## Multiannual Indicative Programme

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country/Sub-Region:</th>
<th>The Maldives</th>
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1 Summary of the MIP

The low-lying islands of the Maldives are threatened by rising sea-levels caused by global warming. The tsunami of 2004 which devastated parts of the Maldives further highlighted the specific vulnerability of the country to storms and sea swells. There are significant regional disparities in living conditions as many of the more remote, poorer island communities have little or no access to basic social amenities. Excessive migration to the capital city island of Male’ with its higher standard of living and strong sea defences have caused overcrowding and a strain on the island’s resources. There is now an urgent need to develop centres of growth in the atolls to improve the standard of living and to encourage people to remain there. Consequently, the GoM has given priority to its regional development strategy to develop larger, safer and more sustainable islands in the atolls where people can live more comfortably with improved job opportunities.

The Maldives is graduating from Least Developed Country (LDC) status from 2008. It needs a trade policy that is not only responsive to its development needs but also takes account of the obligations and opportunities that come with membership of the international trading system. It faces further challenges to recover from the economic consequences of the damage caused by the tsunami in 2004 (financial damage equivalent to 62% of GDP or $470 million\(^1\), financing gap on reconstruction of over $150 million, non-tsunami budget deficit of approximately $80 million in 2005). The EC will continue to support a certain flexibility to ensure the country can recover sufficiently from economic losses due to damage to its tourist and fishing industries.

Since 2004, the country is undergoing important constitutional reforms which have the potential to transform the Maldives from an authoritarian State to a full democracy. The implementation of these reforms by the GoM is going relatively slowly and this has caused serious tension with opposition supporters who would like to see the pace speeded up considerably. In addition, serious human rights abuses of opposition members have caused concern about the GoM’s sincerity to fully implement these reforms.

For these reasons the EC will focus on support to:

- regional development of ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands encouraging environmental sustainability, income-generating activities and improved community services (education, health etc), as well as the government on strengthening economic governance, including local and central capacities.

- the Government of the Maldives (GoM) to address economic development and improved trade capacity. This would allow the EU to take on board the recommendations of its trade needs assessment 2005\(^2\) and support activities that emerge from Integrated Framework Process.

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\(^{2}\) Identification Mission for Technical Assistance in Enhancing Trade Capacity and Economic Development in Maldives’, IBM Belgium, EuropeAid/116548/C/SV/lot n°6, 01/03/2005.
• civil society and the GoM to ensure they are better equipped for the challenges and opportunities of democratisation and good governance.

All components will commence in 2007.

2 Indicative Budget

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Planned (MIP)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Priority sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-focal sectors</td>
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* indicative amounts +/- 10 % of total

3 Priority and Actions: Regional Development

3.1. Strategy context/justification

The extremely low population density (about 350 000) of the Maldives is widely dispersed over approximately 200 islands, making it unique even among small island archipelagic States. It also raises the cost of delivering social services and of public administration as there is hardly any scope to generate economies of scale as it is too expensive to provide education, health and administrative services on each of the 200 islands.

The low-lying islands are vulnerable to rising sea levels and sea swells. This is so serious that some scientists predict that the Maldives could disappear by 2050 because of the projected sea-level rise caused by global warming.

Poverty in the Maldives stems primarily from regional disparities in living conditions related to the remoteness of the inhabited islands and lack of infrastructure and social amenities in the atolls. In recent years the population has migrated steadily to the capital, Male’, with its higher standard of living. This has led to severe overcrowding in the capital, where nearly one quarter of the country’s population now live.

In 1998, the GoM established a policy of regional development and decentralisation to ensure services are delivered in a cost-effective manner to the population in the outer atolls and to reduce the drift of people towards Male’. The strategy promotes the development of one, larger ‘focus island’ per atoll, which is more economically and socially sustainable. Since 2004, the strategy has been enhanced to provide better protection from natural disasters and to ensure environmental sustainability. Migration is on a voluntary basis.
The CSP 2002-2006, NIP 2004-2006 and the Tsunami Indicative Programme 2005-2006 identified regional development as one of the key areas for EC aid.

3.2. Activities

3.2.1. Objectives

The overall objective is to:

- boost the country’s regional development to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and reduce regional disparities by contributing to the ‘focus’ islands’ approach, including local and linked central governance capacities and social issues, such as youth unemployment and drug dependency.

The specific objectives are to contribute to:

- the development of ‘focus’ islands, thereby ensuring a secure, durable environment and enhanced economic prospects for the communities that inhabit them;
- boosting sustainability of ‘focus’ islands by supporting appropriate physical and social facilities and services (housing, schools, clinics, youth related programmes etc.), strong sea defences, environmentally sustainable facilities (access to drinking water and energy, adequate waste facilities) and better job opportunities.

3.2.2. Expected results

- vulnerability of developed ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands to sea level rise is reduced through sustainable environmental planning and environmentally sound sea defences.
- the populations of developed ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands have access to adequate educational, health and other social programmes within the framework of national policies, sustainable water, energy and waste facilities, quality housing resistant to damage by tidal waves and rising sea level, improved job prospects.
- economic governance structures strengthened, including local and central government capacities

3.2.3. Activities

The Commission will contribute to the GoM’s ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands programme which is an enhanced version of the regional development strategy adopted in 1998. The programme will provide wider redevelopment options for the population and will improve upon infrastructure and facilities and ensure environmental sustainability.

‘Focus’/‘safe’ islands will feature improved education, sanitation and health services and will offer enhanced job prospects. Activities will be defined after an identification mission, which will look into the needs and the funding gaps. This will be done in connection with the results of the Tsunami Indicative Programme implementation.

The GoM has indicated that these islands will have:
• economic viability of communities by using economies of scale derived from larger populations and sufficient infrastructure, transportation and communication facilities and financial services and banking facilities to develop a financial asset base.

• elevated safe havens with emergency facilities and stocks of emergency supplies.

• improved building codes and redesigned housing to include multi-storey structures that could be used for vertical evacuation.

• redeveloped harbours and channels to provide speedy access in emergencies.

• improved transport infrastructure including the provision of land, sea and air transport facilities, such as storm resistant jetties, air-strips and helipads where feasible.

• Development of emergency communication systems and wireless communication that could be used when the normal telephone systems are down.

The GoM has set the criteria for the choice of ‘safe islands’ as the following:

islands must have:

• easy access to an airport.

• sufficient space and potential for reclamation and/or the possibility for connection with another island.

• a viable economy and social services.

• sufficient space for subsequent population growth.

In addition, the Commission will ensure:

• coastal protection against sudden wave action or storm surges by building strong coastal defences and environmental coastal zones and green belts to provide natural defences in vulnerable areas of the island.

• coastal reef protection considering its strategic importance in the local context and its coherence with the Country Environmental profile (CEP)

• improved, sustainable access to safe drinking water and sustainable waste management facilities.

• adequate education and health services within the framework of national health and education policies.

• increased employment opportunities for the youth
• support GoM’s efforts to address drug abuse among the youth in the context of the 2005 National Drug Control Master Plan.

• support the efforts of the Government of Maldives to strengthen atoll and island administration.

• Enhance the economic governance mechanisms

• support for the GoM’s efforts to explore sustainable sources of renewable energy.

• support for awareness raising activities related to safety, security, training and labour related aspects in air and transport sectors.

• adequate for climate change mitigation activities, such as support for the development and implementation of government policy on climate change at the local, national and international levels.

• the development of cross-sector clusters on ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands which could support the improved food security situation of the population and eventually assist in reducing the costs of operating the tourism sector. This could include the development of agricultural produce with possible import substitution and integration into the tourism industry supply chain.³

3.2.4. Implementation

Implementation should take into account the lessons learnt from the Commission’s funding of ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands in 2005-2006.

The World Bank (WB) will route the Commission’s funds through the GoM’s Tsunami Relief and Reconstruction Fund (TRRF) using the same implementation measures and social environmental and financial safeguards as those applied to the WB’s own support, thus ensuring harmonisation of implementation methods.

The TRRF is managed by the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoTF). The management of the TRRF is overseen by a Monitoring Board comprising representatives of the government, the private sector and the UNDP Resident Coordinator. The EC will seek to secure appropriate representation in the monitoring board, in order to ensure proper guidance and control over the activities and give visibility to the EC contribution. The WB is a long-standing development partner of the GoM. Since the initial tsunami recovery phase, the WB has been present in the country and has provided technical assistance for the implementation of the TRRF as well as support for the reconstruction of the Maldives (Post Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction Project). Regular assessments on specific activities and on TRRF implementation are made by WB specialists.

³ This would be explored in coordination with activities foreseen under trade-related technical assistance (4.1.2.3), particularly those relating to improved competitiveness of the sectors.
3.2.5. Cross-cutting issues

Governance, gender and environmental concerns will be mainstreamed into the activities on the ‘safe island’. Activities will focus in particular on vulnerable groups such as female-led households and ensure that island communities are consulted on all activities that concern them.

Clearly, the ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands approach is environmental by nature. Environmental aspects will follow the guidelines for reconstruction established by UNEP at the Cairo Conference of February 2005. Activities will include specific environmental projects and support the GoM’s efforts to explore sustainable sources of renewable energy. Environmental Impact Assessments (for projects) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (for programmes) will also be included in the design of the assistance.

3.2.6. Risks & assumptions

Assumptions:
The GoM continues its regional development strategy as planned.

Risks:
Costs in the Maldives could be prohibitive as everything has to be imported and the cost of the limited transport available has increased due to rising fuel prices.

Another major risk could be that the ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands approach is not convincing enough to attract people from vulnerable lower-lying islands or to prevent them migrating into Male’ (This risk has been substantially reduced by the experience of the tsunami where the population saw first-hand the danger of continuing to live on outlying islands).

3.2.7. Main indicators

- Adequate educational and health facilities within the framework of national policies, sustainable water and waste facilities, improved access to energy and reduced dependency on fuel import and quality housing resistant to damage by tidal waves and rising sea levels are in place on developed ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands.

- Protection against sea-level rise on developed ‘focus’/‘safe’ islands is ensured through environmentally-sound sea defences and sustainable environmental planning.

3.2.8. Coordination

The precise amount to be devoted to this priority out of the total package will be determined during the identification and appraisal process.

The main contribution to coordination with Member States and other donors will be achieved by channelling Commission funds via the GoM TRRF. This will ensure a de facto coordination between the Commission, Member States and other donors. The EC will also participate fully in donor coordination meetings.
3.2.9. Indicative timeframe
Disbursement over 7-10 years.

4 Non-focal sectors:
Trade-related technical assistance to enhance trade capacity

4.1. Trade-related technical assistance to enhance trade capacity

4.1.1 Strategy context/justification
As a result of strong economic growth over the last 20 years, the Maldives will graduate from its status as an LDC country in 2010. Graduation will bring opportunities but also challenges for the country's economic development. Its main export product, canned tuna, may lose preferential access to international markets.

The country has suffered serious economic difficulties after the tsunami disaster of 2004 aggravated by a subsequent fall in revenues from tourism and fisheries. In 2005, a drop of 62% in GDP was compounded by a budget deficit of non-tsunami related government revenues (mainly tourism) of around $82 million. There is a danger that this downturn will impact primarily on the poorer areas of the country where jobs and infrastructure are already scarce.

The EC's trade needs assessment 2005\(^4\) recommended that the GoM should:
- develop a trade policy framework to provide strategic direction and a cohesive approach to all international trade negotiations;
- develop a strategic framework for sector development;
- develop a strategy to enable the Maldives to take an active part in WTO negotiations;
- increase the capacity of its line ministry to effectively manage the increased workload that membership of the international trading system brings;
- adjust its domestic tariffs and taxes and establish efficient capital markets to enable a more open economy and adequate protection of local producers and current revenues;
- update and expand the second Tourism Master Plan (2005-2015);
- develop its canned tuna industry to compete on the international market;
- study the feasibility of environmentally sustainable agricultural produce and distributing information communications technology to support cluster development in the regional hubs.

In the course of 2005 and 2006, the EC provided support for the GoM's international trade negotiations and for the GoM's capacity to build market intelligence and identify new fisheries products.

The needs and concerns of developing countries are at the heart of the Doha Ministerial Declaration. Members committed themselves to ensuring that WTO technical assistance focuses as a priority on assisting developing countries with implementing existing WTO

\(^4\) Identification mission for technical assistance in enhancing trade capacity and economic development in the Maldives’, EuropeAid/116548/C/SV/lot n° 6, issued on 01/03/2005
obligations, as well as on increasing their capacity to participate more effectively in future multilateral trade negotiations.

The Maldives’ government has requested technical assistance in preparing their offer in the framework of the DDA negotiations. The non-resident status of the Maldives puts the government in a particularly difficult situation in terms of following, and contributing to, the ongoing negotiations.

4.1.2. Actions

4.1.2.1. Objectives

The overall objective is to:

- support the Maldives in its efforts to build up institutional capacity to deal with the challenges and opportunities of the international trade system (WTO, SAFTA, important bilateral trade relations including the EU), while taking into account its LDC graduation and ensuring coherence with the country’s overall development objectives and policies and support the Development of its trade policy and its integration into the National Development Plan

The specific objectives are to:

- improve the ability of the Maldives to formulate and implement a comprehensive trade policy that integrates its commitments under the WTO (and SAFTA), enables it to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by international trade and is mainstreamed into its development policy.

- improve the ability of the Maldives to meet commitments and challenges related to LDC graduation, in particular with regard to bilateral trade preferences and the competitiveness of its main economic sectors.

- Assist with the Integrated Framework facilitation process

4.1.2.2. Expected results

By enhancing its capacity, the GoM should be better equipped to face the challenge of graduation from LDC status. More specifically, the GoM should be better able to live up to its international commitments and support the export-oriented sectors of the economy to become more diversified and competitive, ensuring that trade is mainstreamed into its national development plan.

4.1.2.3. Activities

Among the actions that should be envisaged:

- follow-up to trade-related technical assistance activities currently being implemented.

- support for economic development as proposed in the trade needs assessment 2005 (improved competitiveness of the tourism and fisheries sectors and
exploration of the possibilities for supporting the establishment of integrated development clusters).

- take on the role of the Integrated Framework Facilitator and implement a plan of action on trade related assistance in collaboration with the development partners.

4.1.2.4. Implementation

Identification should take place in 2007. Synergies should be sought with previous Commission actions for increasing trade capacity, and in particular with the Integrated Framework process.

4.1.2.5. Cross-cutting issues

Governance relates in particular to the inclusive approach that the government needs to apply in the process of policy-making, undertaking continued consultation and interaction with all appropriate stakeholders. Aspects of employment-generation, poverty alleviation and gender balance should be included in the policy-making process, targeting gender-sensitive and socially and environmentally sustainable outcomes. All EC assistance offered should take into account the EC guidelines for gender and environment.

4.1.2.6. Risks & assumptions

Assumptions:
Graduation from LDC status takes place as planned.

Risks:
A potential constraint that could limit the full benefit of the abovementioned activities could be the low level of manpower and capacity in the line ministries to absorb training and technical assistance.

The limited natural resources available in the Maldives combined with the nature of its dispersed atolls seriously limit the options available for economic diversification and increased competitiveness.

4.1.2.7. Main indicators

- Degree and quality of implementation of WTO commitments.
- Trade is mainstreamed in the national development plan of the Maldives.
- Level and composition of exports from the Maldives.

4.1.2.8. Coordination

The precise amount to be devoted to this priority out of the total package will be determined during the identification and appraisal process.

The EC will participate fully in donor coordination meetings.

4.1.2.9. Indicative timeframe

Identification and formulation in 2007, project implementation in 2007 and lasting 3-5 years.
4.2. Democratisation and good governance

4.2.1 Strategy context/justification

Support Maldives in its reform process in line with its recently completed Road Map.

An embryonic civil society exists, particularly in the capital, Male’, but efforts must be made to develop it further. The EC maintains strong bilateral contacts with the President, the government and opposition groups to encourage economic progress and good governance.

4.2.2. Actions

4.2.2.1. Objectives

The overall objective is to:

- support the Maldives in its efforts to build up institutional capacity to deal with the challenges and opportunities of democratisation and good governance.

The specific objectives are to:

- Strengthen the government capacities to carry on the constitutional reforms, related to democratic governance, justice, peace and security (including rule of law, human rights commissions, media freedoms, etc…)
- Strengthen the development of the civil society.
- Enhance participatory dialogue between the government and civil society.

4.2.2.2. Expected results

- The government will have put in place and duly implemented reforms related to democratic governance, justice, peace and security
- Civil society (political parties, citizens’ groups, medias, non governmental organisations) will have been reinforced
- A structure for the dialogue between the government, the opposition and civil society organisations will have been created.

4.2.2.3. Activities

Specific activities could be identified at a later stage as the political process evolves. Such activities could include:

- Institutional capacity building in order to promote democratisation and good governance through capacity building for democratic institutions (judicial & penal reforms, constitutional reform, national Human Rights Commission, media freedom, election monitoring etc.);
- Reinforcing civil society through support to civil society forums, media, the national Human Rights Commission, weak stakeholders (e.g. female-headed households), the promotion of environmental awareness and workers’ rights recognition. capacity to
enhance the contribution of civil society to decision-making (national civil society forums, watchdogs, advocacy groups for weak stakeholders, etc.).

4.2.2.4. Implementation

Identification could take place in 2007.

4.2.2.5. Cross-cutting issues

Governance, in particular key advocacy groups addressing gender and environmental issues. All EC assistance offered should take into account the EC guidelines for gender and environment.

4.2.2.6. Risks & assumptions

Assumptions:
The GoM adopts and implements the promised constitutional reforms.

4.2.2.7. Main indicators

None have yet been identified but they could include:

For the Institutional capacity building

• compliance of national Human Rights Commission with Paris Principles.

• freedom of media to work without intimidation.

For the reinforcing of civil society:

• emergence of stronger and more independent civil society.

• improved capacity of civil society to contribute to broader policy discussions and choices.

• ability of weaker stakeholders to express their views and advocate for their specific constraints.

4.2.2.8. Coordination

The precise amount to be devoted to this priority out of the total package will be determined during the identification and appraisal process. The EC will consult with the Commonwealth, UNDP and other donors.

4.2.2.9. Indicative timeframe

Identification and formulation in 2006, project implementation at the start of 2007 and lasting 5-7 years.
5. Alignment, harmonisation and consultation

In combining efforts to increase aid effectiveness, the Commission is committed to the Paris Declaration on alignment and coordination of policies and harmonisation of procedures. The Council Conclusions of November 2003 provide for the development of EU roadmaps on harmonisation in all countries.

5.1. The dialogue with the Government / alignment to national policies (i.e. PRSP)

The proposed activities are fully in line with the requests expressed by the GoM in their written input to the EC’s Country Strategy Paper and Multiannual Indicative Programme (2007-2013) of September 2005.

The MIP is also fully in line with the priorities set by the National Development Policy for 2006-2010.

5.2. Consultations with civil society and opposition parties

Due to the extremely embryonic nature of civil society in the Maldives, there is no organised forum for consultation with civil society, and the Commission is not aware of any Maldivian NGOs that could be engaged in a policy dialogue. In contrast, opposition parties are well organised, and the Commission Delegation in Sri Lanka has met with and consulted representatives of the opposition on several occasions.

5.3. Harmonisation and coordination with Members States and other donors

The Commission Delegation in Sri Lanka is an active participant in donor coordination and information meetings on the Maldives hosted by the British High Commission. Since very few Member States or other donors are active in the country, the most effective way of ensuring harmonisation and coordination is by supporting large-scale multi-donor schemes. Channelling funds through the World Bank ensures harmonisation of procedures and thereby lowers the administrative burden of the Government.

Aid meetings are held between donors and government on an ad-hoc basis. These coordination efforts have expanded significantly with the arrival of new funds and large number of new donors following the tsunami disaster. Coordination is undertaken bilaterally by the EC but also by government structures (notably TRRF) established to coordinate donors’ tsunami funding.

5.4. Consultations with other stakeholders

The Delegation has participated in meetings and discussions with other stakeholders, such as human rights organisations and regional NGOs.
6. Annexes

Abbreviations

6.1. List of geographic, thematic and horizontal Programmes and Projects for the 2000-2006 period

<table>
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<th>Development assistance</th>
<th>Year of the contract</th>
<th>Contractor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<td>Identification Mission for Enhancing Trade Capacity and Economic Development</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>International Business Machines of Belgium</td>
<td>74960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introducing environment friendly approaches for sustainable development in Male</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Divehi Rajjeyge Jumhooriyya</td>
<td>25000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support for Maldives in international trade negotiations</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>International Business Machines of Belgium</td>
<td>199999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated Framework Facilitator for the Maldives</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>International Business Machines of Belgium</td>
<td>140870</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Maldives Regional Development Plan</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Agrifor Consult SA</td>
<td>63051</td>
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| Tsunami relief assistance                                                               |                      |                                              |          |
| Immediate Support to the Restoration of Tsunami Affected Livelihoods                    | 2005                 | United Nations Development Programme         | 1925000  |
| Safe Host Island Regional Development - EC/WB Administration Agreement.                | 2006                 | The World Bank Group                         | 13900000 |

6.2. Minutes of a meeting with EU Member States for the preparation of the MIP

Since no member States are represented in the country, no specific information meeting took place for the preparation of this MIP.