



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

**STRENGTHENING AND ENHANCING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE
MALDIVES**

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Brief Description:

The objective of this project is to strengthen and enhance civic engagement in the Maldives through the provision of support for the modification of the legal and regulatory framework for civil society organizations, enhancing of the interaction between public authorities and civil society through improved information availability and exchange, enhancing coordination mechanisms and supporting capacity development of both Government and civil society.

Signature Date: 19 August 2010



UNDAF Outcome 2010: By 2010, people enjoy greater rights and have increased capacity to fulfill their responsibilities, and to actively participate in national and local levels of governance

UNDAF Outcome 2011-2015: By 2015 civil society is active and thriving

Expected Outcome/Indicator: National laws and measures are enacted and put into place that provide enabling environment for civil society

Expected Output(s) and Indicator(s): Institutional mechanisms for regular consultations and engagements in place, regular consultations between the Government and civil society organizations; arrangements in place for cooperation among the civil society on economic, social and developmental programmes and issues; capacity development for civic organization within themselves, strengthening of key factors (political, institutional, social and economic) of the civic society organization.

Implementing Partners: Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA)

Other Responsible Parties: NGOs and Civil Society

Programme Period: 2010-2012 Programme Component: Democratic Governance Project Title: Strengthening and Enhancing Civic Engagement in the Maldives Atlas Project ID: 00060493 Project Duration: 2010 to 2012 Management Arrangement: National Execution (NEX)	Budget: Total budget: \$ 595,000 Allocated resources: Regular (UNDP) \$ 300,000 Government: In kind Unfunded Budget \$ 295,000
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Agreed by (Ministry of Home Affairs):

Mr. Mohamed Shihab
Minister of Home Affairs
19 August 2010

Agreed by (UNDP):

Mr. Andrew Cox,
UNDP Resident Representative
19 August 2010

I. Situation Analysis

A. General

The Republic of Maldives is a 500-mile long chain of small, low-lying coral islands, grouped into 20 administrative districts or atolls. Out of a total population of 315,000 people, 49 percent are females. Traditionally dependent on fishing, the economy is now largely based on a thriving tourism industry.

Maldives undertook a democratic reform agenda in 2004. The new Constitution of the Maldives was ratified on 7th August 2008, defining the legal framework to establish democratic governance in the country. Following this change, for the first time in the country's history separation of powers of judiciary, legislative and the executive took place in 2008. The first multi-party election for Presidency was held in October 2008 resulting in the change of a 30 year regime. Among the major changes laid out in the new Constitution includes introduction of decentralized governance to the country. It is also notable that by defining the rights of freedom of expression and association in the Constitution; the foundation has been laid for civil society to prosper.

B. Civil Society Development

Currently, there is limited information on the civil society sector in the Maldives. There are 1125 organizations (registered) however it is not clear how many of them are active or what their main development functions are. Furthermore, due to this absence of clarity, there are various interpretations on the means in which the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can contribute to the development of the country. Due to the increasing political tensions, there is also a need to promote a "neutral" NGO network. A UNDP-supported project of the Government of Maldives can seek to provide an impartial space to discuss better working relations between different NGOs.

Even though there have been some commendable attempts (i.e. – Atoll Development for Sustainable Livelihoods and the work of several NGOs such as the work done by CARE Society, SHE and others), the civil society sector of the Maldives is under-capacitated. Those NGOs that do exist have limited organizational viability and weak internal management systems. There are a few exceptions but these are limited to the larger NGOs based in Male. Therefore, it is difficult for the majority of NGOs to interact meaningfully with the public sector in policy dialogues or otherwise. Moreover, the public sector also needs to have a good understanding of the type of contributions that NGOs can make. Institutionalized forums for public dialogue and consultation needs to be developed, particularly for those civil society organizations based outside the capital, Male.

Existing legislation that regulates the not-for-profit, non-governmental sector of the Maldives is in need of thorough review and revision in order to improve them. For example, the current legislation focuses predominately on registration yet offers no amongst organizations of civil society (hence, football clubs and some businesses have equal status with public benefit associations). The government supports some community infrastructure and other development initiatives undertaken by NGOs. There are no formal or institutionalized arrangements for offering fiscal incentives to NGOs. However some training on NGO and financial management and grants and loans for business activities have been provided. In addition, formal approval is required to access foreign financing. In line with international best practices, there is a need for other relevant legislation, such as a law on volunteerism, which would stimulate a healthy civil society.

II. Lessons Learned from past cooperation

Support to civil society is a priority area in UNDP-supported initiatives and is a strategy in most programme interventions. Some past initiatives that were carried out by UNDP that have focused exclusively on supporting NGOs and community-based initiatives include, Atoll Development for Sustainable Livelihoods (ADSL) II and the South-South Grants Programme. The latter has focused more exclusively on the Tsunami recovery.

The ADSL programme, which was carried out from 2000 to 2007 is particularly relevant to this project. It has contributed to three areas, i) ensure that planning efforts take into account community-level efforts, ii) attest that local development plans reflect gender concerns, are in-line with national development plans, and are harmonized with national development planning processes, and iii) contribute to income-generating activities and community infrastructure, particularly for vulnerable groups. A number of the Community-based Organizations (CBOs) and NGOs supported subsequently received grants from other development partners showing that improvements in capacity.

The South-South Grants Facility provides small grants directly to local NGOs in order to contribute to the Tsunami recovery process at the local level. It deploys the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP) mechanism as a basis for distribution and selection. Grants have mainly focused on building social infrastructure and rebuilding the capacity of communities. This arrangement also contributed to the capacity building of a number of civil society organization in selected localities.

Other recent initiatives that reflect UNDP and NGO cooperation include the activities that were carried out in establishing an auto-pot system under which two green houses and a growing nursery was established in selected islands with the help of a number of social groups from the respective islands. Similarly, initiatives jointly funded by UNDP and Global Fund like the activities carried out by Society for Health Education (SHE) to increase awareness and knowledge about sexually transmitted infections and HIV and to prevent HIV transmission among high-risk groups of the population are also initiatives that shows successful cooperation of UNDP and NGOs. Work is also being carried out with Journey (a sub-recipient under the Substance Abuse and Prevention Program -SAPP) in organizing and facilitating group discussions on identifying interventions to address DU and IDU concerns, facilitating the Peer Educators trainings on HIV/AIDS risks for drug users and outreach to IDUs and also in providing training for Law Enforcement Officers on DU and IDU concerns and drug prevention as Resource Persons.

UNDP is also working closely with a small number of newly formed but active human rights NGOs such as Transparency Maldives, Maldivian Democracy Network, Raajje Foundation and others. Some of the activities recently undertaken commemoration of the Anti-Corruption Day and to hold the Human Rights Day Forum in 2008 and 2009, domestic observations of the 2009 Parliamentary and local elections of the Maldives. A civil society pilot mapping mission and baseline assessment of NGOs was conducted by Raajje Foundation, a Male' based NGO, supported by UNDP.

III. Objective

The main objectives of this project are to strengthen the capacity of the civil society and improve the quality of interaction between public authorities and civil society. This will be

premised on strengthening the legal and regulatory framework, availability and exchange of improved information, capacity development, and mechanisms for interface.

IV. Strategy

The above objective will be met by pursuing government strategy, spelled out in government's strategic action plan as well as the jointly developed United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and also UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD) 2008-2010. The short term goal or strategy outlined in the Manifesto states to "facilitate and promote an environment that encourages the participation of individuals, civil society groups and political parties in constructive criticism of government policy and other matters of national importance".

Five outputs will be achieved under this project. These five outputs, in short, will encompass i) compiling information on the sector and improving the public perception of civil society, ii) supporting capacity and accountability interventions, iii) creating a sustainable revenue stream for NGOs through a grants scheme, iv) promoting participation in national and local decision-making processes and, v) strengthening NGO legislation. The ultimate goal is to help creating an enabling environment for the establishment and functioning of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and assist CSOs to become more efficient and accountable development partners and engage them meaningfully in the delivery of services to the public, the "rights holders", particularly to the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged. This is in line with UNDP's global rights-based pro poor approach to development programming.

The success of the project depends, in part, on the following factors:

- Political and social stability
- Continuity of political climate favorable and conducive towards human rights promotion and protection, provision of access to justice and encouraging civic engagement.
- Political will and commitment by the Government as well as civil society
- Support at the senior levels (Executive, Legislative & Judiciary), governmental media (Radio & TV), as well as the press (digital and printed) in facilitating achievement of project impact
- Fair cooperation, goodwill, teamwork spirit, responsiveness and commitment of key stakeholders as the project management team.
- Continuity of management and coordination arrangements for the total duration of the project to achieve the desired integration and unification
- Timely release of funds by UNDP/Donors
- Effective UNDP support and backstopping at the Country Office and at the regional levels

V. Outputs and Activities

As indicated above, five outputs will be achieved through this project. These outputs reflect the developmental priorities of the Government of the Maldives, the needs of the NGO community, and UNDP programme priorities.

- A. **Output 1:** Ensuring baseline information exists on the status of Civil Society Organizations as well as working toward improving their public image/perception

The purpose of this output is to determine clear base-line information on the organizational structure and scope of NGOs as well as improve public perception. The former is particularly relevant in order to have a better understanding of civil society and measure their progress or lack of progress over time. This will be ascertained through five discrete activity sets designed to assess the existing status of the sector in the Maldives and a number of public activities to elevate their public perception.

Activity 1.1 – Scoping of Civil Sector: A comprehensive scoping of the civil sector will be prepared to establish the size, structure, function, and funding arrangements of non-governmental actors in the Maldives. Furthermore Ministry of Home affairs will work with NGO's In order to develop and maintain an on-line directory.

Description:

- This will add upon the scoping exercise already initiated by Rajje Foundation with support of UNDP, in Male' and three Upper Northern Atolls.
- This scoping exercise is to further take into account capacity needs and can thus be deployed as a programme support tool for additional initiatives to strengthen NGOs.
- In consultation with a hired firm, the content of information to be collected is to be agreed upon. This will include – but not be limited to - the overall numbers registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), the main functions/purposes of NGOs, their staffing size, their revenue base and source, the nature of their internal governance (i.e. – board, reporting, etc.), their working relations with counterparts (private sector, public authorities, international community, etc.), groups they serve, and their main capacity needs.
- The survey will be undertaken and – given the distances between islands – it can also be disseminated via email or an on-line site established for this purpose.
- The directory provides information on the internal management, main focus, address, and website addresses of NGOs.
- This directory would also designate NGOs by their function (i.e. –sports club, social benefit organization, etc.)

Activity 1.2 – Maldivian NGO Networking Day and Forum: With the close engagement of UNDP, a 'Maldivian NGO Networking Day and Forum' that coincides with the launching of the above-mentioned report will be initiated.

Description:

- In order to do the above,, a small roundtable of leading civic activists in the Maldives will be convened to discuss the potential merit and importance of creating a collective national vision and hosting a NGO networking day.
- A suitable time will be selected to establish a Maldivian NGO day that allows NGOs to share their wares, converge for a common purpose, and exchange ideas amongst each other.
- Part of this event will focus on substantive discussions pertaining to networking.
- Invitations will be extended to as many different organizations and stakeholders as practicable for an open meeting.
- The focus of such an event will be on stimulating issues while emphasizing common interests and joint purpose.
- An external expert, with local organizations, can assist in moderating the discussion.
- At the end of the day, considerations will be given to formulate clear consultative objectives of a NGO network through discussion with a wide representative cross-section of members and establish a committed core group of individuals or

organizations (by voting or simply signing up) to devote time to initiatives, network coordination and management.

- The network core group (committee or board) will be representative of the membership and will view network success as an explicit objective of their professional lives.

Activity 1.3 – Public Campaign on NGO Image: A public campaign to be initiated to improve the image and contribution of Maldivian NGOs.

Description:

- During the NGO Networking Day, a competition for a slogan (i.e. – ‘civil society in action – we can do this together for the better of the Maldives) that captures a national vision of positive opportunities for partnership will be considered.
- This will be augmented with a multi-media communication strategy presenting the significance of NGO contributions to Maldivian development in written, video, Internet, and radio formats.
- The strategy will review ongoing and widely practised communication and social marketing practices, attention will be given to utilization of existing practices as a means to optimize limited resources as well as means to reach community level structures.

Activity 1.4 – NGOs Code of Conduct: For better professional functioning of the NGO community, a clear articulated “Code of Conduct” to be introduced to regulate the governance of the sector. UNDP in collaboration with the NGO’s will assist the consultation for developing the Code of Conduct.

Description:

- A ‘Code of Conduct’ would enable NGOs to self-regulate their behavior, activities, and internal governance affairs as well as to serve as a focal point of cohesion should a network be formed.
- Based on consultative input from select NGO members, a draft charter will be prepared with at least two major sections: Standards of Conduct and Code Observance.
- Listed under the standards section are principles and values of voluntarism such as community involvement, fairness and equity, ethics, transparency and accountability, governance, independence, communication and gender equality.

B. Output 2: Capacity development and accountability interventions to strengthen the interaction between Government and CSO

The purpose of this output is to strengthen civil society and their counterparts in government in order to improve the quality of interaction between the actors, particularly on the aspect of service delivery by the civil society organizations. This will be accomplished through well-designed capacity development initiatives and trainings in order to equip actors with the means for improved dialogue and partnership. Three activity sets will be pursued, one focused on civil society actors, one focused on their government counterparts, and the last on bringing stakeholders together around specific public policy issues.

Activity 2.1 – NGOs Capacity Development and Training Module: Based on the survey noted above, a NGO capacity development intervention and training module to be prepared.

Description:

- An appropriate consultant/firm – either nationally or internationally – recruited to provide topical trainings on basic NGO organizational and institutional needs.
- Suggested topics include: i) understanding the legal and organizational basis for local NGO management, including internal governance mechanisms, ii) appropriate tools of strategic planning, iii) establishing basic management information and communications tools, iv) skills required for advocacy and negotiation, v) grant preparation and accessing financial resources, and vi) the benefits of strengthening State/Citizen relations.
- Other relevant areas could be readily identified through structured interviews with Atoll and Island community representatives.
- These trainings could unfold formally or informally, consist of large forums or half-day seminars, result in training of trainers (ToTs) or simply certificates of attendance, target one constituent or two, etc.
- It would prove beneficial to invite prominent members of local communities to tell ‘real life’ stories of interaction with officials as well as inform others as to how they have benefited or were disadvantaged by the law and larger policy framework.
- Moreover, and as noted, different NGOs and Government bodies maintain varying levels of sophistication and knowledge. Staggered approaches to training for different audiences – from novice to expert – will be encouraged when feasible.

Activity 2.2 - Policy Documents on Cooperation: As a result of engagements mentioned above, a Policy Document on Cooperation (PDC) between the Government of Maldives and civil society sector will be developed

Description:

- Currently, the Government of the Maldives does not maintain any formal institutionalized arrangements with the non-governmental sector or CSOs that set forth mutual benefits for both parties.
- Public authorities in several European countries have taken to the adoption of policy documents on cooperation (PDCs) that express the views of the State (including parliament) on the role of civil society.
- These PDCs normally pursue two primary objectives, both of which would be particularly helpful to the citizens, their respective organizations, and officials of the Maldivian government.
- First, in recognition of the voluntary sector’s contribution to societal development, PDCs encourage public participation in political life. Second, they establish mechanisms for cooperation and often focus on reducing the burden of the State in delivering public services.
- There are many different types of PDCs, from bi-lateral documents of agreement (i.e. – UK Compacts) to de-facto agreements adopted as official policy or programmes (i.e. – Croatian Programme for Cooperation).
- Moreover, PDCs’ importance lies in the process of production, not just in the final paper. NGOs and Government officials would work together to draft the PDC.
- The development of PDCs will engage all relevant actors and the size of consultation and expectations will be negotiated at the outset.
- A PDC would normally include the following elements: i) a statement of representation, ii) a statement of principles, iii) areas and instruments of cooperation, iv) funding-related issues, v) implementation modalities, and vi) monitoring and evaluation standard. One of the important attributes of such PDCs is the adoption of

local policy documents premised on the content of the nationally designed instrument. Both England and Estonia have engaged in this practice.

Activity 2.3 – Civil Society Manual for the Government: A manual for Government on how to work with communities, NGOs, and support social mobilization techniques to be prepared.

Description:

- This exercise will be done in tandem with the development and implementation of extensive training modules for select line ministries and government officials on the significance and nature of NGOs in the Maldives.
- The latter exercise will convene Atoll ‘CSO sensitization’ seminars focused on high to mid-level government employees within sectoral areas of interest (i.e. – education, health) as the audience.
- Based on the level of dialogue (frequently asked questions or FAQs, etc.) at the seminars and successful modules, a succinct and user-friendly guidebook to be prepared for civil servants on how they can utilize and improve interaction with civil society.

Activity 2.4 – Public Policy Forums: Approximately two or three times a year, under the facilitation of UNDP, public policy forums will be initiated between members of the government and non-governmental actors.

Description:

- The forums can be half-day policy seminars and exchange on specific topics relevant to Maldivian development.
- For example, forums could be held on issues related to democratic reform process in the Maldives, dangers of global warming or the impact of tourism on environmental conservation.
- External experts could be brought in to moderate and/or participate.

C. Output 3: Strengthen a consistent revenue streams of CSOs in order that they can serve as more productive partners in assisting the Government of Maldives (GoM) in accomplishing development objectives

The purpose of this output is to continue to provide small grants in order to sustain the activities of NGOs. Although, eventually, revenue sources are to be diversified to include public contracting and state contributions, economic activities, and individual/corporate philanthropy, NGOs in the Maldives require immediate assistance for small-scale activities in order to raise their visibility.

Activity 3.1 – Small Grants Programme for NGOs: With the support of UNDP, a well-targeted three-tier small grants programme will be developed to support organizational, sectoral, and institutional capacity development of NGOs as well as assistance for initiatives to support self-financing for the sustainability of NGOs. Under this project, technical support will be provided for the development of a small grants scheme within the Government including implementing and managing the system. UNDP and the Ministry of Home Affairs will collaborate to mobilise resources for the actual disbursement of funds.

Description:

- Certain criteria and parameters are to be adhered to by all, such as co-financing mechanisms (at least in-kind) for sustainability, appropriate documentation of activities, etc.
- The three types of grants are to serve different audiences for different purposes. Organizational grants can support additional training activities around matters such as financial management, human resource management, advocacy, gender mainstreaming, cross-cultural relations, etc., and basic infrastructure such as a computer or office space, and study tours. Assistance could also be provided for self-financing initiatives for the sustainability of NGOs.
- Sectoral grants are to reflect the successful “project grant” modality but with greater focus and perhaps limit itself to the most pressing problems in the Maldivian community and may consider different themes based on perceived needs. This may include areas such as the promotion of gender equality, involving youth, promoting human rights and good governance.
- Institutional grants are to encourage multiple partnerships (between and among different constituents of society) and advocacy efforts to better position NGO efforts in the Maldivian context. The type of activities supported might include State-Civil partnerships against corruption, establishment of social monitoring groups, promotion of civic education, policy reform to improve social welfare benefits, etc.
- UNDP-supported small grants schemes for NGOs are successfully implemented in the context of Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP) in countries such as Iran, Egypt, and Pakistan. The experience of providing small grants in the form of micro-credit schemes have also proved positive in many countries such as Bangladesh.
- The prior experience of UNDP Maldives with small grants schemes is also helpful in this context.

- D. Output 4:** Local governance processes that promote participation, especially of women and youth, in decision-making and planning related to the management of ecological, social and economic vulnerability are strengthened

The purpose of this output is to introduce participatory techniques and planning in a demonstration function in limited Atolls and in the capital of Male. The objective of participatory methodologies and new models of analysis is to achieve better targeting of vulnerable constituencies both broad based through provision of social services such as primary education and health care or narrow targeting such as food based schemes or micro-credit for rural female headed households. In the area of monitoring and implementation of the NDP and budget allocations, several tools are worth considering by UNDP, local authorities, and NGOs, including: i) Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) and documenting “voices of the poor”, and ii) ex-ante social impact assessments. All of these could be implemented by community-based organizations and NGOs, in collaboration with other interested parties, including the Island Development Committees (IDCs) and the Government of the Maldives. These processes require civic engagement in order to democratize fiscal policy making and service delivery as well as demystify how macro-economic policies are designed.

Activity 4.1 – Reference Guide on Participatory Tools: A reference guide on various participatory tools to be prepared in order to provide instructional material for those wishing to engage in basic social monitoring and decision-making processes.

Description:

- **Participatory poverty assessments (PPAs)** and documenting “**voices of the poor**”, for example, explore what the poor themselves see as the most effective actions for poverty reduction that can be addressed by: individuals or families, communities, government agencies, and other institutions such as donors. It gives a face and expression to vulnerable groups, moving away from referring to Maldivian citizens that live below a specific income-level as a generic mass labeled as “poor”. Participatory diagnostic tools further investigate local perceptions of key policy changes related to economic reform and/or liberalization.
- Ex-ante **social impact assessments** would assist in measuring the likely effect of proposed reform packages within the Maldivian context. These type of assessments have value beyond social policy but are often time consuming and expensive to implement. Thus, initial focus could support the endeavors of national/Atoll planning. For example, what would be the result of introducing higher water user fees? The Government could also provide support to ex-ante assessments in areas such as the introduction of user fees for social services if privatization proceeds in some areas such as water. NGOs tend to serve as design and implementation partners in the case of most country experience with social impact assessments.
- Whereas not these approaches may be used, it is significant to provide different stakeholders with a wide variety of options that could possibly be deployed.
- A variety – or a mixture – of these mechanisms, even if on a pilot scale, could be pursued in the Maldives in order to strengthen cooperation between National/Atoll/Island authorities and their respective constituencies. This would require the selection of sites with a representative NGO (and receptive government) in order to pilot such activities. Should they be successful, they can be scaled up to additional settings.

Activity 4.2 – Undertake pilot projects on means to institutionalize citizen/state interaction:

A participatory development model project focusing on civil society contribution to local development will be initiated in selected islands and criteria will be developed for the selection.

Description:

- This activity will be comprised of building capacities within local government units and civil society to promote and facilitate engagement of civil society in local level planning.
- Building civil society capacity to manage projects at local level and promote joint initiatives between local government and civil society.
- Support building partnerships between local government units and civil society in providing information to public on ongoing development projects and issues of public interest.

E. Output 5: Legal and regulatory framework in place to enable increased participation of stakeholders, especially civil society and media, in the delivery and planning of socio-economic services.

This output will seek to undertake a thorough review of current Associations Act 1/2003 (and other related legislation) with a view to significantly reforming (if not entirely re-drafting) the law as current practice impedes autonomous, sustainable, and representative civil society

growth. Furthermore, in an examination of such legislation, additional consideration will be given to other laws that may be beneficial to creating a vibrant and independent civil society.

Activity 5.1 – Revision of Association Act: Support will be provided in order to thoroughly revise (or re-draft) the existing Associations Act as well as an action plan for dissemination.

(Note: The Ministry of Home Affairs has undertaken consultations with NGOs in order to revise existing legislation and develop a policy on civil society engagement. The Ministry has asked for UNDP's assistance which is being considered. The output of these consultations and the development of a policy will inform the review of the Associations Act).

Description:

- This activity set will be comprised of hiring legal advice in order to thoroughly revise (or re-draft) the existing Associations Act as well as an action plan for dissemination.
- This may be done externally by an international organization (i.e. – European Center for Non-for-Profit Law) that can provide other country examples in order to delineate efficiencies and deficiencies.
- However, this international firm is to work closely with Maldivian lawyers and/or associations representing lawyers.
- The exercise would commence by convening a high-level seminar/round-table - inviting relevant development actors from the Government (i.e. – Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Justice), parliament, and policy-oriented CSOs - to assess feasibility of policy reform with benchmarked indicators for change.
- To the extent possible, the outcomes of this event are to be shared with the general Maldivian populace (i.e. – via media campaign or dedicated website) allowing them to comment or offer input.
- A focal point institution (local Maldivian NGOs such as the Law Society) is to be appointed to collate this information as a reference for drafting of the new law.
- Upon collection of this information, a team (including international organization) will be assigned to draft new, comprehensive, and cohesive NGO legislation that is satisfactory to all parties.

Activity 5.2 – Support to additional legal reforms and policy development for civil society enhancement: During the above-stated exercise, consideration is to be given to the introduction of additional legislation that will stimulate a healthy and vibrant civil society in the Maldives and to develop policies for enhancing civil society development.

Description:

- This recommendation is contingent on willingness and energy of various drafting parties and interested stakeholders. There is a danger that fatigue can set-in.
- The recommendation would include a more thorough review of complementary legislation that may be beneficial to Maldivian civil society. For example, most countries have different legislation to distinguish between different actors found within the non-governmental sector that reflect the different status and functions of organizations (i.e. – cooperatives, foundations, networks, public benefit associations). If appropriate, this would produce an additional diagnostic set of recommendations for legal reforms in the Maldives. This may also include developing or amending legislation to allow for tax relief on items imported for activities of non-profit organisations.

VI. Management Arrangements

A. General

The project pursues a fully integrated participatory win-win management approach with equal partnership among the project's partners. The integrated cooperation strategy of the project will have the following focuses:

- 1. Maintaining a holistic programme vision with flexibility:** While maintaining its flexibility which is considered as one of UNDP's comparative advantages, this project emphasizes inter-linkages, intra and inter coordinated programme approach and result-based management instead of supporting a series of activities under different and separate stand-alone projects. It will also avoid having to deal with too many scattered and separate projects.
- 2. Collaboration with other UN agencies within the UNDAF framework to synergize efforts and avoid duplications:** Promoting human rights, access to justice and civic engagement is a key area of activity for UNDP, OHCHR, UNFPA, and UNICEF. Hence, the UNDAF will be used to formalize such cooperation with targeted coordination, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up.
- 3. 'Windowing Effect' while ensuring ownership:** In line with UNDP mandate and its practice orientation, the comparative advantage of the field office toward provision of international learning experiences and knowledge sharing through different means such as networking, twinning and mentoring will be instrumental in the 'windowing effect' of this project, while ensuring national ownership.
- 4. Conducting needs and capacity assessment** are considered as an essential preparatory step for undertaking different project activities.

These cooperation strategies are based on the following assumptions derived from potential risks:

- Political and social stability;
- Continuity of political climate favourable and conducive towards human rights promotion and protection, provision of access to justice and encouraging civic engagement;
- Political will and commitment by the Government;
- Support at the senior levels (Executive, Legislative & Judiciary), governmental media (Radio & TV), as well as the press (digital and printed) in facilitating achievement of project impact;
- Fair cooperation, goodwill, teamwork spirit, responsiveness and commitment of key stakeholders as the project management team and continuity of management and coordination arrangements for the total duration of the project to achieve the desired integration and unification;
- Timely release of funds by UNDP/Donors, and
- Effective UNDP support and backstopping at the country office and at the regional levels.

B. Executing agent

National execution (NEX), result-based management, and operational, practical and targeted coordination are the main management arrangements followed under this project. The agency charged with running the civic engagement component of the Governance Portfolio is the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA). This will be achieved in close consultation with other line ministries and offices and the civil society organizations. MOHA will designate the National Project Director (NPD). A Project Manager will be hired on contract basis.

If feasible, it would be advisable that the small grants facility is managed by UNDP as a general resource pool. This way, it might be easier to mobilize resources from other potential donors.

Lastly, a Steering Committee should be formed for oversight of all activities premised on the GEF-SGP format. It should be comprised of eight members: UNDP, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Economic Development and four representative NGOs. As may be required, other Government departments and NGOs may also be invited to attend the Steering Committee meetings and participate in the deliberations and give advice and opinion. This will also lead to better coordination between various actors in the Maldives. It is suggested that the Steering Committee meetings are convened once every three months (or quarterly), or sooner if required. The Steering Committee will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of project activities, quality oversight, theme selection (i.e. – for public forum), and other tasks as required including adjustment of time-frames and project approach. The Steering Committee meetings will be co-chaired by MOHA and UNDP.

VIII. Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be monitored by a Steering Committee as detailed in the section on Management Arrangements.

An independent end project evaluation will also be done to determine the success of the Project. Verifiable indicators will be developed for tracking progress. The project activities will be tailored to the local context and, should it be required, appropriate changes may be made to accommodate changing situations and circumstances.

At the beginning of the project, and for each calendar year of implementation, MOHA, through the Project Manager/National Project Director (NPD), will present the detailed annual work plan in the required format. The Steering Committee may wish to review the work plan jointly as well. The quarterly work plans will also be submitted in the same manner.

Toward the end of each implementation year or early in the year immediately following, MOHA will submit to the Steering Committee and UNDP the annual progress report, inclusive of financial aspects. The quarterly progress reports will also be submitted in the same manner.

IX. Legal Context

The project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Republic of Maldives and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The host country implementing agency shall, for the purpose of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the Government cooperating agent described in that Agreement.

The following types of revisions may be made to this project document with the signature of UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he or she is assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objection to the proposed changes:

- Revisions in, or addition of, any of the annexes of the project document;

- Revisions which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs, or activities of a project, but caused by the rearrangements of inputs already agreed to or by cost increases due to inflation; and,
- Mandatory annual revisions which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or increased expert or other costs due to inflation or take into account agency expenditure flexibility.

ANNUAL WORK PLAN BUDGET SHEET (Years: 2010-2012)

EXPECTED OUTPUTS and indicators including annual targets	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List all activities including M&E to be undertaken during the year towards stated CP outputs</i>		TIMEFRAME				RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
			2011		2012			Source of Funds	Budget Description	Amount
	2010									
Output 1 - Ensuring baseline information exists on the status of Civil Society Organizations as well as working toward improving their public image/perception Indicators: ■ Scoping exercise of NGOs conducted ■ Maldivian NGO Networking Day and Forum established ■ Public image campaigns conducted for Maldivian NGOs ■ A Code of Conduct for NGOs drafted and available ■ Directory of NGOs established		X					MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 24,000
		X	X				MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 30,000
				X			UNDP, NGOs			USD 10,000
						X	MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 10,000
Output 2 - Capacity development and accountability interventions in support of strengthening the interaction between Gov't and CSO Indicators: ■ A capacity development intervention developed and implemented ■ Training module for NGOs implemented ■ A civil society manual prepared to the government detailing how to work with and support the civil society including training and sensitization exercises ■ Support provided for public policy forums on selected topics			X	X		X	MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 80,500
				X	X	X	MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 20,000
						X	MOHA, UNDP, NGOs			USD 40,100
			X	X			MOHA, UNDP, NGOs		X	USD 25,000

Annex 1

Additional Areas of Possible Cooperation for Supporting Civil Society Organizations in the Maldives

Additional areas of possible cooperation for supporting civil society organizations in the Maldives include the following to be considered for future programming:

- More on Reference Guide to Participatory Tools.

Under Output 4, Activity 4.1, the following are to be considered:

1. **Score-card or report card** normally assesses pro-poor services in a number of key sectors such as education, health care, water supply, subsidized fishing inputs, etc., all part of local Maldivian life. Prepared in a very simplistic manner, they are provided to rural and urban citizens to assess the role of government in provision of services.
2. **Budget tracking** has been done successfully in many settings, albeit mostly in Sub-Saharan African countries such as Uganda. This option would only be viable on a small scale and would require considerable transparency of national and local budgets. Exercises of this nature assist with identifying blockages, corruption, and other detriments to delivery of services. Lastly, it assists in revising planned expenditures to better meet targets.
3. Similar to budget tracking mechanisms, **participatory public expenditure management/reviews** incorporate additional steps from analysis, to tracking, to performance monitoring, and actual formulation. The formulation process, employing information derived from participatory data collection, produces an alternative national budget, one derived from community perceived needs and assets. This was done successfully in Brazil for municipal budgets as well as in Canada at the federal level.
4. Whereas not all of these approaches may be used, it is significant to provide different stakeholders with a wide variety of options that could possibly be deployed.
5. A variety – or a mixture – of these mechanisms, even if on a pilot scale, is to be pursued in the Maldives in order to strengthen cooperation between National/Atoll/Island authorities and their respective constituencies. This would require the selection of sites with a representative NGO (and receptive government) in order to pilot such activities. Should they be successful, they can be scaled up to additional settings.

- Provision of central facilities/NGO Incubator

A number of NGOs found within the Maldives do not own any sustainable facilities and thus do not have any means of working from a central base. Considerations may be given to hosting and/or identifying a large office space (i.e. – four or five rooms with small conference amenities) that could be used for multiple NGOs. This would serve as an “NGO Incubator” of sorts by providing start-up infrastructure (i.e. - internet, phones), shared resources (i.e. - common administrative assistance), and mutual public facilities (i.e. – library, meeting room). Well-established NGOs could share the space with smaller organizations and serve as mentors.

- Independent funding stream

In addition to the grant stream mentioned in the civil society project document, it may be advisable for the Maldivian government to explore the possibility of establishing an independent funding stream for civil society actors. Again, imparting the success of many European nations, Governments have established discrete funds solely for access by CSOs, including community-based organizations. And, in almost all countries, various forms of government funding represent a considerable portion of overall CSO revenue. For example, in Central and Eastern Europe, this amounts to approximately 20% in Slovakia and 40% in the Czech Republic. Thus far, in the Maldives, the funding the State offers to the non-governmental sector is extremely limited.

In spite of the Maldives having a very low asset base (in relation to collection of local revenue, no income tax), the Government may wish to explore the establishment of a special fund formed by income from alternative revenue sources such as lottery proceeds, traffic fines, or the resort bed taxes, etc. Popular throughout Central and Eastern Europe is the so-called 1% contributions that enable individual tax payers to offer a proportion of their income tax returns to support CSO activity. Limitations on the eligibility for accessing such funds can help focus activities of the CSO community. For example, grants may only be accessible in the area of health but, in principle, they can support a range of efforts. As an illustration, the Ministry of Justice in Hungary provides grants to NGOs that educate judges on domestic violence.

- Streamlining government structure (i.e. – liaison office)

Currently in the Maldives, there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding different country focus institutions for NGOs. The Ministry of Home Affairs registers NGOs and is responsible for coordinating NGO and community activities. Different line ministries work with NGOs in different capacities. It would be useful to have one direct office that can serve as clearinghouse for NGOs that will be articulated in the proposed modification of NGO legislation.