National strategies include gender and statistics, but clear strategic direction is needed to integrate gender in the next NSDS and create a distinct and costed strategy and action plan for improving gender statistics.

6 Conclusions

Integrating a gender perspective in the MSS requires political will at all levels, not only in the NBS and the MGFSS but also in the statistical services of other Government agencies and in all institutions that provide administrative data. Current laws and policies in the Maldives set a loose framework for the production and use of gender statistics. The adoption of a statistics law will be a key milestone that will facilitate these actions.

The assessment of global frameworks of gender-indicators adopted by the Maldives pointed out that only half of requested indicators are currently produced. The main gaps are in ownership and control of land, sexual violence, child labour, occupational injuries and fatalities, environment, public transport, human trafficking, and a range of qualitative indicators on gender integration in legal frameworks. Those gender statistics produced currently fail to provide timely and frequent-enough picture on issues affecting women and girls in the country. A more profound analysis of produced statistics is currently not feasible, because additional disaggregation (e.g. by age and location) is missing for more than 40% of sex-disaggregated indicators.

There is great potential for improving gender statistics in the Maldives but the need to produce more and better gender statistics need to come from the Government. A well-defined framework of indicators for the SAP and monitoring of its implementation should constitute a major step in increasing the accountability of the government. A willingness to adopt a gender-lens in data collection and analysis is reflected in the practices of NBS. However, an efficient evaluation and monitoring system of how policies specific to gender statistics are implemented would enable them to measure the progress more effectively.

The new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics is an ideal entry point for emphasising the central and crosscutting nature of sex-disaggregated and gender-related information. Some good data sources already exist, and with another round of household surveys and investment in improving administrative data, there will be a rich evidence base for gender analysis.

There are many challenges to be overcome to achieve improvements in gender statistics. The issues raised through consultations are not uncommon, and the UN Women “Women Count” flagship programme as well as PARIS21 support are designed to address such challenges. Following the same approach and focusing efforts on the interrelated components of enabling environment, data production and data accessibility is a holistic approach that will allow actions to build on each other.

This year, 2020, is the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and an important review point for the SDG indicator framework. It is an opportune time for the Government of Maldives to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable development by investing in crosscutting areas of gender and evidence-based policymaking. The COVID-19 pandemic is also likely to emphasise the need for the production of timely sex-disaggregated and granular data so that government’s intervention can reach the most vulnerable parts of population.

Improving gender statistics in the country will require a number of actions, like integrating gender into the NSDS, developing an accompanying strategy and action plan for gender statistics, mobilizing resources at NBS to do the work and developing partnerships with stakeholders and users to increase the relevance, accessibility and usability of gender statistics products.

6.1. Recommendations for enabling environment at systemic level

1. Integrate gender into the next NSDS in a crosscutting manner and develop an accompanying strategy together with a costed action plan for gender statistics. A first step would be SDG domestication exercise and a closer collaboration with the President's Office in mapping existing SDG framework with the priority indicators of the SAP once the latter are ready.
2. Build a strong network and institutionalized system of collaboration for gender statistics. Build on recent work to establish coordination mechanisms for gender statistics led by the NBS and the MGFSS and involving other data producing ministries and agencies, as well as civil society organizations, where possible.
3. Strengthen the NBS to ensure gender is mainstreamed in data collection and production across the MSS for policy decision-making as well as for CSO policy advocacy. The NSO should be in charge of the co-ordination between statistical producers and of ensuring the system-wide coherence and compliance with the statistics law, and notably with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.
4. Build a culture of evidence-based policy and decision-making. Raise the awareness of senior management across government of the value of gender statistics. Show that improving gender statistics can contribute towards a high-quality national statistics system and to evidence-based policymaking for gender-related goals.
5. Strengthen accountability mechanisms through enforced monitoring, reporting and evaluation processes.
6. Develop Statistics Law to govern the national statistical system and regulate it by adherence to professional standards and Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. National law should authorise national statistical offices to make data collection compulsory for certain purposes, to protect confidential information, and to release data or statistics in a form that preserves the privacy of individuals. This could also resolve some of the "grey areas" in the data collection of various government departments.

6.2. Recommendations for data production at the level of MSS

7. Data production can be improved in future by agreeing on the priority national gender indicators and linking them with government's priorities. Encouraging all data producers to collect and disseminate their data in a sex-disaggregated format is the first step. The inter-agency working group on gender statistics should be an active body coordinating the production of gender statistics and raising awareness of policymakers.
8. Train statisticians and data producers across the national statistical system on how to integrate gender in their work and use the technical standards and guidelines associated with gender statistics. Building the capacity within NBS should be a priority so they are positioned to provide training to other line ministries.
9. Ensure future data collection through household surveys and censuses are maximised by producing sex-disaggregated and gender-related indicators and analysis for dissemination.

10. Administrative data sources provide tremendous opportunities for producing statistics but investment, agreed standards and resources are needed to improve their quality. A rapid assessment of administrative sources will highlight data quality gaps and opportunities. Support is needed for the NBS to identify a best practice approach and conduct the assessment.
11. Data collection, management, and sharing standards and tools are needed to support line ministries in their role as producers of gender statistics. Stronger user-producer consultations between the NBS and line ministries should be put in place to raise the awareness of line ministries staff about data collection of the NBS and applying gender lens.
12. Encourage researchers and development partners to access and use microdata from surveys and censuses that are available for reprocessing to produce gender indicators and further analysis.
13. Build capacity in data analysis so there is a cadre of people who are skilled to work with microdata and other data products to reprocess and produce gender statistics and analysis.
14. Work with civil society organizations to build understanding and explore opportunities to partner on studies such as time use and the prevalence of violence against women and citizen generated data.
15. Explore the potential of data collected by the private sector to see if some efficiency and timeliness gains in data collection could be made.

6.3. Recommendations for MSS data accessibility and use

16. Develop a user's guide and materials to gender statistics and associated training in understanding and applying key gender indicators.
17. Seek opportunities to learn from the experiences of other countries to improve the analysis, dissemination and user-producer relationships so that the gender statistics being produced is taken up in policies, plans and programmes.
18. Explore the feasibility of developing a central database for gender statistics, including the national agreed priority indicators. This could provide a central hub and support efficient monitoring and consistent reporting on national, regional and international commitments.
19. Identify user-producer dialogue mechanisms for gender statistics use involving the NBS, the MGFSS, government agencies, researchers, media and civil society organizations.

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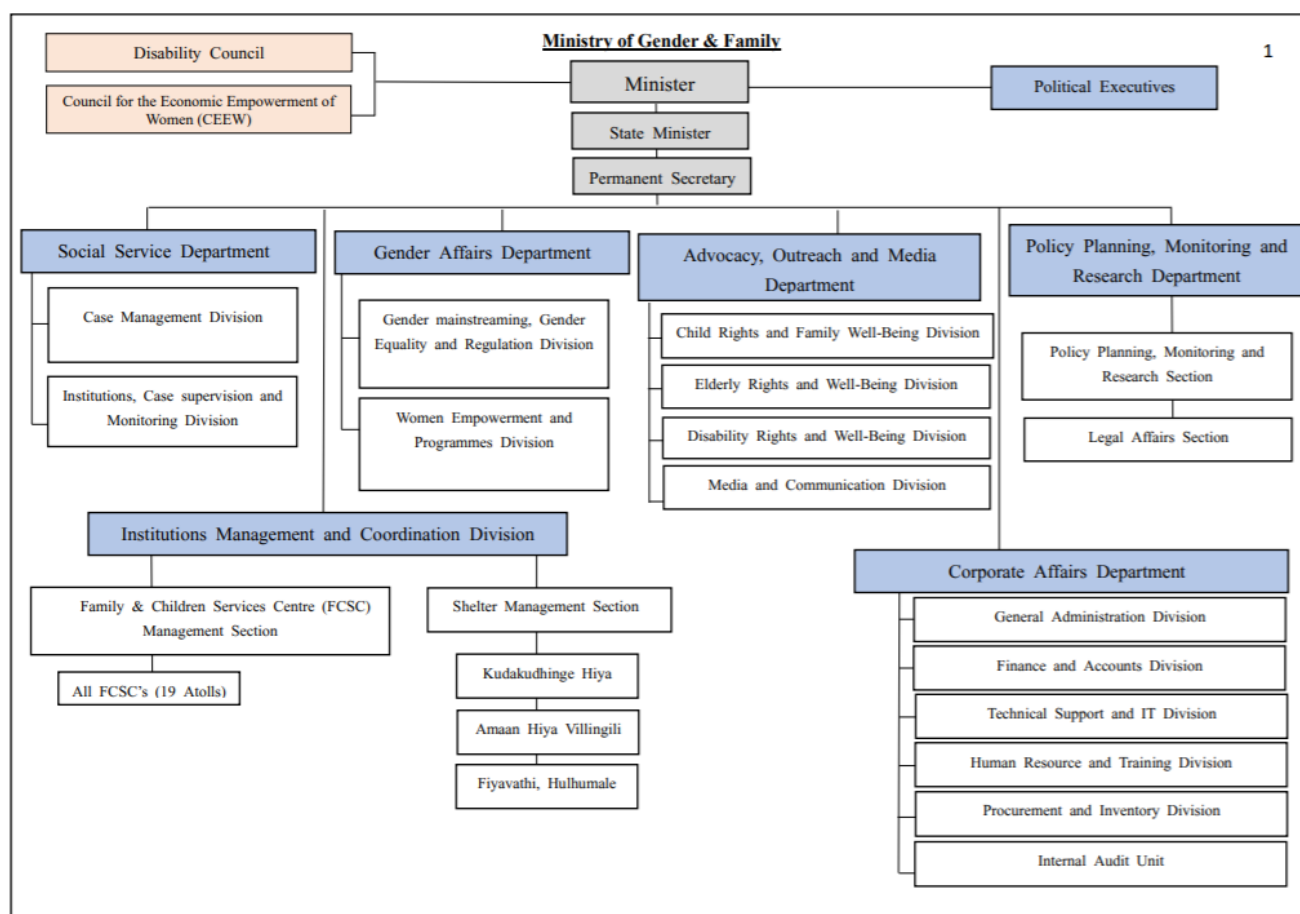
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Annex 1. Organisational structure of the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services¹⁴



¹⁴ Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services, <http://gender.gov.mv/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/1/2018/08/Ministry.pdf>

Annex 2. Consolidated summary of availability of gender indicators in the Maldives, 2020

SDG Indicator	UN Minimum Set Indicator	Maldives Health Indicator	Indicator	Tier Status as of April 2020	Can indicator be produced?	If yes, data source?	If no, likely data source?
1.1.1			Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
1.2.1			Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
1.2.2			Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	Tier II	No		HIES
1.3.1		9	Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, new-borns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	Tier II	Yes	National Social Protection Authority	
1.4.2			Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure	Tier II	No		Census, household surveys and administrative records
1.b.1			Proportion of government recurrent and capital spending to sectors that disproportionately benefit women, the poor and vulnerable groups	pending data availability review	No		Administrative records
2.3.2			Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status	Tier II	No		Agriculture surveys or agriculture census
		1	Life expectancy at birth	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health	
	41		Life expectancy at age 60, by sex	Tier I	No		Population and Housing Census
3.1.1	34		Maternal mortality ratio	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health	
	33		Under-five mortality rate, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health	

	35	Antenatal care coverage	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health
3.1.2	36	Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health
3.3.1	39	Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations	Tier II	Yes	Health Protection Agency
	40	Access to anti-retroviral drug, by sex	Tier I	No	Ministry of Health
3.7.1	32	Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
3.7.2	52	Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
	37	Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
	38	Proportion of adults who are obese, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
	42	Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Health
3.8.1		Coverage of essential health services (defined as the average coverage of essential services based on tracer interventions that include reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health, infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and service capacity and access, among the general and the most disadvantaged population)	Tier I	No	Combination of household surveys administrative data, facility data, facility surveys, and sentinel surveillance systems
4.1.1		Proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Education

4.2.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
4.2.2	Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014
4.3.1	Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the last 12 months, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014
21	Adjusted net enrolment rate in primary education, by sex	Tier I	No	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014
22	Gross enrolment ratio in secondary education, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Education
23	Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, by sex	Tier I	No	Administrative records
24	Gender parity index of the gross enrolment ratios in primary, secondary and tertiary education	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Education
4.5.1	Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated	Tier I/II depending on indice	No	Other indicators
27	Adjusted net intake rate to the first grade of primary education, by sex	Tier I	No	Administrative records
28	Primary education completion rate (proxy), by sex	Tier I	No	Administrative records
29	Gross graduation ratio from lower secondary education, by sex	Tier I	No	Administrative records
30	Effective transition rate from primary to secondary education (general programmes), by sex	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Education
31	Educational attainment of the population aged 25 and older, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014
4.6.1	Percentage of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014

20		Youth literacy rate of persons (15-24 years), by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Population and Housing Census 2014	
25		Share of female science, technology, engineering and mathematics graduates at tertiary level	Tier I	No		Administrative records
26		Proportion of females among tertiary education teachers or professors	Tier I	No		Administrative records
4.7.1		Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education and (d) student assessment	Tier II	No		
4.a.1		Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; (g) basic handwashing facilities (as defined in WASH indicators)	Tier II	Yes	Ministry of Education	
5.1.1		Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	Tier II	No		Administrative records
5.2.1	48	3	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
5.2.2	49	4	Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence	Tier II	No	Violence against women survey
5.3.1	51		Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
5.3.2	50	5	Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
5.4.1		7	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location	Tier II	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016
1			Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location (note: separate domestic work and care work, if possible)	Tier II	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016

2		Average number of hours spent on total work (total work burden), by sex	Tier II	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016
5.5.1	44	Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	Tier I (a)/Tier II (b)	Yes	Administrative records
	43	Women's share of government ministerial positions	Tier I	No	Administrative records
5.5.2	45	Proportion of women in managerial positions	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016
	46	Percentage of female police officers	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Police Services
	47	Percentage of female judges	Tier II	Yes	Judicial Service Commission
5.6.1		Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
5.6.2		Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education	Tier II	No	Administrative records
5.a.1	12	Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure	Tier II	No	HIES
5.a.2		Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control	Tier II	No	Administrative records
5.b.1		Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
	17	Proportion of individuals using the Internet, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17
	18	Proportion of individuals who own a mobile telephone, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17

19	Proportion of households with access to mass media (radio, television, Internet), by sex of household head	Tier III	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17	
5.c.1	Proportion of countries with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment	Tier II	No		Administrative records
3	Labour force participation rate for persons aged 15-24 and 15+, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
4	Proportion of employed who are own-account workers, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
5	Proportion of employed who are contributing family workers, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
6	Proportion of employed who are employer, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
7	Percentage of adult population who are entrepreneurs, by sex	Tier III	No		
8	Percentage distribution of employed population by sector, each sex (sectors here refer to Agriculture; Industry; Services)	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
8.3.1	9 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
8.5.1	Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities	Tier II	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
13	Gender gap in wages, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities	Tier III	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	
8.5.2	10 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Tier I	Yes	Household Income & Expenditure Survey, 2016	

8.7.1		Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age	Tier II	No		Labour force survey; DHS, etc.
8.8.1	2	Frequency rates of fatal and non- fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status	Tier II	No		Administrative records
8.8.2		Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status	Tier II	No		Administrative records
	14	Proportion of employed working part-time, by sex	Tier II	No		Labour force survey; DHS, etc.
	15	Employment rate of persons aged 25-49 with a child under age 3 living in a household and with no children living in the household, by sex	Tier III	No		Labour force survey; DHS, etc.
	11	Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider, by sex	Tier III	Yes	Maldives Demographic Health Survey 2016/17	
	16	Proportion of children under age 3 in formal care	Tier III	Yes	Administrative records	
10.2.1		Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by age, sex and persons with disabilities	Tier II	No		HIES
11.2.1		Proportion of population that has convenient access to public transport, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Tier II	No		Combination of household survey and administrative data
11.7.1		Average share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Tier II	No		Satellite imagery
11.7.2	6	Proportion of persons victim of physical or sexual harassment, by sex, age, disability status and place of occurrence, in the previous 12 months	Tier II	No		No official metadata
13.b.1		Number of least developed countries and small island developing States that are receiving specialized support, and amount of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for mechanisms for raising capacities for effective climate change-related planning and management, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	pending data availability review	No		Administrative records
16.1.1		Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	Tier I	Yes	Maldives Police Service	
16.1.2		Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause	Tier II	No		Administrative records

16.2.2		Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	Tier II	No		Administrative records
16.2.3		Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	Tier II	No		DHS
16.7.1		Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions	Tier II	No		Administrative records
16.7.2		Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	Tier II	No		Household surveys
16.9.1	8	Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	Tier I	Yes	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey	
17.18.1		Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	pending data availability review	No		Administrative records
	Qual1	Extent of country commitment to gender equality in employment	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	
	Qual1a	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 100 on equal remuneration for women and men	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	
	Qual1b	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services	
	Qual2	Extent of country commitment to support reconciliation of work and family life	Tier I	No		Administrative records
	Qual2a	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities	Tier I	No		Administrative records
	Qual2b	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 175 on part-time work	Tier I	No		Administrative records
	Qual2c	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 177 on home work	Tier I	No		Administrative records
	Qual2d	Whether or not ratified ILO convention 183 on maternity protection	Tier I	No		Administrative records
	Qual3	Length of maternity leave	Tier I	No		Administrative records

Qual4	Percentage of wages paid during maternity leave	Tier I	No	Administrative records
Qual5	Presence of a gender quota for parliament (reserved seats and legal candidate quotas)	Tier I	No	Administrative records
Qual6	Presence of a gender quota for parliament (voluntary party quotas)	Tier I	No	Administrative records
Qual7	Existence of law on gender statistics	Tier II	No	Administrative records
Qual8	Whether or not reservation to article 16 of CEDAW	Tier I	No	Administrative records
Qual9	Existence of laws on domestic violence	Tier I	Yes	Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services
Qual10	Whether or not inheritance rights discriminate against women and girls	Tier II	No	Administrative records
Qual11	Legal minimum age at marriage, by sex	Tier I	Yes	Family Court

Annex 3. Summary of workshops and plenary meetings.

Consultation meetings, between 8 and 14 April 2019

1. Consultation meetings with the MGFSS and the NBS on the 8th of April 2019

The PARIS21 mission together with the NBS met with the Deputy Minister of the MGFSS and Heads of various units and departments in the Ministry to discuss the existing policy frameworks and government programs on gender and to identify problems and issues related to data and gender statistics (gaps/availability, capacity needs, coordination on statistics). Further, the mission met with the Ministry of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to inquire about the inclusion of gender concerns in the national development plan currently being formulated and the statistics the Ministry foresees as needed.

2. Consultation meetings with line ministries and CSOs on the 10-14th of April 2019

Consultation with key agencies were also conducted such as with the Ministry of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture and civil society organizations (Hope for Women, Ulthema, Care Society, Arc, and Girl Guide).

Inception workshop, 9 April 2019

A stakeholder workshop was organized in Male' to bring together various government agencies, select civil society organizations, and international agencies to discuss concerns related to gender statistics. The workshop was keynoteed by the Minister of MGFSS, Hon. Shidhatha Shareef, who highlighted some of the challenges related to gender statistics production.

Summary of issues/concerns raised in the workshop:

The workshop participants were divided into thematic groups corresponding to different dimensions of the statistical capacity. Each group had to identify the most important challenges related to gender statistics production and use.

- I. Statistical production processes, existing data, legislative framework**
 - a) Lack of adherence to statistical standards and methodologies;
 - b) Gender data produced are not subject to quality assessment;
 - c) Data collected by agencies are not used for monitoring and policy-making;
 - d) Global reporting commitments and national priorities are not well aligned;
 - e) Lack of cooperation between agencies: National Statistical Coordination Committee exists but is not fully functional in terms of providing clear policy directions and proper coordination in the MSS; Limited exchange of gender data between agencies;
 - f) Lack of statistics legislation to govern the development of official statistics in line with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.
- II. Resources, skills and knowledge**
 - a) Human resources: understaffing, and knowledge gap due a high staff turnover, employees lack skills and knowledge to collect and analyse gender statistics;
 - b) IT resources: lack of databases in most agencies, including statistical software for better data management; problems in internet connectivity in islands/atolls;
 - c) Financial resources: not enough budget allocated to agencies to improve data processes to increase data production frequency and assure quality.
- III. Management and work ethics and standards**
 - a) Many agencies do not have statistical staff responsible for administrative data production,
 - b) No monitoring and evaluation of programmes;
 - c) Data collection constitutes often only a small part of the regular tasks in line ministries;

- d) Lack of transparency in statistical processes in some agencies; the fundamental principles of official statistics are rarely practiced/observed in agencies due to lack of knowledge of the principles;
- e) No accountability: data producing agencies should prepare annual reports;
- f) Politicians and/or high level or senior officials interfere in data collection.

IV. Policy and advocacy strategy

- a) Insufficient political support and interest from previous governments, policy makers did not see the need for an evidence-based policy formulation;
- b) Senior management does not perceive gender statistics as a crosscutting issue, but as a stand-alone problem.

Validation workshop, 26 February 2020

The NBS, the MGFSS and PARIS21 organised a validation workshop for the assessment of gender statistics in the Maldives on 26 February 2020. The workshop gathered the same participants as during the inception workshop in April 2019 (50 participants from main line ministries, in particular the Ministry of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, Ministry of Finance, MGFSS, Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Labour Relations Authority), CSOs, researchers and academia.

The workshop consisted of two main parts: i) presentation of the assessment findings, ii) group work on selected problem-areas of the findings. The findings from the group work resonated with the assessment conclusions. The CSOs highlighted the need to explore the intersection of environment and gender (absent from the two global frameworks of indicators studied) and the data on asset ownership.