

Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) to assess the Maldives readiness to implement the SDGs



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Summary

The report explores/measures readiness across eight areas; (1) existence of institutional mechanism for coordinating SDGs (2) level of policy alignment with SDGs (3) human resource capacity needed to implement SDGs (4) data and monitoring capacity for SDGs (5) level of visibility and advocacy on SDGs (6) financing (7) technology and (8) inter-linkages between SDGs. Some of the key findings of the assessment are summarized below:

Institutional arrangements: progress has been made to establish a coordination and monitoring mechanism within the government led by a ministerial committee and supported by a technical committee representing line ministries and departments and the SDGs Division established under the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEE). Although institutional arrangements were in place, several challenges exist for these bodies to function such as the lack of interest, participation and accountability within line ministries to support the SDG coordination process, and the limited understanding amongst government officials of how SDGs fit in within the government's mandate and operation.

Policy alignment: The mapping of SDGs with the government's manifesto priorities indicated a strong overlap particularly among the social and economic sector goals. SDGs are also being reflected in sectoral policies and plans and are being integrated to newly developed plans such as the Health Masterplan. The main challenges are the lack of a central planning document or long-term planning process and the limited channels for understanding and communicating development challenges and priorities bottom up from island level to the national level. Furthermore, with the limited coordination among agencies, policies are developed using a silo approach that does not take into consideration the policy implication that one sectoral policy may have on the rest.

Human resource capacity: Although a formal skills analysis was beyond the scope of this assessment, feedback from SDG Division team members and technical committee members indicated the need for strengthening their facilitation skills for SDG based dialogues and planning exercises, data and analytical skills for SDG based reporting and knowledge and familiarity with budgeting processes and budget analyses. In addition, weakness in institutional setup and capacity to gather sectorial data needs to be addressed.

Data and monitoring: Significant progress has been made under the leadership of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) to map the existing data availability against SDG indicators and to organize existing baseline information against the indicators. The Maldives also prepared the first Voluntary National Review report in 2017 but the report lack comprehensive information and analysis on the status of the Maldives performance against SDGs. Some of the challenges to data and SDG based monitoring include the challenges in bridging data gaps and limited participation of line ministries in data analysis and reporting processes, weakness or rather lack of capacity in some of the sectorial ministries to collect data. These challenges are exacerbated by the limited reliance on evidence-based national and local-level planning and policies. Given the geographical nature of the country and the cost associated data collection, it is important to explore new way of gathering data beyond the conventional means to have update data that is readily available.

Financing: Given the Maldives development status as a middle income country, domestic resource financing is key to implementation of SDGs. This assessment therefore specifically looked at the budgeting process and identified several entry points to integrate and prioritize SDGs within the budgeting process. This includes the development of a screening criteria for medium terms budgets known as 'new policy initiatives – NPI) and to conduct SDG based budget analyses using the newly adopted functional budget classification of the government of Maldives. Some of the challenges in budgeting include the reliance on external/donor funding for some sectors and the challenges related to internal budget prioritization practices.

Box 1 Summary of recommendations

Recommendations 1-6 months (January to July 2018)

- Formalize lead agency and co-lead agency arrangements through NMCC
- Formalize appointment of focal persons and alternatives for each lead agency and co-lead agency
- Initiate quarterly coordination meetings with 'means of implementation' agencies and goal leads to build interlinkages and synergies
- Create an online information and document archive with support from NCIT.
- Conduct a research skills clinic and attach students as researchers to goal leads
- Initiate SDG annual review for 2018 in collaboration with NBS, goal leads and researchers from MNU/Villa College
- Facilitate NMCC meetings bi-annually

Recommendations 6-12 months (July 2018 to January 2019)

- Conduct a ToT for SDGs Division team, goal leads, interested co-leads and NGO representatives
- Prepare guidance note for incorporating SDGs priorities in any new policies and plans developed by sectors/line ministries using the experience of the recent exercise on the Health Masterplan.
- Conduct a meta-review of five year plans submitted to SDGs.
- Identify an external expert panel who can provide support to goal leads to put together goal level or thematic assessments.
- Identify and provide opportunities to participate in short-term courses for SDGs Division team on data analytics and statistics, budget analysis, research, communications etc.
- Facilitate NMCC meetings and quarterly coordination meetings
- Explore options for an online monitoring tool such as Development Info (DevInfo) that can regularly update and monitor progress against SDG targets.
- Develop criteria for NPI screening with Ministry of Finance and Treasury.
- Set up a SDGs web page either within the MEE website or create a new website hosted at NCIT.
- Conduct a SDGs innovation challenge or 'the SDG pitch' as an annual event

Recommendations (February 2019-February 2020)

- Initiate dialogue to prepare a SDGs 2030 Vision for the Maldives.
- Identify placements to get practical experience on short term basis for SDG Division team's capacity building.
- Facilitate NMCC meetings bi-annually and quarterly coordination meetings
- Prepare issue briefs and other knowledge products on key themes.
- Document best practices on technology application for addressing SDGs in the Maldives.
- Document best practices on data sharing and integration.
- Pilot initiatives such as a 'buddy system' to promote inter-linkages and multi-sector coordination between goals.
- Prepare comprehensive SDGs reports or VNRs on a periodic basis.
- Advocate for strengthening national planning processes to support SDGs based budgeting.
- Engage mainstream media and update media including social media on a regular basis.
- Identify and integrate external advocates of technology into SDGs dialogues and annual SDG review processes proposed.
- Document successful collaborations and or assessments that recognize cross-sector linkages and multi-stakeholder approaches
- Develop infographics, video spots and key messages that can be circulated in SDG events and social media to promote the thinking around multi-sector/multi stakeholder approaches to SDG implementation.

The key recommendations of the report are summarized in Box 1.

1. Introduction

Maldives is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) with a population of 407,660, sparsely spread across 186 inhabited islands.¹ The country's developmental transformation, over the last decades, was driven by the growth of its tourism industry, complemented with sustained investments in social sectors that increased access to education, health and social services for the geographically isolated, small populations. As a SIDS, Maldives is however constrained, by its physical characteristics, such as the geographic isolation, small size, limited natural resources and small population to expand and diversify the economy, to build climate resilience and to consolidate its relatively new democracy.

Maldives successfully achieved five out of the eight MDGs ahead of schedule, making it South Asia's first "MDG+" country and this is attributed to the increased investments in health and education. The goals on gender equality (MDG3), environmental sustainability (MDG7) and global partnership for development (MDG8) were however not achieved. The goal on gender (MDG 3) was not attained due to lack of progress in meeting targets on female political participation and employment. The goal on environment (MDG 7) was off track, due to unmet targets on water access and due to the inability to monitor data on protected areas and conservation. Goal 8 on global partnerships was unattained due to unmet targets on external debt and debt servicing.

Following the adoption of SDGs in September 2015, important steps have been taken to shape the SDG agenda for the Maldives. This includes national dialogues, public awareness and the setup of an institutional mechanism to coordinate SDGs by the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MEE) in 2016. This assessment aims to explore the Maldives readiness to implement and monitor SDGs. The report explores/measures readiness across eight areas; (1) existence of institutional mechanism for coordinating SDGs (2) level of policy alignment with SDGs (3) human resource capacity needed to implement SDGs (4) data and monitoring capacity for SDGs (5) level of visibility and advocacy on SDGs (6) financing (7) technology and (8) inter-linkages between SDGs.

The assessment also contributed to two stages of consultations with government ministries which included the cluster sessions held to identify institutional, policy and human resource gaps to implement SDGs and a second exercise to prioritize SDG targets under each goal, for the context of Maldives. The assessment findings were derived from these two exercises and through individual interviews with relevant focal persons at UNDP Maldives, SDGs Division at MEE, Fiscal Affairs Division, Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT), Local Governance Authority (LGA) and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). A validation workshop was organized in December 2017 with government, state owned enterprises and civil society representatives to validate the report findings.

¹ National Bureau of Statistics (2015) Maldives - Population and Housing Census 2014

2. Main findings of the Readiness Assessment

2.1 Level of institutional coordination to implement SDGs

The SDG coordination structure is as follows:

- **National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC)** – has the over-arching responsibility to provide policy guidance on key decisions that are to be made during the process of rolling out the SDGs. The NMCC has met thrice as of August 2017. The terms of reference of the NMCC is in Appendix 1 Terms of Reference (ToR) of the institutional coordination agencies
- **SDG Technical Committee** – The technical committee consists of focal points from state agencies responsible for providing critical support, assistance and guidance on SDG implementation. The technical committee is divided into five clusters; (1) economic development (SDG 1, 2, 8 and 12) (2) social development (SDG 3, 4, 5, 10) (3) Infrastructure (SDG 6, 7, 9, and 11), (4) environment (SDG 13, 14, 15) and partnerships (SDG 16 and 17). The detailed Terms of Reference is in Appendix 1 Terms of Reference (ToR) of the institutional coordination agencies. The committee was formed at the end of 2016. The committee has met once, as of July 2017 before the start of this consultancy. As part of the consultancy, two rounds of consultations were held with committee members.
- **SDGs Division** - The MEE is mandated by the President's Office to oversee the implementation of the SDGs. The SDGs Division is the lead agency for SDGs coordination. The Division is mandated to coordinate, monitor and report the implementation process of SDGs in Maldives. The SDGs Division was established at the MEE in May 2016 with a main role of coordinating and monitoring SDGs at the national level. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the SDGs division is in Appendix 1 Terms of Reference (ToR) of the institutional coordination agencies

Challenges to operationalizing the current coordination structure

- **Large technical committee:** The SDGs division has comprehensively mapped the cluster representation at department/division or functional level as many ministries had multiple portfolios relevant to several SDG goals and targets. The focus of cluster representation at the division or department level is a step in the right direction. However, this resulted in a large group of technical committee members (approximately 101 members). To manage this group, five clusters were identified. The cluster session meetings held indicated several gaps. While a Terms of Reference (TOR) has been developed and shared with the technical committee with roles of technical committee members clearly, limited will and turnover of members of the committee meant that the technical committee members were not aware of their role and how their agencies are relevant to the SDG goals or targets. Efforts need to be made to make technical committee members more aware of their specific role and expectations on the process of supporting the SDG implementation and monitoring activities.
- **Lack of ownership and accountability amongst line ministries.** The level of participation amongst line ministries was incoherent as different representatives attended the different stages of meetings conducted on SDGs. The engagement of technical committee members demonstrated several challenges; (1) technical committee members not being available or contribute time to provide inputs on SDGs (2) lack of clear understanding of their expected role in the SDGs implementation and monitoring (3) lack of familiarity with planning processes and SDGs (4) lack of strong working relationships between sectors/ministries/external parties such as NGOs and private sector, and (5) lack of association or accountability to specific goals and targets. The SDGs Division initially identified custodian agencies to lead goal level coordination for monitoring progress and reporting. This assessment indicates that lead agencies need to be assigned for the purpose of coordinating and monitoring SDGs implementation progress and

reporting in order to make cluster coordination more productive in such a way that it encourages ownership and accountability of government ministries/agencies to this process.

- **Lack of clarity of ‘Means of implementation’ agencies.** Several agencies found it difficult to directly map their role to SDG targets/goals. These agencies had broader mandates across many goals and were most relevant to the SDG 17 ‘means of implementation’ targets. These agencies were expected to attend all five cluster sessions but this was not time efficient on their part. These agencies which could be broadly categorized as ‘means of implementation’ agencies are:
 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) - relevant to resource mobilization related diplomacy
 - Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) - resource mobilization, budgeting, PPP
 - Ministry of Economic Development (MED) - trade and investments
 - President’s Office - Technical /corporate development secretariat/Economic Development Department) - (policy making, resource mobilization, budgeting, investments)
 - National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (relevant to data monitoring and accountability SDG target 17.18 and 17.19.
 - Local Government Authority (LGA) – look at subnational implementation and monitoring
 - National Center for Information Technology (NCIT) – automation of process an technology related targets
 - Auditor General’s Office – the agency is currently getting trained on SDG based performance audits. This can directly feed into the SDG monitoring and reporting.
 - It is recommended that from a resource mobilization perspective, representatives of UN, the World Bank and ADB coordination focal point for the Maldives are included in this group.
- **Strong participation and engagement of social sectors, weak participation of Goal 16 (governance related) agencies and economic sector agencies.** Given the active lead taken by agencies relating to social goals during MDG implementation, the participation and contribution of stakeholders from the social sector was the most positive (for example, health, gender and education). The cluster meetings indicated limited participation of agencies relevant to Goal 16 and Goal 8. This may be due to the fact that these agencies were not involved in similar processes before such as the MDG implementation. It was observed that there was clearly weak coordination among the economic sector. The SDGs division needs support and guidance to mobilize, sensitize and strengthen these agencies for Goal 8 and 16 implementation and monitoring, while also develop stronger relationships with sectors that work on the environmental goals that are engaged in similar and relevant international reporting.

2.2 Level of policy alignment to SDGs and identifying ‘Maldives SDGs’

Level of SDGs alignment to policies, plans and local level planning are discussed here.

- **SDGs covered in the Government’s Manifesto** - To prepare for the first national dialogue on SDGs in the Maldives in May 2016, a key exercise undertaken was the Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) tool of UNDP to assess how the government’s manifesto overlap with SDGs. The manifesto was chosen because of the absence of a national planning document or long term planning framework. The RIA findings indicated that the Manifesto 2013-2017 integrates most of the SDGs. About 54 of the SDG targets are directly reflected in the objectives and targets of the manifesto document. The coverage of Goal 8, 10 and 11 are strongly reflected in the document. Goal 2 on nutrition and sustainable agriculture (mostly on the latter) and Goal 3 on health, Goal 4 on education, Goal 5 on gender and Goal 16 on governance and peace building are sufficiently covered. The strong priority placed on youth and women supports the ‘leave no one behind’ aspects of the SDGs. The level of ambition and comprehensiveness is less evident for the goals on environment and climate change such as Goal 13, 14 and 15. According to the RIA findings,

the Manifesto 2013-2017 puts forward an ambitious economic development agenda. Clear linkages need to be drawn on how the economic development objective will contribute to SDGs such as reducing poverty (goal 1), gender (goal 5), contribute to income growth of the bottom 40% of the population (goal 10), address youth unemployment (goal 8) and build resilience of the populations vulnerable to climate change and disaster (Goal 1, 11 and 13).

- **SDGs reflected in government policies, sectoral plans and laws.** In May 2016, as part of the first national dialogue on SDGs in the Maldives, a national exercise was carried out to map the existing sectoral policies, plans and laws to SDG targets. This exercise categorized which SDG targets have more than 3 policy documents mentioned, which SDG targets have less than 2 policy documents mentioned, policy still in 'draft' form, or have comments like 'needs more work on..' and which targets have no policy document mentioned. Overall the exercise indicated the existence of some form of sectoral policy or plan for majority of the SDG targets. The Voluntary National Review (VNR) report of the Maldives (2017) indicated new policies and plans that directly incorporate SDGs. This includes the National Food Safety Policy developed by the Ministry of Health in line with SDG 2 and other SDG target areas including health, poverty, gender equality, water and sanitation, responsible consumption and production and climate action. The health master plan 2016-2025 is another example that is aligned to the SDGs and the Agenda 2030 framework.
- **SDG based planning supported at the local level.** The LGA has taken timely steps to introduce SDG based planning at the local council level. The preparation of five year development plans (2017-2025), the templates and planning manuals directly identified and incorporated 13 goal areas as 'local goals' which included goal 2 (hunger), goal 3 (health), goal 4 (education), goal 5 (gender), goal 6 (water and sanitation), goal 7 (energy), goal 8 (economic growth and decent jobs), goal 9 (infrastructure), goal 13 (climate action), goal 14 and 15 (land/ocean conservation), goal 16 (peace and justice) and goal 17 (means of implementation) and additional goal on sustainability of resources. The local councils as part of the planning process are required to conduct participatory needs assessment based on the 13 local goals. Feedback provided by the SDG Division based on their visits to local islands and consultations with local councils however indicated that local council members were not familiar with SDGs and or did not draw the linkages between the local goals with SDGs. However, this planning process introduced by LGA is a critical opportunity to identify local level priorities and to gain an understanding of the types of challenges that are relevant to SDGs at the local level.
- **SDG prioritization.** Under this consultancy, SDG prioritization was kick-started to identify targets within each goal that will be prioritized for the purpose of monitoring and implementation. The process was evidence led where goal leads and co-leads prepared a snapshot of development challenges in the country with respect to the goal to identify the most critical needs for prioritization. Based on this needs identification and a criteria developed by the consultant, the goal leads and co-leads identified 3 priority targets for each goal. The information is summarized in Annex 2. The prioritization was validated during the validation meeting held to share the overall findings of this report. The prioritized targets can be elaborated in the annual SDG reviews, VNRs and can form part of dashboard for SDG monitoring.

Challenges to promote SDG alignment in policies and plans

- **Lack of a national development plan and long-term development planning process.** The Maldives currently does not have a national development plan and any long-term development planning process. This has two implications; one there is no overarching or central planning document that links all the sectoral plans and policies into one integrated development vision. While the government's manifesto is being used for this purpose, the document includes broad statements without a supporting implementation and monitoring framework as a development plan would have. The second disadvantage is that the manifesto lacks long-term focus and vision as it sets target for the political term of five years. While efforts have been made to review

sectoral plans and identify SDG alignment, the absence of an overarching document limits the extent to which the policy alignment can be advocated and implemented in a coherent and coordinated manner.

- **Lack of a mechanism for communication of local SDG priorities at national level.** Given that SDGs promote and advocate for a coherent development agenda for a country, it is critical that the priorities and needs of populations at the local level gets reflected in national level dialogues and prioritization. Currently all discussions around SDG policy alignment and prioritization have been involving national stakeholders. While the SDG Division and UNDP Maldives have conducted CSO dialogues at atoll and island levels, currently there is no systematic framework for communicating local priorities within national SDG processes and activities.

2.3 Human resource capacity

The human resource capacity was assessed at two levels; (1) human resource capacity of the SDG Division and (2) human resource capacity of technical committee members.

- **Human resource capacity of the SDG Division.** The SDG Division has a 5 member team. The SDG Division is headed by Deputy Director General. The team has previous experience in coordinating national planning processes and facilitating multi-sector interaction. Each team member is assigned a cluster.
- **Human resource capacity of the technical committee members.** The technical committee members vary in level of seniority, experience and knowledge in their respective fields. The skills within the technical committee were difficult to assess as new members attended at each stage of interaction with the technical committee during this consultancy. The members need to be equipped with strong planning and data analysis skills to engage in SDG based coordination and monitoring activities.

Human resource challenges to coordinate and monitor SDGs.

- **Skills requirement of the SDG Division team.** Currently the support team at the SDGs Division appears to be engaged at a very administrative level, organizing meetings and logistics. Some of the core-skills that need to be enhanced within the team are:
 - *Facilitation skills* – Currently the SDGs Division team members are not actively involved in facilitating discussions and planning exercises around SDGs. The SDGs Division has relied on external consultants to facilitate such sessions. It is important to build in-house capacity on facilitation so that the SDGs Division can conduct SDG sensitization/awareness sessions for government, NGOs, members of parliament and private sector partners without much cost implications. The SDGs Division team members should also be equipped to act as resource persons for goal level meetings and cluster sessions. They should be equipped with creative presentations, video clips and advocacy material on SDGs.
 - *Research, data and statistical skills* – Currently the SDGs Division team has limited data and analytical skills capacity. While line ministries can implement most of the research and analysis around SDGs, the SDGs Division should be in a position to guide the analysis and to provide the necessary quality assurance. At least one or two members from the team should be equipped data and statistical knowledge in order to work closely with National Bureau of Statistics, Maldives National University, researchers and technical committee members from the government to review and interpret data in an effective and engaged manner. The research capacity of the SDGs Division team is necessary to enable overall analysis of overarching themes around sustainability, poverty, inequality and to identify and explore the relationship between goals and clusters.
 - *Skills to promote domestic financing* – Currently the SDGs Division team members do not demonstrate in-depth familiarity with the national budgeting processes and changes

that are being introduced. At least one or two members of the team should be equipped to work closely with Ministry of Finance and Treasury on budgeting processes and budget analysis.

- *Communications, knowledge management and outreach skills* – To fully coordinate and monitor the SDGs agenda of the Maldives, the SDGs Division needs to be in the forefront of national advocacy and research on SDGs. Currently the team's capacity to produce short knowledge products, issue papers, press briefs, speeches, update website and engage with social media and mainstream media appears to be constrained.
- **Limited familiarity with SDGs agenda among government officials.** Given that SDGs is a new process, the feedback from technical members indicates that efforts need to be made to create awareness on the SDGs at technical level as well as policy level in order to create ownership and accelerate the implementation process.
- **Technical committee members' capacity.** The technical committee identified the need to build their own knowledge and familiarity with SDGs in order for them to establish and promote the SDGs dialogue at their organizations. The goal lead focal persons should be trained as resource persons to facilitate SDGs sessions for their ministry and to facilitate goal level interactions with co-leads during the annual reviews. They should also be equipped with basic writing and data analytical skills to prepare reports on the respective goal areas.

2.4 Data and monitoring of SDGs

- **Progress made on data assessments and availability.** The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) together with the SDGs Division has made substantial progress in assessing data and statistical capacity for the implementation and monitoring of SDGs. Key assessments undertaken are; (1) Assessment of data availability status for each SDGs indicator using the tier category provided by UNDESA, (2) Diagnostic assessment of data of across all ministries/government agencies which identifies national indicators, additional data sources and baseline data availability and (3) baseline data for all SDGs known as the 'SDG goal updates'. During this consultancy, a prioritization exercise was facilitated for each goal where the goal agencies identified the most critical 3 targets within the goal that would add most value for advocacy and monitoring purposes.
- **Voluntary National Review (VNR) compiled in 2017.** The SDGs Division compiled the first VNR for the Maldives which was submitted at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on SDGs in July 2017. The VNR was an initial step to assess status/progress on SDGs but due to the short time frame in preparing the report, the VNR did not include a comprehensive assessment of the goals and progress. The drafting of the report was led by the SDGs Division.

Challenges to SDG monitoring and data assessments

- **Data gaps and data sharing practice.** This data assessment shows that for 56 indicators, no mechanism currently is in place for data generation. For another 51 indicators, additional effort will be required to make the data available. Data gaps are particularly evident in the environment and agriculture sector. Disaggregated data by sex, nationality, geographic location and wealth quintile is not currently available for most of the indicators. Due to the lack of an enabling legal and institutional environment for data sharing and due to the limited emphasis of data and evidence in decision making, data sharing practice within the government is minimal.
- **Limited support from line ministries to the VNR process.** The response from line ministries to provide analysis of goals and sector level information was noted to be very low. This meant that there was very limited ownership of the information communicated in the VNR by the government agencies. It also undermined quality of the reporting process.

2.5 Financing

In light of the comprehensive economic and social agenda targets that have been set under the manifesto and government sectoral plans, it is important to identify linkages with domestic resource mobilisation, national budgets, Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), foreign direct investments and private sector financing. Given the Maldives development status as a middle income country, domestic resource financing is key to implementation of SDGs. The readiness assessment therefore specifically looked at the budgeting process but a broader assessment on financing trends and challenges can be studied as a separate piece of work.

- **New budget procedures** – The MoFT has introduced changes to the budgeting processes based on a broader fiscal strategy. As part of developing a Medium Term Fiscal Framework (2018-2010) and automating the budgeting process based on the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, government agencies were requested to produce (1) Baseline estimates (budget for ongoing functions and programmes - based on a budget ceiling established by MoFT²) and (2) provide proposals with budgets for new projects and programs for the period 2018-2020, known as New Policy Initiatives (NPIs).³ The representatives of Fiscal Affairs Division in MoFT indicated that a SDG criteria can be added to the screening tool for NPIs. Currently the NPI are not evaluated in a structured manner but for next year's budget cycle, MoFT will use a structured screening tool.
- **Functional budget classification using the United Nation's Classification of Functions of Government (COFOG)** – The budget compilation has previously been done based on General Ledger codes. The MoFT has introduced COFOG for 2018 budget compilation. This is a significant opportunity to track SDG financing through budgets and to conduct budget analysis based on SDGs. The COFOG classification serves as a blueprint for a Medium Term Fiscal Framework, a method for planning and reporting government expenditure promoted by the IMF and World Bank. COFOG classification of domestic resources can therefore shed light on how countries finance the SDGs at national level.
- **Thinking towards results based budgeting** – The Fiscal Affairs Division in MoFT, during a meeting, indicated that there is thinking within the MoFT to introduce results-based budgeting. However, the representatives of the Fiscal Affairs Division in MoFT were particularly cautious of the fact that these reforms will take time to implement. A potential gap to establish results based budgeting is the limited results-based planning and targeting that is practiced within ministries and sub-sectors or programmes within the government of Maldives. Results based budgeting can only be put in place when there is an overall commitment for results based planning and results based management (RBM) within the whole government.

Challenges to domestic financing for SDGs.

The cluster meetings indicated potential risks to the budget allocations which puts financing for SDGs at risk. These include:

- **Reliance on external/project based funding for SDG target areas.** When the projects end, the financing will need to be integrated to the national budgeting process.
- **Budget prioritization** –. Based on the budget envelope set by MoFT, the ministries compile budgets and in some instances prioritize allocations. Feedback from cluster members indicated that in most cases, budgets are prioritized for infrastructure investments instead of soft investments such as training and improving quality of services.
- **Budget cuts** - Feedback from cluster members indicated that whenever budgets cuts are made, the budgets for training will be compromised over others. These practices may prove a risk for financing of SDG targets. Due to these practices, the rising debt levels and limited fiscal space may further compromise financing for SDGs.

² Mainly estimated based on 2017 budget allocations

³ Interviews with head of Fiscal Affairs Division MoFT and Budget Circular 1- 2017, MoFT.

2.6 Communications and visibility to strengthen national advocacy on SDGs

The SDGs Division has been conducting a series of information sessions to a range of stakeholders including government ministries, SOEs, NGOs and activities have been planned to engage with political parties and parliament members. The cluster sessions and prioritization sessions held during this consultancy further provided an opportunity for government staff to familiarize with the SDG goals and targets. The SDGs Division has also prepared advocacy material including short videos and has installed SDG sign boards in government buildings.

2.7 Technology

The role of technology and innovation have been recognized as central to the implementation and monitoring of SDGs, globally. Technological and innovative solutions can be developed to bridge existing barriers and challenges. The cluster sessions and an exercise to identify SDG goal level challenges indicated common structural barriers to provision of services in the Maldivian context where islands are dispersed, population is too small to achieve scale and feasibility for operating various infrastructure and services and investment costs are high for any intervention at a local island level. It is therefore important to facilitate dialogues and document best practices and technological advances that can address service provision gaps in the Maldives.

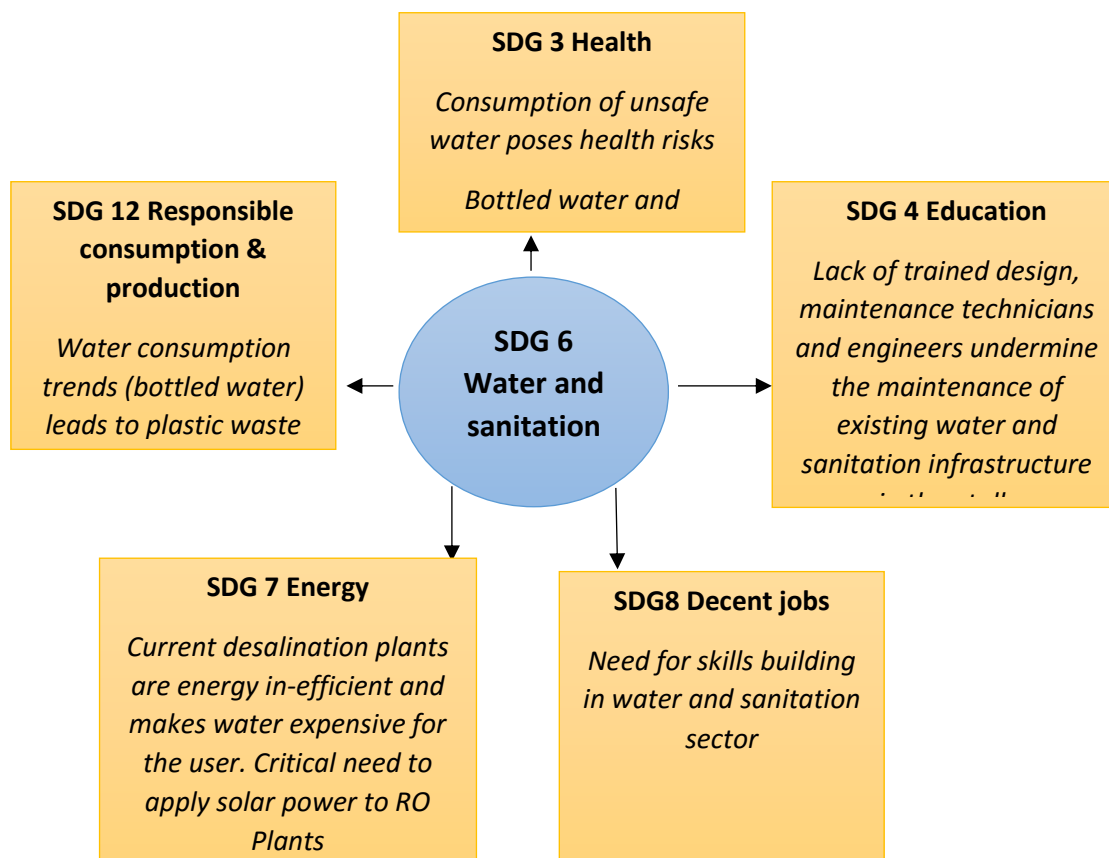
Technology application for data gathering, sharing and integration is another entry point. While data accessibility is a major challenge, good practices are emerging. For example WHO and the Ministry of Health are currently working on a comprehensive and integrated database for birth registration. Similarly, the Ministry of Economic Development is integrating their information systems with Maldives Inland Revenue Authority (MIRA). These best practices need to be documented and shared widely for building dialogue around data sharing and integration at a wider systems level.

Currently, NCIT and Communication Authority of Maldives (CAM) are the only stakeholder that represents the technology field in the SDG based discussions facilitated by the SDG division and NCIT's contribution is very much focused on e-Governance and administrative reform. While this is important, it is critical that external factors` such as technology providers, ICT experts and NGOs promoting technology are included in the SDG dialogues and reviews facilitated by SDG Division.

2.8 Interlinkages and breaking silos

The SDG agenda provides a vital opportunity to break silos within different government agencies and build cross-agency linkages and promote a 'whole of government approach'. The current practice indicates a fragmented way of working and thinking on SDGs. It is therefore critical that through the institutional coordination mechanism set up for SDGs and through various SDG based assessments and dialogues, the inter-linkages between goals, goal targets, stakeholders and clusters be promoted and fostered as much as possible. The SDG discussions held under this consultancy indicated several inter-linkages and a need for collaboration across sectors, goals and targets. Figure 1 below demonstrates the inter-linkages discussed for the Water and Sanitation Goal - SDG 6 during the consultation meeting with technical committee members for this consultancy. While this illustration may not be fully comprehensive, this provides an indication of the how the inter-linkages between sectors can be fostered through SDG based coordination.

Figure 1 SDG Inter-linkages with other SDGs



3. Recommendations

Recommendations to strengthen institutional coordination

- **Assign a lead agency and co-lead agencies for each goal.** In order to strengthen ownership and engagement of the process, it is recommended that lead agency be assigned for most of the goals. This will enhance accountability and engagement for reporting as well. For some goals while the whole ministry has a mandate, for others goal leads include departments or divisions within ministries. For Goal 1, 10 and 17, it is suggested that SDGs division takes the lead for the short term as it is mostly relevant to monitoring trends. Please see Appendix 2 – Goal structure coordination for technical committee for the proposed structure. This structure should be formalized by the NMCC and respective focal persons and alternatives should be formally assigned by each ministry and communicated to all ministries and relevant government/state institutions.
- **Develop and endorse roles for goal leads and ‘means of implementation’ agencies by NMCC.** The responsibilities of the focal persons/alternatives for goal leads, co-leads and ‘means of implementation’ agencies should be endorsed at by NMCC and the responsibility should be formally assigned to the focal persons by the respective ministries (see Box 2).
- **Identify focal persons and alternative focal person for goal lead agencies, co-lead agencies and ‘means of implementation’ agencies.** A formal communication should be made from NMCC to all ministries to formally assign the responsibility to the nominated focal person.
- **Establish quarterly coordination meetings with ‘means of implementation’ agencies and goal leads to build interlinkages and synergies.** The SDG Division is at very early stages of establishing coordination and working relationship with the mentioned groups. The technical committee had met only once, prior to this consultancy. It is suggested that to strengthen coordination and communication, the SDGs Division meets the goal leads and means of implementation’ agencies on a regular basis (quarterly). The purpose of these meetings should be to get updates from the agencies on SDGs implementation and monitoring, document new initiatives, and emerging issues and to identify capacity building needs for strengthened SDGs implementation and monitoring. These coordination meetings should also aim to build linkages and synergies between and across goals. These meetings can allocate time for presenting any assessments or findings from research relevant to a goal by any government or external agency. This is to promote knowledge exchange and data sharing on SDGs as much as possible. The minutes of meetings should be systematically documented and information should be shared with all technical members and NMCC. This is to encourage open sharing of information and to encourage inter-agency coordination and communication as much as possible. This will contribute to promote implementing SDGs in an integrated manner. To encourage participation and consistency among those who attend the quarterly meetings, the SDGs Division can open a Webex account and host group meetings online. This would allow for those travelling or not physically available to attend meetings at MEE, to join online and still contribute to discussions and participate in meetings on a regular basis.
- **Establish multi-stakeholder working arrangements.** A multi-stakeholder approach is necessary to coordinate and monitor an ambitious and complex agenda such as the SDGs. It is recommended that civil society, SoEs, private sector and research groups are invited to NMCC

Box 2 Roles of goals leads and ‘means of implementing’ agencies.

- (1) Provide quarterly updates by email to SDGs Division on any activities relevant to SDGs
- (2) Participate in quarterly meetings of SDGs Division
- (3) Complete annual review of goals
- (4) Share documents, information and data for SDGs

archive

meetings and are included in technical level discussions. They should be involved in developing the SDGs monitoring frameworks and should be engaged during annual and periodic SDGs reviews. Appendix 2 – Goal structure coordination for technical committee indicates an indicative list of national level NGOs that can be engaged on dialogues relevant to different SDGs.

- **Institutionalize the activities of the SDGs Division.** Currently, the SDGs Division works ‘on demand’ by participating in various activities and initiatives relevant to SDGs. However to strengthen its core role on coordination and monitoring, it is important that the SDGs Division compiles annual work plans in order to systematize and prioritize its activities. At the beginning of the year, SDGs Division can inform the stakeholders of the planned activities for each quarter so that agencies have advance notice on their expected engagement in these activities. A draft work plan is provided in Appendix **Error! Reference source not found.** below.
- **Facilitate NMCC meetings bi-annually.** The purpose of the NMCC meeting is for SDGs Division to provide an overall update of SDGs work carried out. The NMCC members can provide progress updates on their respective goal areas during the NMCC meetings. The NMCC can approve the annual SDGs review report. It is also recommended that NMCC allocate time slots for presentation of research, report or share any new evidence around SDGs that are prepared by internally by government, by NGOs, private sector or any other agency. A summary of NMCC meeting minutes should be shared with technical committee members to build and strengthen coordination between NMCC and the technical committee level.
- **Establish communication groups for each goal to foster coordination and working relationships at the goal level.** To further build communication, share updates and strengthen working relationship, it is also suggested that SDGs Division continue to make efficient use of existing communicational channels such email groups and tap social media such as Whatsapp or Viber for the goal leads, co-leads and any other members relevant to a goal.
- **Mobilize social cluster champions.** Given the positive response from social sector, recommended that agencies responsible for social goals and individuals who spearhead social sector inputs to the SDGs coordination process, be mobilized as resource persons and champions in future gatherings (for example – Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Gender and Family can co-facilitate planning and reporting exercises of the SDGs Division).

Recommendations to strengthen policy alignment to SDGs

- **Complete the SDGs prioritization process.** While goal level discussions have been made and targets identified this process validated by all government agencies and external partners such as NGOs and private sector entities. It is also recommended that priority goals be selected by the NMCC for high-level monitoring. The criteria for selection of goals is provided in Appendix 3 – SDG goal prioritization framework for below.
- **SDGs division to prepare guidance note for incorporating SDGs priorities in any new policies and plans developed by sectors/line ministries.** The Ministry of Health has recently conducted an exercise with the support of WHO to review the health sector master plan and to integrate SDG priorities into the master plan document. This process /exercise needs to be documented and consolidated into a guidance note that can be used by any government agency that is developing a new sectoral plan or revisiting an existing plan/policy. This can be monitored and coordinated through the quarterly meetings recommended above.
- **Conduct a meta-review of five year plans submitted to SDGs.** The SDGs Division together with LGA and Maldives National University (MNU) researchers can facilitate a meta-review of five year plans submitted to LGA by local councils. This meta-review will aim to identify which local goals were most critical at island and atoll level and what are the main challenges associated

with the 13 local goals at the island level. This meta-review findings can help to communicate local priorities at the national level and establish a vertical collaboration for SDGs monitoring between national and local levels.

- **Prepare a SDGs 2030 Vision for the Maldives.** Given the absence of a long-term national development plan and planning act in the Maldives, it is recommended that the SDGs Division together with goal leads, civil society, academia and private sector representatives prepare a long-term development vision for the Maldives using ‘foresight’ planning. This document can be endorsed by the NMCC and lobbied through parliament as a commitment to long-term development and sustainability principles in development action in the Maldives. The SDG 2030 Vision can be an over-arching document and tool to steer development dialogue in the Maldives amongst diverse actors and can be updated every five or ten years.

Recommendations to strengthen human resource capacity

- **Conduct a ToT to SDGs Division team, goal leads, interested co-leads and NGO representatives** on how to facilitate SDGs dialogues and awareness sessions to stakeholders. The ToT participants will be designated as ‘SDGs resource persons’ who will provide time input to facilitate various SDGs related sessions and advocacy activities.
- **Conduct a research skills clinic for SDGs Division and goal leads to develop research and analytical skills.** This exercise should be jointly implemented with NBS and the National Statistical Committee members, MNU, Villa College, interested NGOs and individual researchers in the country.
- **Identify national researchers through MNU and Villa College.** The annual SDGs review process can engage students and staff from MNU and Villa College who can be attached to the goal leads to gather documents, conduct desk reviews, data reviews and to prepare written analysis.⁴ This will help to address time constraints of staff within ministries to conduct these tasks. At the same time, feedback from MNU staff indicated that students are required to do internships in selected programmes and with advance notice, these internships can be organized in close collaboration with the SDGs Division.
- **Identify an external expert panel who can provide support to goal leads to put together goal level or thematic assessments.** The SDGs expert panel can act as a roster that the SDGs Division and goal leads tap to get thematic advice and views on SDGs implementation and monitoring. The expert team can individual consultants, consulting firms, researchers, retired members representing various areas including thematic areas, technology/data fields etc.
- **Identify and provide opportunities to participate in short-term courses** for SDGs Division team on data analytics and statistics, budget analysis, research, communications etc.
- **Identify placements to get practical experience on short term basis** – they could include local and international placements. For example, the SDGs Division data team can be posted to work with NBS for three to four weeks to gain statistical skills and experience. The partnerships and communications team can do a placement with UNDP, UNICEF communications and or partnerships team for 3 to 4 weeks. International placements could be sought through UN agencies to work with governments that have strong advocacy activities, budgeting activities, research activities, technology or private sector initiatives on SDGs.

Recommendations to strengthen monitoring and data analysis capacity

- **Conduct SDG annual reviews** to assess progress using data and information available on each goal. The goal review will integrate a data review and a qualitative written assessment. The data review component should be led by NBS and National Statistical Committee members in a

⁴ These could include post-graduate students in political science, social policy and environment management programmes.

similar manner to how the diagnostic assessment and baseline assessments were carried out in 2017. This exercise should also integrate a qualitative assessment of the goal using the data updates and analysis. The goal review should be led by the goal lead agency together with SDGs Division, NBS and co-lead agencies. The goal lead agency can host the goal level meetings and assessment exercises. The goal reviews can be targeted for first and second quarter of each year.

- **Conduct a research skills clinic and attach students as researchers to goal leads.** The research clinic can target SDG Division, NBS, goal leads and researchers to develop technical analysis for key themes of the goals. The main output of the research clinic could be a national SDG review report. This could be implemented in collaboration with MNU, Villa College, NGOs and individual researchers in the country. The process should engage students from MNU and or Villa College who can be attached to the goal leads to gather documents, conduct desk reviews, data reviews and to prepare written analysis.⁵ This will help to address time constraints of staff within ministries to conduct these tasks.
- **Compile an annual SDGs review for Maldives.** The goal assessments can be consolidated into an annual SDG review of the Maldives and validated by technical committee members who should be given a three-week window to review and provide any comments. The annual level monitoring is key to systematically assess progress and to strengthen quality of SDG reporting. The goal review should be approved by NMCC and released at the end of second quarter of each year.
- **Systematically monitor SDGs advocacy, implementation and planning through quarterly coordination meetings** with ‘means of implementation’ agencies and goal (see suggestion above).
- **Explore options for an online monitoring tool such as Development Info (DevInfo) that can regularly update and monitor progress against SDG targets.** The online system can include a dashboard for priority goals and targets and the system can be integrated to MaldivesInfo and the government’s Isles system.⁶ Feedback from a President’s Official indicated interest to revive the project monitoring tool ‘Isles’ which was previously hosted at the President’s Office. Interview with a LGA staff indicated their efforts to establish a database system known as e-Council which will have data on birth, housing registry, death registry and pension related information.
- **Create an online/cloud-based information and document archive with support from NCIT.** The archive can be created on a user-friendly platform and should be set up by SDGs Division with access to technical committee members across all goals. The archive should have a folder for each goal and should consolidate different types of documents relevant to the goal such as (1) sector level/thematic assessments/reports to international agencies and conventions/ (2) survey reports (3) policies, master plans, action plans (4) laws (5) research including academic theses (6) performance audits (which can be updated systematically by AGO) (7) local development plans, policies and reviews (to be updated systematically by LGA) and (8) SDG relevant communication/media briefs, speeches and advocacy tools such as presentations. The folders can be updated as and when a new document is finalized/published by the respective agency. All goal leads, co-leads and external members should have access to all the folders for the purpose of promoting open and transparent information sharing. The goal leads should also be mandated to update the folders for the quarterly coordination meetings and during the annual goal review period.
- **Prepare issue briefs and other knowledge products on key themes.** The SDGs Division can partner with MNU, Villa College, NGOs and private sector entities to prepare issue papers and

⁵ These could include undergraduate students in political science, social policy and environment management programmes.

⁶ Discussion with President’s Office indicated a plan to revive the Isles monitoring system

briefs to facilitate policy dialogues and advocacy on priority goals or sub-themes within goals that are critical for assessment and advocacy. The knowledge products can further look at best practices in SDG inter-linkages between goals and sub-thematic areas and process related issues such as inter-sector/multi-stakeholder coordination partnership mechanisms or case studies of effective data solutions/sharing. The knowledge products can also show case best practices on these themes at national and local level.

- **Prepare comprehensive SDGs reports or VNRs on a periodic basis.** The national SDGs report or VNR can be consolidated periodically, based on annual SDG reviews reports.

Recommendations to strengthen domestic financing for SDGs

- **Develop criteria for NPI screening** - To add a SDGs criteria to the screening tool, the MoFT would require the necessary criteria developed and shared with them by first quarter of 2018. This would be an appropriate action to ensure SDGs based budget allocation and prioritization takes place in 2018 national budgeting process.
- **Review the SDGs mapping against COFOG classification (See Annex 1)** – The SDGs Division together the Fiscal Affairs Division should immediately review the mapping undertaken in this consultancy of SDG targets against the COFOG classification. This can help to generate SDGs based expenditure reports and budget allocation data.
- **Capture any lessons from 2017 budget evaluation sessions** – Given that the budgeting process has been changed, it is important for SDGs Division to meet and discuss with representatives of the fiscal affairs division, the main lessons from this year's budget evaluation sessions. This can provide new inputs and entry points to strengthen SDGs prioritization in budgeting.
- **Opportunity for budget prioritization at the ministry/entity level** – The new budget procedures involve MoFT giving a fixed budget envelop to each ministry/state agency. The entity then compiles the budget based on the ceiling. This means that the entities retain flexibility to allocate and prioritize budgets and there is no risk of budgets items/activities being slashed by MoFT as was previously the practice. As a result, there is currently some leverage at entity level to prioritize budget allocation.
- **Strengthen planning to support SDGs based budgeting** - It is important that SDGs based planning be strengthened within ministries to facilitate such an effective transition to results based budgeting that targets SDGs.

Recommendations to strengthen SDG advocacy and visibility

- **Set up a SDGs web page either within the MEE website or create a new website hosted at NCIT.** Currently there is no government website or webpage to communicate to government and public on SDGs and the relevant information on Maldives. The SDGs website can serve as an effective communication tool to inform government agencies and the wider public on the progress made and to update various tools, messages, assessments and reports relevant to SDGs in the Maldives.
- **Engage mainstream media and update media on a regular basis.** The SDGs Division should establish regular communication with media focal points who participated in the recent UN funded media training on SDGs. The SDGs Division can prepare quarterly press-briefs and share with the media focal points. This is an important channel to build awareness and advocacy around SDGs with the wider public. The media can also be contacted at critical points such as when a VNR is prepared or annual review is completed or when an issue paper/brief is prepared on SDGs relevant themes.
- **Social media.** Given that social media is increasingly being used as a critical platform to inform public and engage dialogue with youth, it is recommended that social media accounts with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc are being set up under SDGs Division and are regularly updated. The goal leads can also be provided administrative access to these accounts for sharing

regular updates. Any messaging targeted to wider public should ensure that all messaging are inclusive so that persons with disabilities – visual and hearing impaired are not left behind.

Recommendations to strengthen technology and innovation for SDGs

- **Identify and integrate external advocates of technology into SDGs dialogues and annual SDGs review processes proposed.** Explore technology application in different goal areas including water provision, marine conservation, renewable energy providers etc. Additionally individuals and experts in the field of ICT should be brought into the SDGs dialogue to identify ways to gain efficiency and break barriers to service provision. The Maldives also has an NGO on science and technology promotion which can be integrated to the SDG goal groups.
- **Document best practices on technology application.** The SDGs Division can establish collaboration with MNU and NGOs as suggested in the earlier section and produce annual research products such as issue briefs or case studies on effective technology adoption and relevance to Maldives. This can help to build a dialogue for innovative solutions to existing barriers within the government stakeholders including the goal leads and co-lead agencies.
- **Document best practices on data sharing and integration.** There are several inter-agency projects that aim to integrate data systems between different government organizations. This includes the current initiative to integrate the MED's 'Boli' system to that of MIRA's. Such cases need to be documented and advocated as good practices to breaking the silos on data management.
- **Conduct a SDGs innovation challenge or 'the SDG pitch' as an annual event.** To promote innovative solutions to development challenges relevant to SDGs, it is recommended that the SDG Division to organize an annual SDG innovation challenge.⁷ This can be targeted to youth or NGOs. SDG Division can partner with UNDP Maldives and other UN and private sector agencies to the conduct events. These solutions can be documented and transferred to the goal leads and co-leads for their adoption.

Recommendations to break 'silos' and promoted an integrated approach for SDGs

- **Utilize the proposed quarterly meetings** with SDG goal leads, co-lead agencies and 'means of implementation' agency representatives to discuss potential areas for collaboration between goals and relevant goal level agencies. The quarterly meetings should have a mandatory agenda item to discuss ways to strengthen coordination and collaboration between stakeholders and to develop a working relationship between agencies working on multiple SDGs.
- **Pilot initiatives such as a 'buddy system' to promote inter-linkages between goals.** The SDG Division can create a 'buddy' system for goal leads to work together on a two or more goals that are inter-related and can work together. This system can be then be replicated to other goals. It is also important to document the process of identifying the linkages and the best practices for building a working relationship between the goal lead agencies.
- **Document successful collaborations and or assessments that recognize cross-sector linkages and multi-stakeholder approaches** that have contributed to the SDGs. This could also link to a review of SDGs through common themes such as gender, climate, technology, poverty and inequality.
- **Develop infographics, video spots and key messages** that can be circulated in SDG events and social media to promote the thinking around multi-sector/multi stakeholder approaches to SDG implementation. See Figure 1, above.

⁷ Existing models include Miyaheli and Start Up Weekend piloted by UNDP Maldives with private sector partners.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Terms of Reference (ToR) of the institutional coordination agencies

1.1 TOR for NMCC

Terms of Reference National Ministerial Coordination Committee

1. Introduction/Background

On September 25th 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. On 1 January 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at an historic UN Summit, officially came into force. Over the next fifteen years, with these new Goals that universally apply to all, countries will mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. The SDGs build on the success of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and aim to go further to end all forms of poverty. The new Goals are unique in that they call for action by all countries, poor, rich and middleincome to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and addresses a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and environmental protection. While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments are expected to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals. Countries have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review of the progress made in implementing the Goals, which will require quality, accessible and timely data collection. The 17 goals are demonstrated in the diagram below

The purpose of the SDG is to provide overall directions to the implementation of the UN SDGs across the government sectors through the following.

- i. Integrate socioeconomic development and good governance in Maldives.
- ii. Ensure all form of parity and inclusiveness in the development process.
- iii. Awareness within the cabinet, ministries, parliament and key stakeholders.
- iv. Provision of a systematic framework that integrates key cross-cutting sectors.
- v. Coordination among government sectors and other state agencies.
- vi. Enhancing civil society and the private sector in the development process.

2. Roles and Objectives of the Committee

The committee will have the over-arching responsibility to provide policy guidance on key decisions that are to be made during the process of the development of the SDGs.

- i. Facilitate the formulation and execution of SDGs in Maldives.
- ii. To provide guidance and feedback from their respective agencies and other areas of knowledge.
- iii. Ensure the integration of economic, environmental, governance and social actions towards the development of SDGs at country context.
- iv. Promote awareness of the SDGs within relevant government agencies and key stakeholders.
- v. Identify and facilitate acceleration to goals/areas that are lagging behind
- vi. Approve work plan of the activities to be implemented within different sectors during the implementation of the SDGs.

- vii. Approve document outline and provide guidance on the structure of the reporting mechanism (monitoring, reviewing, evaluation framework) of the progress of the SDGs especially the Voluntary National Report for the High Level Political Forums.
- viii. Take final decision on any issues related to the multi-sectorial discussions / overlaps approve and take other key decisions related to the overall coordination in the development of the SDGs. ix. Ensure successful achievement of SDGs by 2030.

3. Role of the chairman

- i. To convene meetings, in consultation with the committee members, and to liaise with the Secretariat in relation to administrative support for meetings.
- ii. To develop and set the agenda for meetings in consultation with the committee members and the Secretariat
- iii. To chair meetings and facilitate the participation of members
- iv. If the chairperson is on leave or not present at a meeting of the Committee, a member appointed by the chairperson must assume all roles and responsibilities of the chairperson

4. Administrative Arrangements of the Committee

4.1 Committee Meetings

- i. The committee will meet at least four times a year, commencing from the formulation of the committee and continued until the objectives are achieved. However if any issue arises the chairperson may decide to hold a committee meeting given the urgency of the issue.
- ii. Should the chairperson consider it necessary, the committee may meet more frequently, either in person or by teleconference/video conference.
- iii. The Committee Secretariat will forward meeting invitations through email at least three day ahead with a tentative agenda and invite members for their response. The meeting and agenda and any associated paper will be confirmed with the Chairperson and forwarded to the members prior to a meeting.
- iv. At least 03 members must be present. Nevertheless the chairperson can decide on whether to continue or postpone a meeting, in the event of absence of members after giving confirmation.

4.2 Secretariat

- i. The Secretariat of the committee will be the SDG unit of Ministry of Environment and Energy.
- ii. The secretariat will be responsible for all the coordination and administrative and logistical arrangements that need to be made for the committee meetings to be convened.
- iii. The secretariat will prepare minutes and arrange to have them shared with the committee members within 5 working days after meetings
- iv. Minutes with any amendments will be ratified at each subsequent meeting of the committee

1.2 TOR for Technical Committee Members

Focal points from relevant agencies have been appointed to the Technical Committee of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and would be responsible for providing critical support, assistance and guidance for the SDG team to:

Roles of the Focal appoints appointed by Agencies:

- 1. Coordinate information sharing within their respective agencies regarding SDGs.

2. Provide required data and information relating to that sector and relevant agencies for the development of the SDGs. Where possible, provide disaggregated data (location, age group, gender, etc)
3. Provide information on:
 - a. The key aims and objectives, focus and policy/priorities of the sector, including updates on strategic planning initiatives.
 - b. The new trends and emerging issues in the sector
4. Identify bottlenecks and challenges in achieving the SDGs (policy & planning, finance/budget, service delivery).
5. Coordinate with other stakeholder agencies/institutions, civil society, development partners and private sector, as and when needed, to identify information/data, issues and policies for the achievement of SDGs.
6. Create awareness on SDGs within the respective agency
7. Ensure that SDGs are incorporated into the sectoral plans and other development plans
8. Provide information and data for to monitor the SDG targets and indicators
9. Identify and provide proxy indicators where necessary
10. Monitor and report the progress of the targets relevant to the respective agency
11. Participate and contribute in SDG national workshops and meetings
12. Provide key documents from the sectors (published or draft)
13. The members of the technical committee will need to meet at least once a month. However the frequency of the meetings would increase depending on the tasks at hand.

1.2 Roles of SDGs Division / MEE

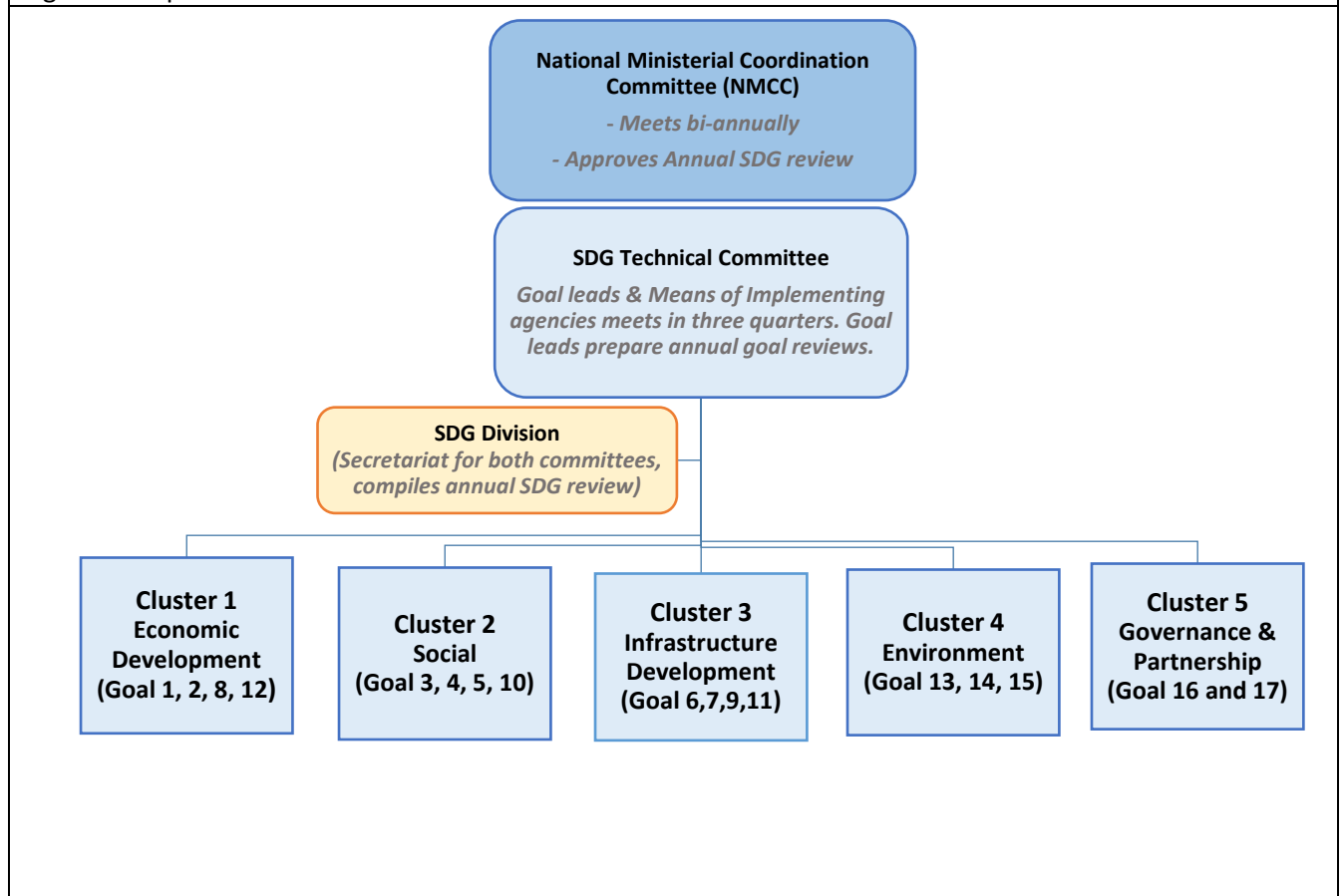
1. Act as the secretariat for the National Ministerial Coordination Committee (NMCC) for SDGs
2. Act as the secretariat for the SDGs Technical Committee / Cluster Groups
3. Coordinate with Custodian agencies and NBS and other agencies to ensure that milestones are reached and reporting deadlines are met.
4. Provide technical support and guidance to the NMCC and technical Committee where necessary
5. Create awareness of SDGs on among government& state agencies, Local governments, civil Society, private sector, media and the General Public.
6. Monitor progress of SDGs and identify areas of acceleration where necessary
7. Reporting of SDGs to concern parties
8. Identify gaps and facilitate to mitigate the deficient areas.
9. Aligning SDGs with national development plans, sectorial plans, development partner assistances and national budget
10. Coordinate with NBS to gather data for monitoring targets and indicators.
11. Ensure participation of government and state agencies, civil society, development partners, private sector and community in implementing SDGs in Maldives.

1.3 Role of National Bureau of Statistics

1. Develop high quality and robust statistical measurement framework for SDGs
2. Provide support to custodial agencies and stakeholders on the methodologies used to measure SDG goals, targets and indicators
3. Review and assist capacity building activities in statistics needed for SDGs
4. Bridging data gaps and identify new data sources
5. Share information and data with SDGs Unit and other stakeholders regarding the data issues.
6. Provide guidance and technical support on data issues for the SDGs coordination Committee and Technical Committee.
7. Assist custodial agencies and stakeholders to identify proxy indicators where necessary
8. Create awareness on SDGs indicators and importance of data among stakeholders and general public

1.4 Enhanced structure for SDG coordination

Figure 2 Proposed enhanced structure for SDG coordination



Appendix 2 – Goal structure coordination for technical committee (This list should be periodically updated by the SDGs Division)

GROUP STRUCTURE				
Goal	Goal lead	Cluster Co-leads	Main data sources /information providers – the codes in the bracket show indicators (Source – Data diagnostic assessment conducted by NBS)	Other agencies that can be included as cluster members (This section will be completed with feedback from CSO forum)
Goal 1 NO POVERTY	SDGs division	• NBS • NDMC • MOFA • NSPA	NDMC (1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.5.3) MPS (1.5.1) MOFT (1.a.1, 1.a.2, 1.b.1) MOH (1.2.2, 1.5.1) MOYS (1.2.1, 1.2.2)	• MNU Research • Interested NGOs/CSOs
Goal 2 ZERO HUNGER	Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture / Agriculture Division	• MED (Enterprise Development Unit on SMEs) • MoH (HPA nutrition) • MFDA (nutrition and food safety) • SDGs Division	MOFA (2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.a.1, 2.a.2, 2.b.1, 2.b.2, 2.c.1) MOFT (2.a.1, 2.a.2, 2.b.2) MOH (2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.2.2)	• ARC (nutrition), • FAO • IFAD • NBS • MOGF • NSPA • LGA

Goal 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Ministry of Health	• NSPA (universal health coverage) • NDA (substance abuse) • Transport (traffic accidents) • MOGF (maternal health) • MEE (Environment Dept – hazardous waste exposure) • PO (social department) • SDGs Division	MOH (3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.5, 3.4.1, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.6.1, 3.7.1, 3.7.2, 3.8.1, 3.9.1, 3.9.2, 3.9.3, 3.a.1, 3.b.1, 3.c.1, 3.d.1) NSPA (3.8.2) MPS (3.4.2, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.6.1, 3.9.3) MOFT (3.b.2) MOGF (3.7.1) MOYS (3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.5.2, 3.6.1, 3.7.1, 3.8.2, 3.a.1, 3.b.2, 3.c.1)	• Aasandha • SHE • Cancer Society • Diabetes Society • Tiny Hearts • Bluepeace • MOH • NBS • NDMC • NCIT • LGA • IGMH • DNR • EPA
Goal 4 QUALITY EDUCATION	Ministry of Education	• MOYS (Skills development/TVET) • MOGF (education disparities) • PO (social department) • SDGs Division	MOE (4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.4.1, 4.5.1, 4.6.1, 4.7.1, 4.a.1, 4.b.1, 4.c.1) MOYS (4.3.1, 4.4.1, 4.5.1, 4.6.1) MOFT (4.b.1)	• ARC • Care Society • Autism Association • Disabilities association • MNU/Villa College • UNICEF • NBS • MOT • CSC • DHE • MOIA

				• CAM • MIU
Goal 5 GENDER EQUALITY	Ministry of Gender and Family	• MoH (SRH) • AG (discriminatory laws) • MED (Enterprise development unit – women owned businesses) • FPA (GBV) • PO (social department) • SDGs Division	MOGF (5.1.1, 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.4.1, 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2, 5.a.1, 5.a.2, 5.c.1) MOFA (5.a.1) MPS (5.2.1, 5.2.2) MOH (5.3.2, 5.6.1, 5.6.2) MOYS (5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.b.1)	• Hope for Women, • Dhi Youth Movement • SHE • Uthema • Women on Boards • NBS • HRCM • MCS (customs) • AGO (Attorney) • Elections
Goal 6 CLEAN WATER & SANITATION	Ministry of Environment and Energy / Water and Sanitation Dept.	• MEE (Environment unit on water pollution) • SDGs Division	MEE (6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.4.1, 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 6.6.1) MOYS (6.1.1, 6.2.1, 6.3.1, 6.3.2) LGA (6.b.1) MOFT (6.a.1) MOE (6.2.1) MOHI (6.2.1)	• Fenaka • MWSC • NBS • HPA • All City Councils

Goal 7 AFFORDABLE & CLEAN ENERGY	Ministry of Environment and Energy / Energy Dept.	• MEA • SDGs Division	MEE (7.1.2, 7.2.1, 7.3.1, 7.a.1, 7.b.1)	• STELCO • RE companies • NBS • MED • MHI • MOT
Goal 8 DECENT WORK & ECONOMIC GROWTH	Ministry of Economic Development	• MoFT fiscal division (growth rate) • MED (Labour division) • MoT (employment) • MOYS (employment) • MOFA (Agriculture and fisheries businesses) • MMA (financial sector diversification) • PO (economic department) • SDGs Division	MOT (8.9.1, 8.9.2) MOYS (8.3.1, 8.5.2, 8.6.1) HRCM (8.8.2) MMA (8.10.1, 8.10.2) MOFT (8.a.1, 8.b.1) MED (8.8.1) MOHI (8.6.1) MOE (8.6.1)	• SME corporation • Dhi Youth Movement • JCIM • MNU – TVETNBS • MIRA • MEE • NDMC • MMS (MET) • MPL • MOHA • All city Council • MCS (customs) • Immigration • CMDA

Goal 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION & INFRASTRUCTURE	Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure	• MED (entrepreneurship infrastructure) • MoT (tourism infrastructure) • PO (Technical /corporate development secretariat) • SDGs Division	MEE (9.5.1) Maldives Transport Authority (9.1.2) MOFT (9.5.1, 9.a.1) MED (9.3.2) MOH (9.5.2) MOHI (9.1.1, 9.a.1) MOYS (9.2,2)	• LGA • All City Councils • NBS • MOGF • CMDA
Goal 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	SDGs division	• NBS • MOGF • HRCM	MCS (10.a.1) HRCM (10.3.1) MOFT (10.b.1) MMA (10.5.1, 10.c.1) IMMIGRATION (10.7.1, 10.7.2) MED (10.7.1, 10.a.1) MOGF (10.3.1) Ministry Of Foreign Affairs 10.6.1	• Disability Association • CARE society • MNU research center
Goal 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES	Ministry of Housing and Infrastructure	• MED (transport) • NDMC • PO (Technical /corporate development secretariat) • All City Councils	MOHI (11.1.1 , 11.3.1, 11.7.1, 11.c.1) MEE (11.5.1, 11.6.1, 11.6.2) NDMC (11.b.1, 11.b.2, 11.5.2) Maldives Transport Authority (11.2.1) MPS (11.7.2) LGA (11.a.1) MOFT (11.4.1, 11.c.1) MOGF (11.7.2)	• HDC • City council • NBS • MNDF • EPA • MOGF • HDC • MTCC • MRDC

		• SDGs Division		• MACL
Goal 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION	Ministry of Environment and Energy /Waste Dept. Ministry of Environment and Energy / Environment Dept.	• MED (sustainable consumption) • MOF&A (Agriculture) • MEE (waste Dept.) • MEE (Env. Dept) – Chemical • MOT (Sustainable Development) • MoFT (Public Procurement) • SDGs Division	MEE (12.4.1, 12.4.2, 12.5.1, 12.6.1, 12.a.1, 12.c.1, 12.8.1, 13.2.1, 13.2.2) MOFA (12.a.1, 12.1.1, 12.3.1) MOT (12.b.1) MOFT (12.7.1) MOE (12.8.1)	• WAMCO • STO • NBS • NCIT
Goal 13 CLIMATE ACTION	Ministry of Environment and Energy / Climate Change Dept.	• NDMC (Climate Related Hazards and Natural Disasters) • MEE (Environment Dept.) • MOFA • SDGs Division	MEE (13.2.1, 13.2.2) NDMC (13.1.1) NSPA (13.1.1) MPS (13.1.2) MOFT (13.a.1 13.B.1) MOE (13.3.1) MOHI (13.3.1)	• Maldives Red Crescent (MRC) • NBS • AGO • MMS (MET) • NCIT • MPL • MNDF • DHE • MED

				• MOH
Goal 14 LIFE BELOW WATER	Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture Ministry of Environment and Energy / Environment Dept.	• MEE (Climate Change Dept) • MoT (Environment Dept) • EPA • SDGs Division	MEE (14.1.1, 14.2.1, 14.3.2, 14.3.1) MOFA (14.4.1, 14.5.1, 14.6.1, 14.7.1, 14.b.1, 14.c.1) MOFT (14.a.1) MED (14.2.1) AGO (14.6.1, 14.b.1, 14.c.1)	• Private companies advocating marine research (eg. six senses, villa college marine center) • Save the Beach • Bluepeace • NBS • MCS • FDA • MEA
Goal 15 LIFE ON LAND	Ministry of Environment and Energy / Environment Dept.	• MoT (Environment Dept) • EPA (Protection of ecosystems and species) • MOF&A (Agriculture) • SDGs Division	MOFA (15.1.1, 15.1.2) MPS (15.c.1) MOFT (15.a.1, 15.b.1) AGO (15.6.1)	• Save the Beach NGO • Bluepeace • NBS
Goal 16 PEACE, JUSTICE & STRONG INSTITUTIONS	Attorney General's Office	• MOHA (crime, death) • MPS • PO (governance unit) • MMA	MPS (16.1.1, 16.1.2, 16.1.3, 16.1.4, 16.2.1, 16.2.2, 16.2.3, 16.3.1, 16.3.2, 16.4.1, 16.4.2, 16.5.1, 16.5.2, 16.10.1) MOYS (16.1.3, 16.1.4, 16.2.1, 16.2.2, 16.2.3, 16.3.2, 16.4.2)	• Transparency Maldives (corruption, RTI) • Supreme Court • DNR • PGO

		• Auditor general's office (illicit financial flows) • DNR (birth registration) • NDA (birth registration) • DJA (rule of law) • Information Commissioner's Office (RTI) • HRCM • MoGF (violence, rule of law) • MNDF (Security) • ACC • SDGs Division	16.10.1 HRCM (16.a.1, 16.b.1) MOFT (16.6.1) IMMIGRATION (16.2.2) MED (16.2.2) MOH (16.7.2, 16.9.1) MOHI (16.6.2) MOGF (16.1.3, 16.1.4, 16.2.1, 16.7.1) AGO (16.10.2) Ministry Of Foreign Affairs (16. 8.1)	• MCS (correction) • MOIA • MDNS • MOT • MCS • NDA • CSC • JJU • NBS • NCIT • All City Councils • LGA
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Goal 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	SDGs division	• NBS • PO • MOFT (fiscal division and debt division)	MCS (17.10.1, 17.11.1, 17.12.1) MMA (17.3.1, 17.3.2) MOFT (17.1.1, 17.2.1, 17.3.1, 17.4.1, 17.9.1, 17.15.1, 17.16.1, 17.17.1) MED (17.3.1, 17.5.1, 17.6.1, 17.10.1, 17.12.1, 17.14.1 17.15.1) Ministry Of Foreign Affairs (17.9.1, 17.6.1)	
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NOTE:

- Cluster/thematic lead agencies were selected based on overlap of policies, ministry mandate with majority of the SDG targets in a given goal. For any assessment, monitoring and reporting of SDGs, the cluster lead will coordinate inputs from the respective co-leads and sub-departments.
- Co-lead agencies are government agencies which have policy and or implementation mandate for a specific SDG target within a given goal.
- Information providers are those that are responsible specifically for providing data on SDG indicators in a given goal. This information was taken from the diagnostic assessment conducted by NBS.
- Other agencies include private sector, SOE and civil society organizations that can contribute to qualitative assessment of SDGs for any reporting purposes.
- Color codes indicates cluster classification
- Lead Agency for Goal 1, 10 and 17, is SDGs division for the short term as it is mostly relevant to monitoring trends.

Appendix 3 – SDG goal prioritization framework for NMCC

CRITERIA	SDG 1 Poverty	SDG 2 No hunger	SDG 3 Health (social)	SDG 4 Education	SDG 5 Gender (social)	SDG 6 Water & Sanitation	SDG 7 Energy	SDG 8 Decent work and growth (Economic)	SDG 9 Industry Innovation & Infrastructure	SDG 10 Reduced inequalities	SDG 11 Sustainable cities (Infrastructure)	SDG 12 Responsible consumption & Production	SDG 13 Climate action	SDG 14 Life below water* (Environment)	SDG 15 Life on Land	SDG 16 Peace, Justice & institutions (Partnerships)	SDG 17 Partnerships
1. MDGs - Unfinished business																	
2. Overarching goals/cross cutting																	
3. Government's pledges										youth	housing						
4. Development context and emerging challenges																	
5. Accelerator interventions: interventions that trigger progress across a range of goals/ targets/ high impact																	