

**REGIONAL TRAINING COURSE ON COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY
FOR AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL STATISTICS.**

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Country Profile

1.1 Introduction

The Republic of Maldives is a group of low-lying coral islands scattered vertically across the equator along the Indian Ocean archipelago. The islands are located 300 miles southwest of the southern tip of India and 450 miles west of Sri Lanka. There is an estimate of 1192 islands separated into a series of 26 geographic atolls. For easy administration these islands are grouped into 20 atolls. 188 are physical inhabited and around 1004 are uninhabited. These islands grouped in ring-shape clusters stretch over an area of 90,000 sq kms of which about only 1% is land.

Over the last few decades the Maldives has transformed itself into a popular fishing, scuba diving, surfing and exotic resort and spa destination. There are 105 tourist resorts. And 79 island leased for agriculture, mariculture and aquaculture by the Ministry of fisheries and Agriculture. There are few inhabited islands which are known as agricultural islands, where locals engage in agricultural work as their main income generating activity.

1.2 National statistical System in Maldives

The statistical system in the Maldives is highly decentralized, with the National Bureau of Statistics, the NSO of for the Maldives, being the core statistical unit, while other government agencies collect other kinds of data mostly through administrative channels, but through registers to some extent and, and in fisheries area through catch an earning and other fishery related surveys and in the health area through household surveys.

Statistical systems are carried out in at least 15 other agencies outside NBS. Among them ten agencies have their own statistical units, with varying capacity, while the others do not yet have separate statistical units.

National Statistics Coordination Committee represents the statistical units of National Statistical System for overall guidance and coordination of all statistical activities of the country.

1.3 Role of National Bureau of Statistics

National Bureau of Statistics is responsible for national accounts and price data, and also housing and population census of the county and other major household surveys, and for basic enterprise surveys which are carried out at national level.

The lack of Statistical Act, limits the authority of the National Bureau of Statistics to coordinate statistical activities throughout the government and to collect data from business units.

1.3.1 Data disseminations

National Bureau of Statistics began to issue the Statistical year book of Maldives since 1980. It includes national accounts, prices, and census data from national bureau of statistics. Rest of the data is provided by other agencies, principally data from health, education, employment, law and order, fisheries and agriculture, tourism, transport and communication, electricity and water, public finance, money and banking, and trade data collected from respective authorities and provided to NBS to include in the Statistical year book of Maldives.

A wallet sized monthly statistical bulletin, Maldives at a Glance is published monthly with information on various sectors.

In addition, comprehensive reports have usually been published for household surveys and census, presenting tabular results, analysis, and a descriptive methods.

NBS disseminates Agriculture statistics via Statistical Yearbook of Maldives every year. Which contains, imports of fresh agricultural crops mainly produced in Maldives by county, in kilograms and by year.

National Bureau of Statistics publish its publications on official website www.statisticmaldives.gov.mv. The website been widely used by government authorities, international agencies, students and other local and private companies.

1.4 Role of Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture

Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture is responsible for the collection, monitoring and dissemination of agricultural data of the country.

For now, a sample of agricultural data is limited to the local products brought to the capital, Male'. This data is taken daily from the local market. Both retail and wholesale prices of the products are taken in rufiyaa. The quantity of products brought to Male' is also taken in kg broken by atoll or region.

Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture has also launched an agricultural statistics logbook where it is distributed among the farmers and data of their production along with information on how they conduct farming.

1.4.1 Data Dissemination

Data from agricultural products in Male' is uploaded daily to the ministry website for everyone to see. These are uploaded in the form of fact sheets. These fact sheets show the main products available on the day with the quantity brought and the place where it is produced. This is very important in months like Ramadan where the prices of the products are constantly changing,

The main objective of introducing of statistical logbooks is to get constant agricultural data, not only from the capital but from all over the country, so that these data could be used in the policy making. However, a constant set of data have not yet been taken up to date.