



PROGRESS REPORT

April - June 2016

Integrated Governance Programme (IGP) Phase II

Supported by: Government of Australia and UNDP funds (Bureau for Policy and Programme Support & UNDP Core contributions)

Country: MALDIVES
Reporting Agency: UNDP

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Project Title: Integrated Governance Programme (IGP) II
Reporting period: April–June 2016

I. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The country has been attempting to build on considerable economic and human development gains, while simultaneously still challenged by deep socio-economic, environmental and political issues. Important challenges still remain, particularly with regard to issues of strengthening participation, transparency, accountability and rights-based approaches to development. Against this backdrop, UNDP commenced Phase II (2016-2020) of the Integrated Governance Programme. The new phase aims to create an enabling environment for citizen's engagement, especially young people and women, while simultaneously increasing their confidence in an independent, transparent and accessible legal system. The overall programme will contribute towards reduced societal tensions, improved citizen participation for sustainable human development.

The most notable progress during quarter 2 was in the area of youth engagement. UNDP through IGP organized the first ever social innovation camp-Miyaheli. The camp provided a platform for selected youth to develop their ideas for every day development challenges. Additionally, capacity building support to NGOs continued through the Medium Term Grants.

The preparatory work undertaken in the previous quarter paved the way of implementation of key activities during this Quarter, including women's access to justice survey aimed at identifying challenges facing women in accessing justice sector services, drafting of the legal aid bill and commencement of the clinical legal aid assessment for Maldives.

Additionally, preparatory consultations were held with key institutions such as Election Commission (EC) and Human Rights Commission (HRCM) of Maldives to strengthen civic engagement and foster dialogue on democratic principles and processes.

In order to assess the electoral and political landscape and the needs of the various electoral stakeholders, UN at the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs deployed an electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM). Based on stakeholder consultation, NAM would recommend the parameters for UN electoral assistance. This report is expected to be finalized in quarter 3 and will outline UNDP electoral support through IGP.

This report captures the progress from March–June 2016 as well as the challenges faced by the programme in the implementation of planned activities.

The programme contributes to the following UNDAF Outcomes and UNDP Country Programme Document Outputs:

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) outcomes:

Outcome 02: Gender equality advanced and women empowered to enjoy equal rights and opportunities in access to social, economic and political opportunities

Outcome 03: By 2020 Citizen Expectations for voice, sustainable development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance

Country Programme Document (CPD) Outputs:

Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance.

The IGP will seek to achieve the following inter-linked two programme results:

1. Increased voice and participation for stronger governance systems
2. Enhanced Access to Justice and Protection of Human Rights

II. RESOURCES FOR THE PROGRAMME

The total expenditure for this quarter was USD 214,478 against the annual budget of USD 518,004. The funds have mainly been utilised for providing technical support to Family Protection Agency and conduct key baseline assessments and the Social Innovation Camp. The challenges and delays faced in meeting implementation and expenditure targets are explained in the subsequent sections. The contributing partners are Government of Australia, and UNDP funds (Bureau for Policy & Programme Support and UNDP Core contribution).

III. RESULTS

Result Area 1: Increased Voice and Citizen Participation for Stronger Governance Systems

This Result Area focuses on strengthening engagement between state and citizens to ensure that the voices of the communities are taken into account and there is meaningful participation in political processes for a strengthened governance system. Through the use of different dialogue platforms and capacity building initiatives, Result Area One, aims to improve the linkages between public service providers, governance institutions, and the citizens and civil society organizations.

The programmatic interventions will have a special focus on the vulnerable groups and ensure their voices and concerns are brought to the decision making level to ensure development is participatory.

Following the groundwork laid in quarter 1 for the new initiatives, quarter 2 focused on implementation of new and innovative activities including the Social Innovation Camp and support to medium term grantees. Additionally, preparatory work was undertaken for the political party women's wing mapping study. The study aims to assess the current gaps within the party structure and outline recommendations for meaningful engagement and participation of women in the political sphere.

The details of activities under Result Area One are given below.

Output 1.1 Enhanced Capacity of Civil Society to Contribute to Policy Development and Democratic Discourse

UNDP continues to engage civil society as crucial stakeholders in the democratic process and as primary entry points to civic participation for youth, women and vulnerable groups. Enhancing their capacities to contribute to democratic discourse and expansion of democratic space through community dialogue, youth social innovation camps and medium-term grants are the key programmatic interventions planned under this Output.

During Quarter 2, UNDP supported to organize the first social innovation camp for youth which created a platform for youth to present their innovative ideas for everyday development challenges. Support to CSOs under the Medium Term Grant continued and preparatory work was undertaken to hold a civic education camp.

Issue-based dialogues in IGP focus atolls

One of the key objectives of conducting issue-based dialogues is facilitating community led and community owned local solutions for every day developmental challenges.

IGP had visited 3 of the four focus atolls, Thaa Atoll, Shaviyani Atoll and Haa Dhaalu Atoll in Quarter 1. A scoping visit to the remaining geographical focus atoll (Fuahmulah) was completed at the beginning of quarter 2. As with the past scoping missions, the IGP team met with key stakeholders including Councillors, Women's Development Committees (WDCs), court representatives, NGOs and made household visits to recognise what the community regarded as critical developmental issues for the islands. Based on the findings, IGP aims to roll out the issue-based dialogues in the geographical focus atolls in quarter 3.

The preparatory work for the social innovation camp included holding 'itch workshops' in the focus Atolls. The itch workshops aimed to bring groups of youth together to develop an innovative idea for an issue of concern within their island communities. Based on the positive feedback received for these workshops, a similar model for issue based dialogues will be explored and piloted. This will help to make community dialogues more solution-based. A concept note is also being developed and a pilot will be conducted in quarter 3.

Social Innovation Camp- Miyaheli

One major planned activity for this year under IGP was to hold the first Social Innovation Camp ‘Miyaheli’ in early June. The Social Innovation Camp aims to bring together youth, innovative ideas as well as digital and non-digital tools in order to create local solutions to developmental challenges.

The final preparatory work for the innovation camp continued during this quarter. This included launching the call for innovative ideas to be developed at the camp. Additionally, a call for participants was also launched, aiming to identify youth with selected skills that could support in making these ideas a reality. During this period, UNDP through south-south Country Office exchanges also sought the support of UNDP Sri Lanka, who had experience in rolling out similar innovative initiatives. Additionally, UNDP was successful in securing a partnership from the private sector for the camp; one of the main telecom companies Ooredoo agreed to provide technical and financial support.

A comprehensive media and social media plan was launched to promote the camp across the country. As the country had a vibrant youth social media presence, a social media communication plan was developed and rolled out. Communication materials developed included posters, video spots and information on the selected ideas and camp. Local networks at the island level such as NGOs and community youth leaders were engaged to promote information on the Camp. Closer to the date of the camp, ‘Itch workshops’ were held in several locations. This was seen as a more interactive approach to provide information about the camp and developing possible ideas for camp submission. In this regard, the IGP team held a total of 8 itch workshops including Male’, Laamu Atoll, Addu Atoll and Haa Dhaalu Atoll.

Miyaheli’s pre-camp outreach efforts proved to be a resounding success. By the camp date the Facebook page had received over 4000 likes. In addition, the camp received over a 100 submissions for ideas, and over a 100 submission forms from participants, proving there is a need as well as interest within Maldivian youth regarding social innovation. The top 5 ideas that were selected for the camp were ideas from North, South and the Central Maldives. During the camp event, Miyaheli received high traction and public interest on social media platforms such as twitter.

The camp was held in Maafushi Island on the 1st and 2nd June. The best 5 ideas, as well as the selected participants, were all taken to K. Maafushi along with tech experts, and mentors. The top 5 ideas as selected by the judges to be developed further at the camp were:

- 1) Women2Code: A coding program aimed at improving women’s representation in ICT
- 2) Heyvalla: An app that will bridge volunteers with NGOs based on their availability and skill set
- 3) Mathivaru: A Learning Management system in Dhivehi (the Maldivian natives language)
- 4) Community Gardens: An initiative to build community gardens to encourage community engagement

5) Atoll Ride: A speed boat ride sharing app which would lower the cost of travelling between the islands as well as fuel wastage

The camp essentially provided the participants with the space, creative environment, like-minded team members, and experts with relevant knowledge, to help them create a plan to make their innovative ideas a reality. At the end of the camp, 3 ideas were chosen to be provided seed-funding. These were, 'Heyvalla', 'Mathivaru' and Atoll Ride. The planned activities for the 3rd and 4th quarter include providing assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation support to the selected teams.

Civic education camps

IGP in partnership with Human Rights Commission will be organising a civic education camp in Haa Dhaalu Atoll. The camp is targeted for students of the Human Rights Club, aiming for active participation of students in the club, enable human rights discourse within the community, and to assist the students in engaging on community issues. This camp will take place at the end of quarter 3. The Camp will contribute towards creating an enabling environment for youth to actively participate in the democratic process and discourse.

Medium Term Grants (MTG) projects

IGP continued to monitor progress of the 3 medium term grantees who were awarded grants to implement development projects in the following areas; good governance, human rights, youth development, women empowerment etc. The NGOs that were awarded the grants are, Hope for Women, Naifaru Juvenile and Journey.

The second interim reports for the grant activities were due in Quarter 2. As part of their grant activities, the NGO Journey conducted a 5-day training in Laamu atoll for participants from different NGOs and stakeholder groups in service provision for vulnerable groups, gender equality and rights based approaches. Under its grant project "Economic Empowerment of Women", Hope for women held a 3-day training for women on how to run a business, business registration process, management of finances and marketing. The NGO also provided the participants with information on domestic violence, women's rights in Islam and the basic concepts of gender. Two out of the three NGOs faced difficulties conducting their activities, due to unforeseen challenges, such as lack of affordable land to conduct their activities, or lack of skilled personnel to train their participants. The third NGO was unable to hold their project activities for the second quarter due to capacity issues. IGP is working closely with these NGOs to address these challenges and re-evaluate their work plans.

Output 1.2 Increased Transparency and Accountability of Governance Processes

The Election Commission remains a key focus of IGP in light of the 2017 Local Elections and 2018 Presidential Election. Long-term support needs to be provided throughout the electoral cycle for a credible and nationally owned election. The new phase focuses on

strengthening the Commission's outreach and engagement with the public. In this regard, IGP will be supporting EC to develop a civic education strategy for effective voter and civic education.

Development of civic education strategy

In March of this year, the Elections Commission officially launched its Strategic Plan for the next 5 years. The Strategic Plan developed in partnership with UNDP, included promoting stakeholder and public engagement as one of its strategic goals. Under this goal, the Commission aims to increase knowledge and understanding of election processes and democratic principles through an extensive voter education campaign. As enhancing citizen participation is a key goal of IGP, preparatory work was undertaken this quarter to develop a civic education strategy for the Election Commission. This activity is expected to commence in Quarter 3. The civic education strategy will attempt to streamline the civic education activities conducted by EC with the activities of other agencies.

Output 1.3 Increased representations and participation of women in public sphere

Systematically creating awareness is seen as one of the most critical step for facilitating a change in public perception on the issue of women's role in the public and political sphere. This output focus on creating an enabling environment for women's meaningful participation and representation at the social, economic and political sphere.

Activities planned under this output include capacity building of women leaders, increasing knowledge and understanding of gender issues through gender sensitization sessions. Additionally, organizing community level dialogue sessions on gender issues and improving access to engage in the political sphere through political parties will be key areas.

Mapping study of Political Parties Women's Wings

IGP is working with women's wings of the major political parties to increase women's participation in the political sphere. Preparatory work was undertaken to develop the concept for capacity assessment of women's wings of political parties. This assessment aims to highlight the current context in which women's wing operate and also identify the key capacity gaps that exist. Additionally, training needs will be identified for those potential female leaders beyond political parties under this exercise. During Q2, initial consultations were held with political parties to assess their willingness to engage with UNDP on this initiative and the feedback received was very positive. This activity will be carried out in the third quarter.

Gender Equality Policy

IGP Phase I supported the development of the National Gender Equality Policy for the Government. This Policy was launched on International Women's Day, 8th March 2016. There was a delay in full implementation of the Policy in quarter 2 due to a request from the President's Office to change the content of outcome 1: leadership and governance. UNDP in

partnership with Ministry of Law and Gender will be organizing a new round of stakeholder consultation to further develop Outcome 1. Additionally, work is ongoing to establish steering committees for the other 3 outcome areas; economic empowerment, institutional gender mainstreaming and gender based violence.

Result Area 2: Enhanced Access to Justice and Protection of Human Rights

This Result Area focuses on strengthening access to justice and protection of human rights. Considering the need for further understanding key challenges in this area, the programme will continue to support policy research to ensure legislative and institutional reform is evidence based. As evidence suggests high prevalence of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), IGP will also support strengthening the SGBV referral mechanisms by supporting the implementation of the existing legislative frameworks.

Following the groundwork laid in quarter 1, for the new initiatives under Result Area 2, Quarter 2 focused on implementation of the following key activities. Support continued to the AGO in their effort to strengthen the legal aid mechanism including the development of a comprehensive legal aid Bill. An assessment to understand barriers facing women in seeking access to justice also commenced and 5-day domestic violence prevention training in collaboration with the Family Protection Authority (FPA) was conducted in one of the IGP regional-focused Atoll. Preparatory work for the first National Legal Aid Conference in collaboration with AGO and FPA is ongoing. Formulation of the National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP) has also reached the final stage.

The details of activities under Result Area Two are given below.

Output 2.1: Strengthened legal aid mechanism

Access to legal aid is essential for enhancing access to justice for vulnerable groups and is considered as a fundamental human right. IGP supported the AGO in developing a green paper on options for a legal aid mechanism in the Maldives and subsequently supported the AGO to conduct public and stakeholder consultations on the green paper. Building from this work, UNDP is supporting the AGO in developing the legal aid bill. In addition, preparatory work was undertaken for the community based paralegal baseline assessment.

Legal Aid Bill

A local consultant will work closely with the counterparts from the Legal Sector Resource Centre (LSRC) at AGO during this process and subsequently support capacity development of the LSRC staff. Additionally, the local consultant will work closely with key stakeholders during the bill formulation and a final draft is expected to be produced in Quarter 3.

Output 2.2: Strengthened referral mechanism to address SGBV

Strengthening the referral mechanism is critical for addressing the high prevalence of sexual and domestic violence in the Maldives. One of the major focuses under this output is to support implementation of existing legislations such as the Domestic Violence Prevention Act (DVPA) and support strengthening institutional mandates. Building on the findings of the DVPA implementation gap analysis and following a validation workshop conducted in Quarter 1, UNDP is supporting the FPA in developing key regulations under the DVPA. Preparations for the First National Legal Aid Conference, focusing on establishing an alternative mechanism within relevant government institutions to provide pro bono legal services to victims of SGBV is also underway. In order to ensure successful implementation of the DVPA and to strengthen the referral mechanism, UNDP supported FPA to conduct training for stakeholders in one Atoll. Initiatives under this Output, aims to introduce new and strengthened existing legal aid and justice services to prevent and address SGBV.

Formulation of key regulations under the Domestic Violence Prevention Act

Following up from the stakeholder consultation in Quarter 1, IGP will be supporting FPA to develop and implement the overarching regulations and protocols required under the DVPA Act. This regulation would ensure a harmonized approach to dealing with domestic violence nationally. Based on the stakeholder consultations, the General Regulation for the Prevention of Domestic Violence under the DVPA will be formulated. This consultancy is expected to commence in quarter 3.

Mechanism for Pro Bono legal services to victims of SGBV

UNDP continued the preparation work for the First National Legal Aid Conference under the theme of “Pro Bono Initiatives: Building Partnership in Legal Aid” to be jointly organized with the AGO and the FPA. In quarter 2, a taskforce consisting of representatives from AGO, FPA and UNDP was setup to coordinate the preparations for the conference, which will be held on 20th of July 2016. In addition, under a pro-bono partnership with the UNDP, a team of experts from the American Bar Association produced a research paper on best practices for establishing formal pro bono legal initiatives. This document will form the basis for pre-conference consultations with key stakeholders which are currently on going.

The main objective of the conference is to engage more with the legal community and relevant stakeholders to provide alternative legal aid mechanisms, including pro-bono initiatives. Furthermore, this conference will open up avenues to enhance accessibility of legal aid services at community level, especially for vulnerable groups including victims of SGBV.

Domestic Violence Prevention Training at local level

IGP in partnership with the FPA conducted stakeholder training on prevention of domestic violence at local island level. The 5-day training aimed at strengthening the technical capacity and improving the responsiveness of all relevant stakeholders to incidents of domestic violence.

The first training was conducted in quarter 2 in Fuvahmulah with a total of 40 participants (31 female, 9 male) from various institutions such as police, school, hospital and island office. Towards the end of the training, participants prepared an Atoll-level advocacy plan and a domestic violence prevention group was formed among the participants to implement the plan. FPA will be working closely with this group to roll out the advocacy plan at the local level.

Women's Access to Justice Study

To complement the 2014 Legal and Justice Sector Baseline Study, UNDP commenced the women's access to justice study aimed towards identifying the specific barriers facing women, especially the vulnerable groups such as the victims of domestic violence in seeking access to justice. In this Quarter, the local consultancy firm has completed the quantitative component of the study by conducting the public perception survey among women in Male' and four other Atolls (IGP-focused areas). The qualitative component (stakeholder consultations and individual interviews with victims of domestic violence) will be completed in early next quarter and final report is expected by end-July.

This assessment is expected to provide a deeper understanding on women's access to justice; to identify how/if women access justice, which barriers they are facing in accessing justice through formal justice system and the performance of justice sector institutions in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in justice service delivery for women.

Output 2.3: Improved capacities for treaty body reporting and implementation

Given that Maldives is party to seven of the core international human rights instruments and two of the optional protocols, further strengthening of national capacity for treaty reporting, monitoring and implementation of treaty body and UPR recommendations is essential. A well-functioning national human rights coordination mechanism is crucial for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Country. Under this output, UNDP is supporting the Ministry of Law and Gender (MoLG), in formulating the National Human Rights Action Plan aimed toward establishing an effective national human rights mechanism to coordinate and implement treaty body and UPR recommendations.

Development of National Human Rights Action Plan

In this quarter, significant progress has been made towards the formulation of National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP). A high-level steering committee with representation

from MoLG, AGO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Human Right Commission of the Maldives, civil society and UN offices, chaired by the Attorney General has been established to advise and oversee the formulation of the NHRAP. In order to ensure inclusivity and national ownership, a wide range of stakeholders were consulted at local and national level. Additionally, social media platforms were also used to generate discussion among public on the formulation of the NHRAP.

The NHRAP is expected to be finalised by early next quarter. The NHRAP will ensure that there is an institutional set up for coordinating implementation of Maldives human rights obligations as well as better monitoring of recommendations received from Treaty Bodies and UPR mechanism.

Output 2.4: Strengthened functions and capacity of legal and justice sector institutions

Strengthening the functions and capacity of legal and justice sector institutions is essential to ensure access to justice, especially for the vulnerable groups. Strengthening legal education is key to improving the quality of the legal and justice sector institutions and the services delivered by them. Under this output, UNDP is working with Universities to support legal education through development of interactive and practical skills based legal training including clinical legal education (CLE). In this quarter, UNDP has commenced the baseline study to develop and implement a CLE programme in the Maldives.

Baseline Assessment for the Clinical Legal Education Programme

In close consultation with the national universities, an international expert was recruited to conduct a baseline assessment for the development and implementation of a CLE programme in the Maldives. This consultancy is expected to be completed in Quarter 3.

The recommendations would advocate for a stronger legal education system which will have a core focus on developing pro bono ethics in law graduates. Such programmes would train students in core practical legal skills and provide the opportunity to practice law through advising clients in free legal advice centres operated by the clinical legal education programmes. This would create an environment for greater access to justice and rule of law especially for the vulnerable groups.

CHALLENGES

The key challenges were;

- Delay in implementation due to a change in government policy
- Change in government priority/focus due to fluidity of the external political environment
- Weak communication and coordination between government counterparts delaying collection and analysis of data for assessments

LESSONS LEARNED

- Closer coordination with national partners for smooth implementation of planned activities including collection of data/information prior to commencement of activities
- Consultations with all relevant stakeholders especially the President's Office during the initial stages of key activities

ACTION TAKEN TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES/LESSONS LEARNED

- A number of email exchanges, meetings and discussions were held with the implementing partners to expedite implementation of project activities.
- Strategic meeting was held with national partners and UNDP RR including the Attorney General & Supreme Court aimed at building a stronger partnership
- Regular review of risk matrix of Medium Term Grantees for smooth implementation