

# Voluntary National Review for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2017

## Republic of Maldives

Prepared by: Sustainable Development Goals Division, Ministry of Environment and Energy

## **Opening Statement**

The adoption of Sustainable Development Goals is a major achievement in the global effort towards a sustainable future. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an ambitious agenda—more so for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as the Maldives.

Despite the numerous socio-economic and environmental challenges, including the dispersal of population, lack of human resources as well as difficulties in the mobilisation of resources, the Maldives has made significant headway towards sustainable development. As a low-lying island nation, Maldives is extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts. As such, additional efforts will be made to further substantively integrate climate change into national planning processes.

This report aims to highlight the efforts of Maldives towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, planned programmes and the challenges we face as a small island developing State. Considerable work has already been undertaken by the Government of His Excellency President Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, and I wish to thank His Excellency the President, for his guidance and assistance in the efforts towards sustainable development.

While the Maldives has made substantial progress in sectors such as education, energy and infrastructure, extensive effort needs to be undertaken to consolidate these gains. It is our hope that the seventeen Goals inspire collaboration and cooperation with the international community and with domestic development partners.

I wish to take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the Maldives to the 2030 Agenda and our pledge to leave no one behind in its implementation.



Thoriq Ibrahim

Minister of Environment and Energy

## ***Executive summary***

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Maldives will be built upon the successes of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the country. The thematic focus of the current review will be on the substantive progress the country has made in the areas of health, education, gender, water and sanitation, energy, infrastructure, climate change, and marine resources.

As a Small Island Developing State, the Maldives faces significant economic, social and environmental challenges. These are exacerbated by the impacts from climate change and vulnerability to both internal and external shocks. In addition, the geographic insularity coupled with a dispersed population and high transaction costs results in limited potential for economies of scale. Despite these challenges, the country has made substantial progress in eradicating poverty, achieving universal education and healthcare and protecting terrestrial and marine biodiversity. However, additional efforts must be made in other areas such as empowering women, strengthening mechanisms of governance and justice, minimizing economic disparity and promoting sustainable consumption and production in order to ensure that no one is left behind.

This review will attempt to voice out the challenges faced by a Small Island Developing State such as the Maldives, and the efforts made towards overcoming these challenges through innovation, strategic long term policies and collaborative decision-making processes. Innovation and participation of various stakeholders is critical, especially given the ambitious nature of the 2030 Agenda and the need to synergise our efforts in the implementation process. In this regard, financing and resource mobilization from national and international development partners is needed to achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Maldives recognises the importance of stakeholder engagement and participation in the substantive realisation of SDGs. To this regard, emphasis has been made to create awareness and engage stakeholders throughout the SDGs process, including implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Focused awareness sessions are planned to be conducted for parliamentarians, local councils, and members of the judiciary, NGOs, students, and the general public for the third quarter of 2017.

Long term strategic direction and focused policies will eliminate duplication of work and, in this manner, determine the success of the budgeting and execution of sectoral programmes towards SDG implementation. With the completion of stock taking of available data by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), initiating the work of identifying national priorities is currently in progress. National priorities for the SDGs targets will be identified through consultations with implementing agencies and input from civil society and the private sector. A Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) is scheduled for 2017, which will feed into the process of identifying of the national priorities. Corollary to this, the SDGs Division and NBS are undertaking an exercise with relevant stakeholders to identify data gaps and mechanisms to address these. The development of a monitoring framework to report the achievements of the SDGs targets is planned for 2018/2019. However, it is important to note that the implementation of the SDGs which will require further technical assistance and financial support in addition to the domestic resources.

The lack of technical expertise, particularly in terms of data collection and management, remains a major hurdle in the implementation of SDGs in the country. This is compounded by the lack of trained staff and adequate resources for data collection and management.

Furthermore, enhanced collaboration across government agencies is required to effectively track and monitor progress on SDGs. The integration of data systems and the institutionalisation of a coherent and holistic mechanism for periodic and regular data collection will be critical in this regard. In addition, administrative data already available at different sectors must be strengthened as these can be used for evidence-based decision-making and avoid the duplication of work and resources. Due to the geographical dispersion of the islands, high cost is required for the transport to collect data. Hence, attaining sufficient funds required for data collection through domestic resources remains a huge challenge.

The National Ministerial Coordination Committee, constituted of cabinet ministers, provides overall policy guidance and political support towards the implementation of SDGs in the country. The Ministerial Committee is supported by a Technical Committee on SDGs, which brings together experts from various government institutions and civil society. Together, the National Ministerial Coordination Committee and the Technical Committee ensure country ownership and broad based participation that will be critical for the successful implementation of SDGs. The SDGs Division at the Ministry of Environment and Energy coordinates work related to the implementation of SDGs including monitoring, reporting and follow-up on the implementation process.

The Sustainable Development Goals will be implemented in the Maldives by the government agencies, civil society and independent institutions whose mandates align with the targets of the SDGs. The role of the monitoring and reporting body will be to ensure that proper consultation has been carried out with all relevant stakeholders in the implementation process, given the integrated nature of the SDGs. It will also promote the mainstreaming of the SDGs into sectoral policies, plans and strategies develop a review and follow-up mechanism to provide coherence between line agencies, and ensure the integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions of the 2030 Agenda in the implementation process.

The realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals requires strong coordination and cross-sectoral collaboration between the government agencies, development partners, local governments, the private sector and civil society. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda also requires continued political support and commitment as well as broad based participation to drive the national sustainable development agenda forward.

## **1. Introduction**

The Maldives is an archipelago of coral atolls which consists of 1,192 islands located in the Indian Ocean, between 7°6'35"N to 0°42'24"S and 72°32'19"E to 73°14'36"W. The chain is 860 km long and varies between 80 and 120 km in width. For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 20 atolls and the capital Male'. The country's dispersed geography presents unique challenges for financing, capacity building and resource mobilization in coordinating sustainable development activities nationwide.

The population of Maldives increased from 298,968 in 2006 to 338,434 in 2014. The population growth rates declined from 1.69% to 1.65% over the same period. The working-age population (15 to 64 years old) outnumbers young dependents (those under 15 years old) by a 2 to 1 margin. This indicates that the country could be poised to capture the benefits of a first demographic dividend.

Despite the unique challenges facing as a Small Island Developing State, the Maldives achieved five of the eight MDGs before 2015, making it the first 'MDG plus' country in the South-Asia region. Maldives has seen substantial progress in eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. This demonstrates strong commitments to the social sectors, particularly health and education.

Furthermore, infrastructure development policies emphasising climate change resilience have been implemented in recent years. This includes the development of safer, environmentally resilient islands and greater commitment to renewable energy sources. Moreover, policies and strategies targeting integrated water resources management and resilient sewerage systems across the country have been implemented.

Maldives' acute vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather events remains a serious concern, impinging on the sustainable development agenda of the country. To this regard, increased beach erosion, and flooding resulting from extreme events combined with the impacts due to sea level rise presents significant challenges. Efforts have been made domestically and internationally to combat climate change, including the formulation of a national framework policy on climate change and strengthening international partnerships with the aim of combatting climate change globally.

Given that the Maldives' economy and social well-being is inextricably linked to its natural environment, particularly its marine environment and resources, the sustainable management of these resources have been a key priority of the government.

The economy of Maldives has grown rapidly, driven largely by a vibrant tourism industry, with support from fisheries and the service sector. The GDP of Maldives in current prices reached MVR 52.8 billion (\$3.4 billion) and MRV 113,167 (\$7,339) per capita in 2015. Tourism, the highest contributor, represents 23.9% of the GDP. Despite fisheries and agriculture being the main source of income for rural communities, their contribution to the GDP is 1.3% and 1.4% respectively. Other important sectors include communication, transport, construction, real estate and government administration.

Despite notable progress and achievements in some sectors, more efforts must be made towards achieving gender equality, especially as this is one of the Goals of the MDGs that was noted for slow progress. However, progress have been made in the area of gender equality, particularly through the strengthening of the legal framework to further align with relevant provisions and principles in international law, including as enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Gender Equality Act, Domestic Violence Prevention Act, Sexual Offences Act, Anti-Sexual Harassment Act created the necessary legal framework, regulatory and monitoring mechanism to implement CEDAW domestically.

Political reform, such as a multiparty system and the establishment of various independent institutions, has dominated the Maldivian political landscape in recent years with rapid developments. In this regard, the separation of powers and the establishment of a Supreme Court in the Maldives for the first time ever following the Constitution of 2008 have paved way for stronger institutions.

## **2. Methodology**

The current review presents the progress towards sustainable development in the Maldives. While all seventeen goals are addressed in this review, the thematic analysis will focus on how some of these goals contribute to eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a Maldivian context.

This review is mainly based on the guidelines proposed by the UN Secretary General. It deviates from the recommended structure slightly by combining two sections: policy and enabling environment and next steps; and institutional mechanisms and means of implementation. The Sustainable Development Goals Division of Ministry of Environment and Energy carried out the process of developing this Voluntary National Review.

Information and data was collected from sectoral reports as well as national submissions to various international treaties and agreements. In addition to this, information was also gleaned from statistical reports produced by the NBS. Further information was sought directly from sectors specifically for the purpose of this review.

## **3. Policy and enabling environment**

### **a) Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals**

In order to create ownership of the 2030 Agenda, the current focus is on creating awareness of all stakeholders, including civil society organizations, parliamentarians, local councils, and students, in order to engage these actors in the implementation process of the SDGs. Furthermore, lead agencies for various goals have been identified and work has been carried out to sensitise relevant institutions regarding the SDGs. This process includes identifying existing policies and strategies that aligns with the 2030 Agenda and assess how targets could be integrated into them.

Given the catalytic role that civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can play as potential agents of change in the substantive implementation of the SDGs, the Maldives is committed to ensure their full participation in the SDGs process. To this regard, a national forum is being organised which will bring together NGO and civil society actors across the country to

discuss mechanisms for contribution and participation. The forum will focus on empowering and catalysing action on the ground whilst also promoting the participatory nature of the SDGs.

The Maldives further recognises the importance of engaging with the media and public sphere in promoting national ownership of the SDGs process. As such, efforts have been made to forge new partnerships and intensify existing ones with the media. In this regard, the government continues to engage with the Public Service Media (PSM) in disseminating information related to the SDGs. Furthermore, a capacity building workshop is scheduled for journalists from various media in order to enhance and develop their skills to report on the SDGs. This will include specific information on how to create, develop and deliver reports and other media content on the SDGs process. Efforts are also underway to develop special programmes targeted to the entire Maldivian population.

#### **b) Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks**

One of the main tasks for the year 2018/2019 includes integration of the SDGs into the budgetary process through program budgeting. This work is on-going at the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, and will help plan the future activities for the implementation of the SDGs.

Some sectors - namely education, health, energy, waste management, fisheries, water and sanitation, and local governance, have incorporated the SDGs into respective policy documents and action plans. For instance, National Food Safety Policy (2017-2026) developed by the Ministry of Health is in line with SDG 2. The policy targets to eliminate hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. Furthermore, it also takes into account other SDGs related to health, poverty, gender equality, water and sanitation, responsible production and consumption, and climate change. In addition to this, the Health Master Plan (2016-2025) is also focused on building trust in the national health system, reducing disease and disability among the population and reducing inequalities in access to healthcare services and medicines. The 2030 Agenda is one of the frameworks adopted in developing the Health Master Plan.

In local governance, the Local Government Authority has aligned its five year Development Plan (2017-2021) with SDGs, which will be implemented by the island councils.

In the education sector, it is important to note that the election manifesto of the current administration makes specific provisions for improving access to and quality of education. This includes a commitment towards inclusive education, professional skills development for the youth and facilitating opportunities for tertiary education. These provisions contribute directly to the achievement of SDG 4. This is reflected in the Strategic Action Plan (2013-2018) of the education sector which is aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

In the energy sector, the Maldives Energy Policy and Strategy 2016 is the key policy document guiding the development of the sector in the Maldives and are aligned with SDG 7. In this regard, the objectives of the policy include promoting energy conservation and efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy in the national energy mix, and improving the reliability and sustainability of electricity while increasing national energy security.

The sustainable and sound management of waste poses as a significant challenge in terms of protecting human health and the environment. The National Waste Management Policy which

was introduced in 2015, recognises these challenges and is geared towards institutionalising appropriate, environmentally sound and commercially viable and sustainable models for waste management in the country. To this regard, it includes targets for waste reduction, recycling and recovery, engaging communities, private sector and other relevant stakeholders, and developing an enabling environment for the sound management of waste. Moreover, the Ministry of Environment and Energy is developing a legal framework to reduce plastic pollution with the aim of reducing marine plastic pollution. This framework will contribute to the realisation of SDG 14 through reduction of marine pollution, in particular from land based activities, and also contribute to protecting the marine and coastal ecosystems.

In the fisheries sector, the Maldives is continuing its engagement with regional and international partners in making fisheries in the Indian Ocean more sustainable. In this regard, the country has been closely collaborating with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, by providing data and other necessary information to protect the marine environment as well as supporting the elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries in the region.

In water and sanitation, efforts are on-going to provide access to safe drinking water and sewerage services across the country. To this regard, the government manifesto pledges the supply of safe drinking water to all islands, and increasing storage capacity to ensure water security across the country. The Maldives is also implementing an Integrated Water Resource Management approach towards the provision of safe drinking water. This aims at establishing water supply and sewerage systems while concurrently strengthening the governance framework and increasing community participation in monitoring and management of the freshwater resources. Furthermore, after the ratification of 2008 constitution, which states that safe drinking water supply and sanitation is a basic right for all Maldivians, major water supply and sewerage projects were launched in the outer islands. As of 2016, 48% of the total population has access to improved sewerage facilities and 39% of the population has access to water supply systems.

In the youth sector, emphases have been made to enhance the skills of the youth population for the labour market through education and vocational training. This is expected to contribute towards reducing the number of 'out of work' youth ensuring decent jobs for all. Furthermore, mental and physical health awareness programmes are being conducted which targets the promotion of healthy lifestyle habits among the youth which will in turn facilitate in promoting good health and wellbeing in the current as well as future generations.

### **c) Integration of three dimensions**

The integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals, in a balanced manner, is ensured through the National Ministerial Coordination Committee, and the Technical Committee on SDGs, and its associated thematic sub clusters. Moreover, stakeholder engagements and awareness creation among various agencies and policy makers would assist in integrating the three pillars of sustainable development.

The monitoring and reporting functions for the SDGs are anchored at the Sustainable Development Goals Division at the Ministry of Environment and Energy, which serves as the nodal agency for co-ordination. The Division provides the necessary institutional support to harmonise various efforts and promote synergies in implementing the SDGs.

#### **d) Identifying data gaps**

The SDGs Division in close collaboration with the NBS engaged with different sectors during the first half of 2017 with regards to data availability and challenges for SDGs reporting. The objective of this exercise was primarily to identify the data gaps, and develop mechanisms to address those gaps. Through these discussions, the need to strengthen the maintenance of administrative data was identified as a key initial priority. However, all sectors also noted the lack of human capacity and technical expertise as a fundamental impediment in improving the availability and quality of data and statistics. With the completion of a data gap analysis by NBS, establishing a mechanism to fill the identified gaps, followed by the process of identifying national priorities based on this analysis will be the next step forward.

*Note: Refer Annex 2 for the **Data Updates on SDG Indicators: MALDIVES (March 2017)***

#### **e) Development of a Monitoring Framework**

Development of a monitoring framework is planned for late 2017. The framework will be developed to monitor and report the achievements of the SDGs and its targets. However, the country requires technical assistance and financial support in institutionalising such a framework.

The development of programme budgeting will be crucial to the development of a monitoring framework, as the linkage of available finance with the programmes, and the SDGs will be used to track the progress of the actual implementation process. In addition to this, aligning monitoring of the SDGs with that of sectoral plans and other international reporting obligations will require capacity building not only in data collection but also data management.

#### **f) Identifying National Priorities**

Identification of national priorities for the SDGs and its targets will be made through a process of consultations with implementing agencies as well as input from the civil society and the private sector. A Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) is scheduled for 2018/2019, which will feed into the process of identifying national priorities.

#### **g) Goals and targets**

##### **Goal 1 – End Poverty in all its forms everywhere**

The proportion of the population living below the national poverty line of MVR 22/day decreased from 21% in 2002/2003 to 15% in 2009/2010. Poverty in islands/rural areas is less compared to the poverty in the capital city. Nearly one third of the total population lives in the capital and this leads to inadequate living conditions and increase in urban poverty. The provision of basic education and health for all the citizens is provided for free throughout the country. Yet, people tend to migrate to the capital for economic activities and for easy access to better quality services. In this regard, the focus needs to be on minimizing the urban-rural gap in the quality of service provision and tracking poverty.

## **Goal 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture**

Locally produced food items in the Maldives are limited. From staple goods and daily essentials to more luxury items, nearly everything is imported to Maldives. This makes the country vulnerable to external economic shocks. Fish and very few agricultural products are the only source of local produce. Even though some fruits and vegetables are cultivated, these are not produced in adequate numbers for the population's needs. Although there is no absolute hunger in the country, food security is an issue due to the high dependency on imports of staple and daily essentials.

In order to tackle this issue, there is a need for promoting sustainable agriculture in the country. Therefore, encouraging and supporting local agriculture and promoting sustainable agricultural practices will be critical to enhance food security. In addition to this, educating locals to eat healthy and nutritious food is also a key priority.

## **Goal 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages**

The health status of the people of Maldives has significantly improved in the past few decades. The Maldives Health Statistics show that during the period of 2006-2015 the infant mortality rate decreased from 16 to 9 per 1000 live births. During this period, under 5 mortality rates also decreased from 18 to 11 per 1000 live births. Maternal mortality ratio has decreased from 69 per 100,000 births in 2006 to 13 per 100,000 births in 2012. The decline of maternal mortality ratio is due to factors such as the wide dispersion of obstetric and other health services to outer atolls, with access to skilled attendants in delivery and provision of antenatal care.

The Maldives has made considerable achievements in the health sector through the provision of universal healthcare. In the past two years, extensive efforts have been made to expand the reach of pharmacies with the result that at least one has now been established in each inhabited island. The Maldives is the first country in the South Asia Region to be awarded certification of elimination of Malaria, Lymphatic Filariasis and Measles. The Maldives is further committed to tackle HIV/AIDS, TB and other communicable diseases whilst grappling to control frequent outbreaks of vector borne diseases such as dengue and chikungunya. Focus is also given to care for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, thalassemia and mental health.

With the fast changing lifestyle and development, chronic non-communicable diseases are emerging as the main cause of morbidity and mortality in the country. The Health Master Plan 2016-2025 recognizes this as one of the key critical areas that need concerted actions by the government in the coming years. Factors such as living condition and lifestyle factors such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet or nutrition, obesity, child malnutrition (stunting and wasting of children under five years) and inadequate physical activity is a concern which is addressed in collaboration with schools.

Drug use has been a growing concern to the society's wellbeing and harmony. According to the National Drug Use Survey Maldives (2011/2012), the prevalence of drug use in Male' and atolls were 6.64% and 2.02% respectively.

Furthermore, reproductive health needs of young people deserve a special attention. As such, a more holistic approach towards access to adolescent friendly health services including reproductive health services is needed. This includes issues of sexual and gender-based violence,

sexual diversity, discrimination, relationship issues, and fears and concerns about sex and sexuality.

The reliance on expatriate workers as healthcare service providers remains a major challenge. There is a further need to enhance the local capacity, including through education and training of medical personnel for the Maldivian health sector. The dispersed islands pose challenges to logistic management, particularly in providing necessary supplies and equipment, assuring quality services and regular maintenance and administration of the service delivery. This also results in considerably high cost to the government.

#### **Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Maldives has outperformed other countries in the South Asia region in its education indicators despite the country's challenges associated with a highly dispersed population. Maldives had realized MDG goal 2 on achieving universal primary education with a 7 year primary school cycle by the year 2000, and achieved gender parity at all levels of education as set in MDG goal 3 on promoting gender equality. Maldives is also among the few developing countries in the world that had fully achieved all six of the Education for All (EFA) goals by 2015.

Two years into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), Maldives is well on track in achieving the targets of SDG 4. The national education policies and sector plans are in full alignment with this goal and the country is well on track to achieving all targets far ahead of 2030.

The overarching education policy of the government, “No Child Left Behind”, reaffirms the government's commitment in ensuring inclusive quality learning opportunities that cater to the needs of every child to reach their full potential. As such, all children are now guaranteed 14 years of free education starting at the age of 4 in pre-primary education till they complete higher secondary education at age of 18 or 19, which includes a 10 years compulsory cycle from grades 1 to 10. A comprehensive inclusive education policy also ensures and facilitates the education provision for children with disabilities across the nation. Currently there are 52 specialized SEN units and 178 schools with SEN trained teachers across the country catering to over 1172 students with special needs. Furthermore, in line with the school attendance policy, every school age child is being identified and tracked, monitoring attendance as well as identifying potential risks of dropout or exclusion. These policies and initiatives are in the right direction to achieve the SDG targets of 4.1 and 4.2.

A new, value and skilled based curriculum with clearly defined learning outcomes and key competencies is being rolled out from 2015 with the focus on making learning more relevant and preparing students for the 21st century. In line with the SDG target 4.7, the new school curriculum 'ensures that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable lifestyles, human rights, climate change and global citizenship. It has also introduced a vocational training pathway at secondary level. Opportunities for vocational education through Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET) programs such as work based apprenticeship programs supported by virtual learning has been expanding to reach young men and women all across the archipelago providing them the skills required for employment. Scholarships and loan schemes support students to pursue higher level training in the fields of their choice in the country and overseas. The opportunities will facilitate in achieving the SDG targets 4.3 through to 4.6.

However, a clear policy and institutional mechanism on lifelong learning and adult education is required to engage youth and adults in learning and skills development in order to facilitate for a more productive and skilled population to drive the economy.

Continuous professional development opportunities are provided to uplift the quality of in-service teachers and a minimum qualification requirement for all teachers to hold at least a diploma has been set and enforced since 2015. A further target for all teachers to hold at least an undergraduate degree in the profession by 2020 has been set, and teachers are being supported in attaining these qualifications. Innovative means for teacher training, such as virtual training, video conferencing and the Teacher Resource Centers (TRC) are being adapted to overcome the challenges faced by the remoteness of the islands.

While Maldives is clearly on the right track to achieving the SDG 4, the challenges that it faces remains imminent through its journey towards 2030. The widely dispersed, population greatly increases the cost of providing educational services. The inherent constraints imposed by distant and small, dispersed populations greatly increase the associated costs and adversely affect the provision of educational services.

### **Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

Maldives has made significant strides in efforts to establish gender equality. The Gender Equality Act 18/2016 is a milestone legislation which prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender, harmonizes the existing legal framework with the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and promotes gender equality in the Maldives in a cultural, social, economic and political context. The Act outlines explicit duties and responsibilities on State and private parties, prohibits victimization and introduces remedy for discrimination based on gender.

Maldives has achieved equality in access to education and health services, and there is a gradual increase in women's participation in different sectors. Greater efforts are, however, required in increasing women's participation in political and public life and increasing their representation in decision-making levels. Currently, 5 out of 85 seats are held by women in parliament and in the 2017 Local Council Elections, women represent only 6% of the elected local councilors. Women comprise only 15% in the cabinet, 14% among Ministers of State, 15% among Deputy Ministers and 26% among corporate representation. The Government remains committed to promote equal rights for men and women and current efforts are also focused on increasing interagency collaboration to empower women and girls at the community and national level. The National Action Plan to advance Gender Equality is currently being finalized and Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have also been appointed in line ministries and agencies to promote gender mainstreaming.

The Domestic Violence Prevention Act 3/2012 is a key legislation that has legal provisions to ensure that victims of domestic violence are given adequate protection and safeguards. Under this Act, a Family Protection Authority has been established and there has been an increased national effort in recent years, to raise awareness on gender based violence and domestic violence. Furthermore, Sexual Offences Act 17/2014 and Anti-Sexual Harassment Act 16/2014 also are key legislations that provide the necessary protection framework for women in situations of violence and abuse.

In addition to the work by the Ministry of Gender and Family to protect and promote the rights and wellbeing of vulnerable groups at the national level, the Ministry has also established Family Children's Services Centers (FCSC) in each of the 19 atolls of the country to provide services at the atoll level. Furthermore, the Ministry of Gender and Family is currently working with relevant stakeholders to establish 'Community Social Groups (CSGs) at the island level, to identify and provide support to vulnerable individuals and families, and encourage community participation to address social issues.

### **Goal 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**

Population increase, urbanization and environmental changes, including climate change present a number of challenges to the water security of the country. Due to geographic dispersion of the population, management of water resources and provision of sanitation services in Maldives remains a significant challenge. The high rate of urbanization in islands such as Male' increases the pressures on supply, as well as the risk of water borne diseases.

Approximately 87% of atoll population (including non-administrative islands) used rainwater for drinking purposes in 2014. Hence, there is a need to increase the rainwater harvesting within the country. Currently, Maldives is moving towards an Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) approach to address water insecurity in a changing climate. The country faces difficulty in access to clean water during the dry season especially in the remote islands given the high transportation costs incurred in supplying emergency water. The government has made major efforts to address this issue by increasing water storage facilities in affected islands, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

The Government is steadfast and committed in developing the water and sanitation sector and in the recent years major developments have been experienced in the sector. Over the past 3 years the population with access to adequate sewerage networks has increased from 31% (in 2013) to 48% (by the end of 2016). Achievements in the water sector demonstrate that the population with access to water supply networks has increased from 25% (in 2013), to 39% (by the end of 2016). The Government targets to continue this momentum and provide access to safe water supply and adequate sewerage services to 75% of the population by the end of 2018.

### **Goal 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**

Maldives has achieved provision of 24 hours electricity service throughout the country in 2008. All its energy needs are met through imported fossil fuel products. Over reliance on fossil fuel imports leaves Maldives highly vulnerable to global fuel hikes, bringing positive and negative impacts on the balance of payments accordingly.

Islands being dispersed in nature and given the small size of the islands, it is difficult to store large quantities of fuel in these islands. Hence, current fuel storage capacity of the country is very small, approximately 28MT, which only lasts for 10 days. Therefore, fuel need to be imported twice or thrice per month.

In order to overcome these challenges and to enhance the energy security and to achieve a low carbon development economy, the Maldives government has launched a program in 2014 to

diversify energy sector through introduction and promotion of locally available renewable energy sources. Through these initiatives, the government will install renewable energy systems up to 30 percent of day time peak load of electricity in all inhabited islands before the end of 2018. Solar PV-diesel-hybrid systems have already been installed in some of the islands and work in rest of the islands is on-going at different stages. In addition, Maldives government has installed in 2016 met masts in different locations to explore the wind potential in the country. This initiative is one of the most significant steps taken by the country in the transformation of the energy sector, targeting to scale up renewable energy installations from 2MW to 21MW.

To facilitate the achievement of this target, a feed-in tariff mechanism and a net metering regulation have been introduced in 2015 to promote renewable energy projects in the private sector and household level. In order to encourage renewable energy investments, government has launched “Green Loan” facility in collaboration with Bank of Maldives in 2016 which provides loans to the customers, both private and households, at concessional rate. In addition, government conducts several energy efficiency awareness and efficient equipment distribution programs to increase awareness on energy efficiency and conservation among the public.

#### **Goal 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**

The Maldivian economy is heavily dependent on tourism, construction and fisheries, which are the major sources of foreign exchange and government revenue. In 2015, tourism contributed 23.9%, construction contributed 8.5% and fisheries sector contributed 1.3% to the country’s GDP. The GDP growth rate reduced from 6% in 2014 to 3.9% in 2016. Thus, adopting sustainable fisheries and tourism in the country is given importance to achieve long term benefits.

Public administration accounts for the largest employer in the capital, whereas in the outer atolls, the majority of people are employed in the manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries with rapid expansion of the tourism sector, more than a fifth of the employed are engaged in this industry.

In 2014 the unemployment rate was 5.2% of the working population. 9 out of 10 people are employed from the labor force. However, there is an increase in the expatriate labor force that has to be addressed, including their living conditions and migration status.

The Government has initiated loan schemes that aim to encourage entrepreneurship in the country. These schemes also provide support and facilitate technical guidance needed for entrepreneurs to launch startups, thus encouraging participation in the labor force through innovative methods. However, more efforts are needed to cater to the growing workforce of the country and to provide decent employment opportunities.

#### **Goal 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation**

Maldives has a thriving and innovative construction industry. Despite the challenges of being a small island nation, infrastructure development across the country has been rapid. Construction is the second largest industry contributing to GDP with 8.5% share in 2015. Resilient infrastructure, based on sustainability and green technology, is one of the major focuses in the country.

Infrastructure as an adaptation measure is costly and essential at the same time for the growth of the economy. Integrating mitigation and disaster risk management into infrastructure through innovation will be critical for the future.

Hence, establishing disaster risk reduction and mitigation measures through innovative and sustainable methods is necessary

### **Goal 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries**

There is an internal migration within the islands of the Maldives, with most people migrating to the capital city for education and employment. As a result, one third of the total population lives in the capital city – an island of approximately 5.8km<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, many expatriates have also migrated to the country over the past few years for employment and are distributed unevenly across the country with the majority of foreigners living in the capital, resorts and industrial islands

Initiatives are being undertaken to address the needs of different groups of socially vulnerable people in the country. In 2015, there were a total of 1172 students enrolled in classes for special needs. In addition, opportunities are created for the disabled in the job market and safety net mechanisms are in place for the vulnerable groups. Still a lot of measures have to be taken to reduce inequalities to cater for the vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, the ratification of Disability Act, Social Security Act, and Social Protection Act created the necessary framework to support and give special assistance to vulnerable populations.

### **Goal 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

Congestion is one of the major issues faced by the people living in the capital Male'. The government initiative to develop Hulhumale, a reclaimed island within 25 minutes from the capital city is ongoing in order to cater to the growing population of Male'. However, the high cost of developing cities and communities in a sustainable manner is a major concern in the country.

All the services are provided equally to every citizen in all parts of the country taking into account public safety and security, but the improvement of quality of service requires further attention. Hence, population and development consolidation is one of the major policies that the government has initiated in the past years supporting migration to larger islands such as Hulhumale. The aim of this initiative is to provide better opportunities and services in terms of education, employment and healthcare for people living in islands.

People living in islands require access to services as well as employment opportunities. Hence, transportation facilities are required to travel between the islands. The main form of transportation used to travel from one island to another is sea travel. Currently, there are three international airports and seven domestic airports in the country. However, the high cost of transportation remains a significant challenge.

In 2006, Maldives Transport and Contracting Company Plc. (MTCC) commenced the “Integrated Transport Networks” with the objective of linking the entire country through a well-organized transport network. Over the years, MTCC has increased its capacity and now provides ferry

services within the islands and the atolls across the country. As a result, people of the islands have the opportunity for accessing better services. In addition, transport facilities such as bus services are provided by the private sector. The increased mobility has consequently enhanced the overall wellbeing of communities across the country.

### **Goal 12 – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**

Despite the high dependence on imported food, agriculture constitutes an important sector for both livelihood and food security. However, reliance on chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides remain a concern in the agricultural sector. In addition to this, amongst other factors, inadequate storage and transportation results in a significant amount of food waste. Interventions to promote sustainable consumption and production in agricultural sector would need to focus on these challenges and issues. Furthermore, a sound management of waste remains a significant challenge, particularly given the dispersed population. Addressing this issue will be critical to substantively realize the goal on sustainable consumption and production.

Fishing constitutes as one of the most important sectors for the country's economy. The pole and line fishing method practiced in the Maldives for centuries is a model for sustainable fisheries, the cleanest and the greenest, whereby each fish is caught individually to reduce by-catch. Yellow fin tuna is the second largest catch in the Indian Ocean and the latest stock assessments show overfishing of this species mainly due to increasing fisheries activity in the Indian Ocean by all countries. However, interim measures have been taken by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) to recover the stocks by introducing catch limits, reduction of drifting Fish Aggregating Devices and reduction of supply vessels.

The tourism sector in the Maldives serves as a model for sustainable tourism. From its very early stages of development, environmental considerations had been integrated to the sector through relevant laws and regulations. The private sector has also been critical in adopting sustainable consumption and production principles in the tourism sector.

### **Goal 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**

The Maldives is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change. Of particular concern are the impacts due to sea level rise and extreme weather events that will significantly impact low-lying coastal marine eco-systems and islands causing beach erosion, and affect biodiversity. Furthermore, salt-water intrusion from the extreme weather events can affect the freshwater lenses on the islands, which consequently will negatively impact water security in the country.

Maldives has incorporated climate change adaptation and mitigation into sectoral planning and development. The Climate Change Policy Framework 2015 (MCCPF) is the key policy document in this regard.

The effects of climate change on industries such as agriculture, tourism and other industries are of major concern and need to be taken into consideration. Efforts are underway to integrate climate change into development projects. In this regard, the Tourism Adaptation project (TAP) is aimed at identifying the climate change adaptation measures that will be required for the tourism sector in the coming years.

In March 2017, a project funded by the Green Climate Fund was initiated to support vulnerable communities in Maldives to manage climate change-induced water shortages during the dry season. The project aims to provide safe water to vulnerable households, introduce cost-effective dry season water supply systems and improve quality of ground water to build long-term resilience.

**Goal 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**

Ninety nine percent of the Maldivian territory is comprised of ocean, and fish, especially tuna, is the primary source of food in the diet of any Maldivian.

Pollution, both from land based and sea-based sources are a significant threat to life below water. In this regard, solid waste, untreated sewage, oil pollution and ballast water constitutes the major sources of marine pollution in the country. The growing amount of waste generated and the lack of sufficient capacity for sound management of waste on the islands is one of the most challenging environmental issues related to life below water in the Maldives. In 2015, a Waste Management Policy was formulated to manage waste in a sustainable and feasible manner. The initiative will result in the establishment of waste management centers on all inhabited islands by the end of 2018.

As a small island nation in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives has always depended on its rich natural marine resources for the subsistence of its people as well as its economic base. Sustainability of the fisheries sector is the key to ensuring livelihoods, as well as food security in the country. The commitment towards low impact fishing methods demonstrates the long-standing commitment from Maldives to safeguard fish stocks and promote sustainable fisheries. The traditional pole-and-line tuna fishery is highly selective, and produces no by-catch while employing high numbers of fishermen compared to other methods.

Since becoming a member of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission in 2011, the Maldives has been actively advocating for the sustainability agenda at the Commission. Additionally, the Maldives currently plays a key role in voicing the concerns of coastal states toward sustainability of the fish stocks, as well as protecting livelihoods of coastal communities throughout the region. Maldives openly advocates for stopping licensing fishing fleets from distance water nations and concentrating on developing artisanal and local commercial fleets, to empower coastal communities.

Despite being a Small Island Developing State, Maldives is taking initiatives to protect its ocean to safeguard life below water. As such, a national campaign to reduce plastics in the Maldives was launched on June 2017 focusing on reducing plastics from various sectors and progressively phases out the use of non-biodegradable plastics.

**Goal 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**

Maldives has a rich marine diversity, with several species that are globally significant. The main threats to biodiversity are the loss of habitats that are associated with harbors dredging, reclamation, and exploitation of resources, climate change, and other human activities. Currently, the Environmental Protection and Preservation Act (Law no. 4/93) provides the legal basis for environmental protection, preservation and conservation in the Maldives. Consequently, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2025) was formulated to mainstream biodiversity concerns into national development planning.

Maldives has designated 42 protected areas and has successfully designated one of its atolls (*Baa atoll*) as a United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserve. In this regard, the government is committed towards conservation and expanding, where feasible, the network of marine protected areas.

The government is continuously engaging with the tourism sector in promoting environmental protection and stewardship. Given that the house reef of resort islands are highly well managed areas, the government is collaborating with various resorts in examining the modalities in which these areas can contribute to the network of protected and managed marine areas.

**Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

In recent years, a number of important achievements have been made in promoting democratic governance, rule of law and human rights in Maldives. Overall, important challenges remain, particularly with regard to the development of effective and inclusive governance institutions and processes, consolidation of the rule of law and evolution of an informed civil society.

As part of the political transition, there are ongoing efforts to strengthen the justice sector – the legal framework, capacity development in the institutions, access to justice, and civil society strengthening are all being actively addressed. The Attorney General’s Office has been leading the criminal justice reform process in the country including the enactment of the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code (CRPC). The CRPC details out the procedure to investigate, prosecute and pass judgments on unsuspected criminal offenders. This key legislation would support in effective prosecution and significant reduction of criminal activities.

Furthermore, the Government has submitted a comprehensive Evidence Bill in 2017, passing and implementation of which will complete the reform process of the criminal justice sector that began over a decade ago. Important and similar efforts of reform are yet to be taken with respect to the civil justice sector, to which 80% of the cases/claims go to. A civil procedure code is yet to be enacted, while specialized courts for specialized matters such as constitutional matters, human rights, commercial, and family are needed. In addition to this, the Legal Aid Bill, which is being drafted, is expected to increase access to justice for those people who cannot afford or access to legal representation. Furthermore, it is important to note that for the effective implementation of these reforms, judges need specialized training in these areas.

The Government is also committed towards creating effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. In this regard, the Parliament passed the Right to Information Bill in 2014. The implementation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act would ensure state transparency and accountability encompassing various stakeholders with mandates to serve and inform the public.

With the enactment of this Act, Information Commissioners' Office of Maldives was established in July 2014 as an independent statutory body. In addition, local councils are being empowered to contribute towards strengthening local level planning and development and increasing citizen's engagement for stronger governance institutions.

### **Goal 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development**

The 2030 Agenda can be achieved through continued political support and commitment and strong coordination among all stakeholders. This requires effort and commitment by the government and state agencies, private sector, development partners, local governments, non-governmental organizations as well as the civil society working in harmony to achieve this immense task.

Partnership with the Public Service Media (PSM), knowledge transfer with the NGOs and civil society are some of the ongoing activities geared towards enhancing the partnerships for the goals. Additionally, information sharing and awareness sessions have been conducted for the State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to encourage their participation and ownership in implementing the SDGs.

Given the connectivity challenge that geography presents, the proliferation of Internet and mobile cellular subscriptions provide an important entry point to reach communities. In fact, mobile tele-density in the Maldives is among the highest in the world: there are 239 mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 people and based on the latest statistic there are nearly 300,000 broadband subscribers. The government seeks to capitalize on this high penetration rate to improve service provisions in areas of health, education and work with telecom service providers and banks to introduce schemes that can enhance financial inclusion for marginalized and remote communities.

Widening the role of private sector in providing services such as education, health, electricity, water and sanitation, transportation, communication and technological services and in infrastructure development is given importance throughout the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Strengthening the laws and regulations to facilitate and widen the private sector investment in such areas should be emphasized.

It is also important to mobilize additional financial resources through, ODA, concessional loans and through South-South cooperation initiatives. Related to this, capacity building will feature as a key determinant in the success of implementing the SDGs in the country.

Being a small island developing State, the country is vulnerable to environmental shocks. The main challenge is getting funds required for the implementation of the SDGs and capacity building to achieve the Goals throughout the implementation process. In addition, due to the population dispersion; additional efforts have to be made to reach everyone leaving no one behind.

Supported by International Financial Institutions (IFIs), in 2009 the government of Maldives initiated an ambitious and transformational reform towards modern taxation. Key to these initiatives was the introduction of Business Profit Tax (BPT) and Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2011. Furthermore, efforts to strengthen domestic revenue generation through a Green Tax introduced in 2015, levied from tourists and tourist facilities and Remittances Tax in 2016 imposed on money transferred out of the Maldives by foreigners employed in the Maldives have been introduced.

#### **h) Thematic analysis**

In the Maldives, the incidences of poverty are considered low with 7.3% of the population below \$1.90 (PPP) a day and an estimated 15% of the population living below the national poverty line. However, the gap between lower income groups and the affluent is widening. There are considerable socio-economic and sociocultural divides between the urban and rural islands, gender and age groups, with regards to access to basic social services.

The Human Development Index (HDI) ranking of Maldives has increased steadily, from 0.599 in 2000 to 0.701 in 2015, placing it 105<sup>th</sup> and in the high human development category and above average for South Asia. However, once adjusted for inequality, the HDI falls to 0.529 mainly due to the spatial disparity between the capital, Malé, and the rest of the country. This is exacerbated by gender disparity where women living in the outer islands are disproportionately affected when it comes to development outcomes.

While gender parity has been achieved in literacy rates, enrolment, and attainments at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, challenges remain, in the areas of women's political, economic, and social empowerment. Women's labor force participation is high, but limited to lower echelons of the economy. Women are slightly more likely than men to be unemployed. Even though there is no gender bias in primary and secondary schooling, girls' access to tertiary and professional education is curbed by conservative beliefs about girls' and women's mobility and primacy of household roles over others.

Geographical characteristics of the country are a major challenge for the government in the provision of essential services. The population is dispersed over 186 islands with 116 inhabited islands having populations below 1000. For the government, in addition to the high cost associated with service delivery, attracting talented individuals and transporting goods and services from one location to another is a huge obstacle. As per the recent census, the key reasons for internal migration are for education and employment. To cater to the needs of the population, the government is undertaking initiatives to relocate people from smaller islands to regional hubs to enable them to have better access to healthcare, education and transport facilities. Furthermore, to bring an end to the difficulties faced in transporting patients between islands, the government of Maldives has introduced a sea ambulance service.

One of the biggest developmental projects being carried out in Maldives is the development of 'Hulhumale', in the greater Male' region. In the mid-1990s, the idea of creating an artificial island from an existing lagoon and transforming it into a futuristic urban city which would accommodate the increasing population of the central region was conceptualized. Phase I of Hulhumalé reclamation, consisting of 188 hectares, began on 16th October 1997. Primary developments in terms of the required physical and social infrastructure and residential developments were

completed in 2004. The initial vision of the project has broadened to accommodate the growth of the island and now envisions the establishment of higher standards in the quality of living in the Maldives. Phase I and II were planned to be a combination of residential, commercial and industrial components acting as a catalyst to entice broad based investments in the fields of commerce. The island is fortified with sea walls 3 meters above sea level, which is higher than the highest natural island at only 2.5 meters above the sea. In addition to the development of quality healthcare and education in the island, the city, with its upcoming fiber optic network, is designed to incorporate the aspects of a ‘Gigabit Community’ to provide the required ICT backbone to achieve the speeds to cater for the regional market.

In the Maldives, fisheries and high-end tourism are the main economic drivers in the country; both of these sectors are reliant on the sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems. Maldives was an advocate for a stand-alone goal on oceans in the formulation of the Sustainable Development Goals as the country’s prosperity is dependent on conserving and protecting the oceans at a global level.

An innovative tool developed by the government of Maldives call “Keyolhu”, a web-based fisheries information system has allowed exporters to report fish purchase information and catch areas, and has assisted in tapping into new markets and to keep track of vital data and information necessary for managing the sector.

Maldives has the seventh largest coral reef system within its territorial boundaries and it is estimated to contain approximately 3% of the total coral reef area of the world. At a national level, the Maldives is working to expand, where feasible, its network of protected and managed areas in a sustainable manner. Currently, *Baa Atoll* in the Maldives has been designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve while a total of 42 areas have been declared as protected.

The contribution of fisheries to the economy is declining, however, it continues to be the only source of food security that the country is self-sufficient in. Rice, wheat flour, fruits, vegetables and other food items are largely or entirely imported. The country balances its food requirements through both domestic production and food imports. According to FAO, it is estimated that Maldives produces less than a tenth of its overall food requirements. Maldives’ agriculture is generally characterized by its subsistence nature. The contribution of the agriculture sector to the GDP is significantly lower, however, in terms of economic and social welfare it plays a major role in providing livelihood and employment opportunities for those residing in rural communities.

For the Maldives, climate change and extreme weather events are a reality. Sea level rise is an imminent threat in the Maldives, where 80% of land is less than 1 meter above sea level with 42% of its population and more than 70% of its critical infrastructure within 100 meters of the shorelines. In 2016, alone over 45 islands faced water shortages due to significant changes to weather patterns, including the hottest dry season recorded in the past 18 years. The unusually warm temperature due to El Nino resulted in more than 60% of coral reef bleaching, which adversely impacts underwater life and natural resources vital for the economy and livelihood. Building the resilience of the communities in the country is key to eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in the country.

#### **4. Means of implementation**

The existing institutional mechanisms will play a major role in implementing the SDGs in the country. In this regard, government and other state institutions whose mandate aligns with the SDGs will carry out the implementation process, in partnership with relevant stakeholders.

A Sustainable Development Goals Division has been established at the Ministry of Environment and Energy in May 2016. The Division is mandated to coordinate, monitor and report the implementation process of SDGs in the Maldives. It is also the role of this Division to advocate for the mainstreaming of SDGs in national policies, plans and strategies. As such, the Division has been carrying out awareness raising sessions in order to sensitise agencies, institutions and organizations to the 2030 Agenda.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the SDGs in the Maldives, a National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC) was formed to provide policy guidance and feedback from their respective agencies and other areas of knowledge and ensure the integration of economic, environmental, governance and social aspects in the implementation.

The Technical Committee for the SDGs implementation was formed at the end of 2016 where all the government offices and state agencies are included to act as focal points from their relevant agencies in providing critical and technical support (refer Annex 1).

For the implementation process to be effective and efficient, long-term strategic direction and focused policies will be vital to eliminate the duplication of work. This will in turn determine the success of national budgeting and execution of sectoral programs towards the implementation of the SDGs.

As a small island developing State, Maldives require financial as well as technical support from its international development partners in this regard. The lack of technical expertise, particularly in terms of data collection and management, remains a major hurdle in the implementation of SDGs in the country. This is compounded by the lack of trained staff and necessary equipment for data collection and management. Support is needed to implement the ongoing National Statistics Development Strategy of Maldives 2010-2019 and to strengthen the legal basis for data collection.

Furthermore, enhanced collaboration across government agencies is required in order to effectively track and monitor progress on SDGs. In this regard, the integration of data systems and the institutionalisation of a coherent and holistic mechanism for periodic and regular data collection will be critical. In addition to this, there is a need to strengthen the administrative data that is already available at different sectors since these can be used for evidence based decision-making and avoid duplication of work and resources.

## **5. Conclusion**

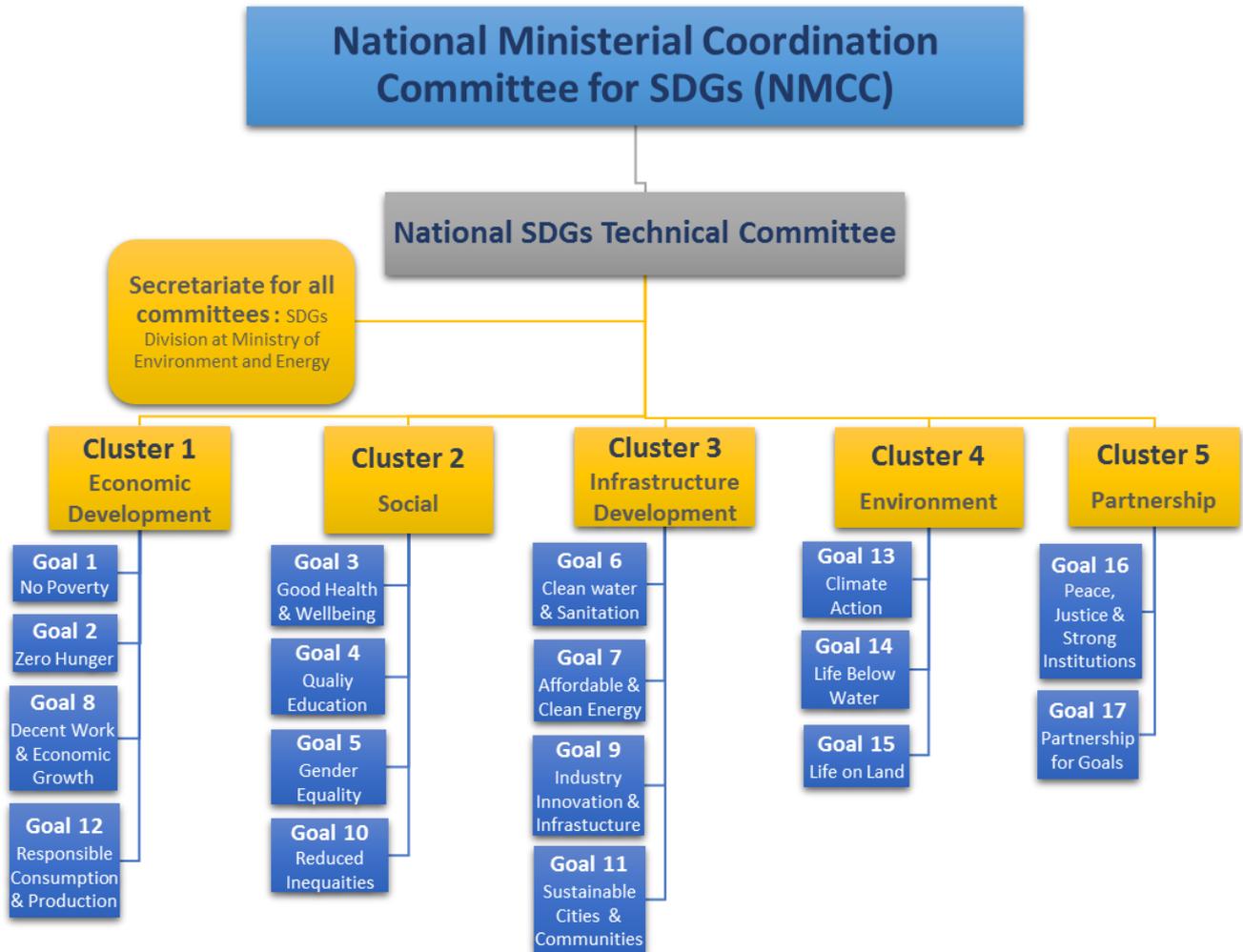
This review analyzed current efforts and planned activities for the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Maldives. In this regard, ongoing efforts are targeted towards mainstreaming the Goals in sectoral policies and plans by creating awareness and analyzing data gaps were highlighted. Furthermore, identifying national priorities and developing a monitoring framework are key activities scheduled for 2017.

This report also identified challenges faced by the Maldives in implementing 2030 Agenda as a Small Island Developing State. Collection and effective management of data across all sectors is one of the major challenges in the implementation process.

While Maldives has already made some headway in sustainable development in sectors such as health and education, more technical and financial support from domestic and international development partners is necessary to successfully implement the SDGs, particularly given the challenges in capacity development and resource mobilization.

Building upon the success of Millennium Development Goals, Maldives is determined to take the necessary steps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. By employing current institutional mechanisms and including all stakeholders – from island communities to government agencies – in the implementation process, Maldives is committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development.

## ANNEX 1 - Coordination Structure

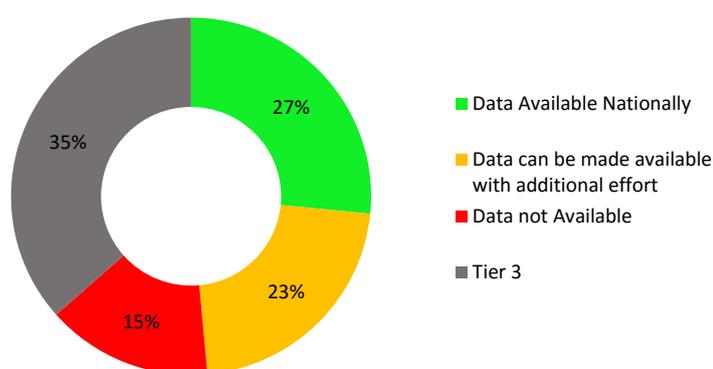


## ANNEX 2 - Data Updates on SDG Indicators: MALDIVES (March 2017)

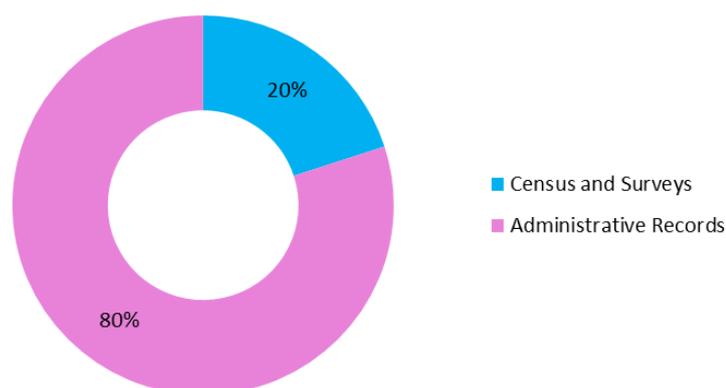
Preliminary Data Review conducted within the National Statistical System

- 64 indicators identified as data being *collected* through the currently ongoing statistical efforts
- 57 indicators identified as data can be collected with *additional effort*
- 37 indicators identified that *so far no mechanism* established to compile data
- 86 indicators identified as Tier 3<sup>1</sup>

Current Status of SDG Data Availability (% of indicators):



SDG Data Availability by Source:



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<sup>1</sup> 2 indicators are directly *not relevant* to Maldives context from these 86 indicators

**DATA AVAILABILITY STATUS AT GOAL LEVEL (Number of indicators)**

**Goal 1. No Poverty**

4	Data Available Nationally
5	Data can be made available with additional effort
1	Data not Available
4	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
14	

**Goal 2. Zero Hunger**

4	Data Available Nationally
3	Data can be made available with additional effort
2	Data not Available
4	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
13	

**Goal 3. Good Health and Well-being**

12	Data Available Nationally
7	Data can be made available with additional effort
4	Data not Available
4	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
27	

**Goal 4. Quality Education**

7	Data Available Nationally
1	Data can be made available with additional effort
0	Data not Available
3	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
11	

**Goal 5. Gender Equality**

4	Data Available Nationally
4	Data can be made available with additional effort
1	Data not Available
5	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
14	

**Goal 6. Clean Water and Sanitation**

2	Data Available Nationally
3	Data can be made available with additional effort
1	Data not Available
5	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
11	

**Goal 7. Affordable and Clean Energy**

2	Data Available Nationally
2	Data can be made available with additional effort
0	Data not Available
2	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
6	

**Goal 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth**

8	Data Available Nationally
5	Data can be made available with additional effort
2	Data not Available
2	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
17	

**Goal 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**

4	Data Available Nationally
3	Data can be made available with additional effort
2	Data not Available
3	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
12	

**Goal 10. Reduced Inequalities**

3	Data Available Nationally
2	Data can be made available with additional effort
0	Data not Available
6	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
11	

**Goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities**

3	Data Available Nationally
2	Data can be made available with additional effort
3	Data not Available
7	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
15	

**Goal 12. Responsible Consumption and Production**

0	Data Available Nationally
1	Data can be made available with additional effort
1	Data not Available
11	Tier 3
<hr/> <hr/>	
13	

### Goal 13. Climate Action

1	Data Available Nationally
2	Data can be made available with additional effort
0	Data not Available
5	Tier 3
8	

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### Goal 14. Life Below Water

0	Data Available Nationally
2	Data can be made available with additional effort
0	Data not Available
8	Tier 3
10	

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### Goal 15. Life On Land

0	Data Available Nationally
5	Data can be made available with additional effort
6	Data not Available
3	Tier 3
14	

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### Goal 16. Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

5	Data Available Nationally
7	Data can be made available with additional effort
5	Data not Available
6	Tier 3
23	

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### Goal 17. Partnerships for the Goals

5	Data Available Nationally
3	Data can be made available with additional effort
9	Data not Available
8	Tier 3
25	

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