Fourth South Asia Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals

COUNTRY PRESENTATION
MALDIVES

Aishath Saadh (Ms)
Deputy Director General
Ministry of National Planning Housing and Infrastructure
Maldives
Overall SDGs Performance - Maldives

• The Maldives among the ‘Fast Risers’: countries making rapid progress relative to regional averages and are well positioned to achieve the SDGs provided the momentum is maintained.
• Maldives was positioned at 91 out of 166 countries in the global SDG ranking.
• Index score of 67.6 roughly the same as the regional average of 67.2, but slightly higher.

Annual Sustainable Development Report (Sach et. al 2020).
The only goal that the Maldives has achieved so far is SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy).

The assessment shows that the Maldives are on track or maintaining momentum on poverty eradication, improving health, provision of clean water and sanitation, promoting sustainable cities and communities, addressing climate action and fostering partnership for the goals.

More work is required for all remaining goals, particularly on Goal 15 where a decreasing trend was reported.
Performance by SDG

- Significant achievements in reducing poverty however, **28% of the total population still multi dimensionally** poor children are more likely to be poor than any other age group.
- 98% of the households hygiene services - and 73% of the households is **connected to an adequate sanitation system**, depravations in data for some indicators.
- Major **data gaps** in SDG 10, SDG12 and SDG16
- **Nutrition and food security** are key challenges in SDG2
- **Achievements are high in SDG3, SDG4** but need to need to focus on inclusivity and accessibility
- **Regression in Gender Equity**: decreased labour force participation and seats held by women in parliament.
- **Regression and challenges in SDG 14 and 15** related to preservation and biodiversity protection. Major data gaps also identified
Impact of COVID-19 Maldives

- Not only a health pandemic, socio-economics systems and how we function as society has changed drastically
- Negatively impact years of development progress
- Deepened pre-existing disparities, more amongst the vulnerable and marginalized groups
- Emergence of ‘new poor’ and new vulnerable groups and new disparities
- Learning disruption was mitigated as Maldives was already moving towards digital learning: high cost of internet and digital divide exists
- Higher impact on women: household chores, caregiving, home-based schooling, additional income generating activities, increased abuse
- Dramatic shift towards contemporary ways of doing business and providing public services, needs to be accelerated further, ensuring accessibility, affordability, reliability and safety are met.
- Fiscal space narrowed drastically through loss of revenue and increased public spending.

- 11.3% contraction in the Maldivian economy
- More than 45,000 employees in tourist affected directly, out of which 22,000 local employees in the payroll of resorts.
- Income loss ranging from US$ 600 to US$ 1,000 per employee on payrolls, and those on reduced pay income loss of 60%
- Number of redundancies highest among and younger employees.
- Income loss sever with women in the informal sector, where they make up 44%
- Over 90% of food being imported, food security was a major issue
- Issues of non-COVID patients from accessing health facilities.
- Restricted access to maternal and reproductive health services
- Rise in domestic violence and abuse
Taking SDGs forward in the New Normal

• Mainstream the prioritized SDGs into all development planning processes including local development planning.

• National Resilient and Recovery Plan, reprioritized initiatives:
  • to diversify the economy,
  • job creation and reintegration of the redundant workforce back into the labor force
  • support to MSMEs and fiscal stimulus
  • building on existing social protection mechanism including Universal Health care
  • reinforcing the online platforms and the many digital initiatives

• Strengthening decentralization and empowering local governments

• Greater Mobility and easier access to public service and socio-economic services though ICT and better nationwide transport network

• Better data management and strengthen reporting of SDGs

• Fostering meaningful and transformational Partnerships:
  • Foster and Strengthen partnerships with local governments, private sector, CSOs and academia

• Financing for development is crucial to address the adverse effects and to keep the momentum:
  • Impact of COVID on the economy and fiscal structure is dire
  • Alternative means of finances
  • Realization of pledges commitments

• More Regional Cooperation
  • knowledge sharing: new technology, research collaborations etc
  • Reinforce south-south and triangular cooperation
  • trade initiatives (travel bubbles, trade routes, tax incentives etc)
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Thank You