State of Population data in the Maldives

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Background

- Maldives is a small island nation located in the Indian Ocean near India and Sri Lanka.
- The population is dispersed over 187 inhabited islands.
- In 204 Census 38% of pop was enumerated in the capital Male’, while 53 percent in 187 administrative islands, 7% in 109 resort islands and 2% in industrial and other non-administrative islands.
- In 2014, population growth rate stood at 1.67% per annum.
- The country has a Resident population of 533,941 in 2019 with Resident Maldivians as 366,176 (Maldives Projection, 2014 - 2054).
Out of 187 inhabited islands:
- There are 20 administrative islands with a population above 2,000 inhabitants. These islands have 36% of population.
- Besides the capital Male’ with a population of 153,904, only 4 administrative islands have a population size greater than 5,000 (Thinadhoo, Kulhudhuffushi, Fuvahmulah, Hithadhoo).
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By 2050, population growth is projected to decrease to 0.90%
Decline in population growth rate for the Atolls is sharp, due to negative migration rates whereby higher outmigration than in-migration occurs and low fertility rates. By 2054, more than 64% of the Resident Maldivian population will be living in the Greater Male’ Area.
Based on census 2014, population projections up to 2054

Atoll and island level projections produced
VRS is not able to produce timely data
Total Fertility Rate (TFR) that it has dramatically declined from 6.4 in 1990.

TFR has decreased over the years to a woman on average having 2.46 children in 2014.

It is expected to reach below replacement level of 1.9 children per woman by 2050.
Elderly constitute 5 percent of our population today.

In 40 years, elderly population will constitute 14 percent of the population share as the population undergoes changes to become an ageing population.
Next Population and housing census planned for 2021

- Census 2021 – Need to improve coverage resident foreign population
- Add disability questions (6 core questions of functional difficulty recommended by Washington Group on disability statistics)
Other key surveys collecting population data

- DHS 2016
- HIES 2016
Need to strengthen data on migration

- Need to collect comprehensive migration data through census and surveys on a regular manner by improving frequency and coverage
- Need to strengthen Administrative data systems and report generation

Need to strengthen vital registration data

- VRS is not able to produce timely data
- Work is underway to improve the system
Big data pilot project

- To study the resident population using CDR data in cooperation with Communication Authority of Maldives and the Mobile phone companies
- Objective is to get up-to-date population data especially to use in order to factor in the internal migration
- Internal migration towards the capital is high but in the absence of regular surveys it is difficult to obtain data to monitor
- Plans to update population projections at Atoll and island levels on a frequent basis factoring in data and assumptions on internal and international migration