

MALDIVES

Country Challenges

The Maldives is an island state in the Indian Ocean comprising of more than 1 000 coral islands, none of which rise more than 1.8 meters above sea level. Fishing and tourism drive the economy. Though more than 23 percent of Maldives land is devoted to agriculture, it makes up only a little over 4 percent of the economy, with the main food source being fishing. Data collection for reef fisheries, however, is weak, and the majority of fisherfolk do not report their catches. The process of collecting agricultural data was discontinued in 2007 due to lack of response from island councils, and since that time there has been a lack of regular data collection. There is also a lack of support for surveys and data collection, with too few professional and support field workers. The country's small scattered islands also provide logistical challenges for field work, and there is a lack of funds and transport equipment for these activities. The Maldives will require more up to date information technology hardware and software to overcome these logistical challenges.



Agriculture in the Maldives accounts for only 4 percent share of its GDP



Close to 23 percent of the population in the Maldives is employed in agriculture



Global Strategy Solutions

The In-depth Country Assessment (IdCA) conducted by the Global Strategy in Asia Pacific recommended a number of actions for the Maldives. The first action is to establish a working group on agricultural and fisheries statistics which will drive development of a Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS). Additional recommended technical assistance actions include: assessment of the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture farmer logbook, examination of data collected for the Male market's produce arrivals, and design and development of an agricultural survey or census. Another recommendation is to develop a plan to identify and address the Maldives' many data gaps. A master sampling frame for agricultural data collection should also be developed. Building staff capacity for statistics collection and use is also a priority.

Current Country Work

The Global Strategy in Asia Pacific is collaborating with the Maldives' Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture on a thorough plan that will meet the country's agricultural, fisheries and rural statistics needs. The plan will concentrate on the following actions.

- Develop a Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS)
- Develop a Master Sample Frame for agricultural and rural statistics
- Assist the design and development of an agricultural survey and associated collection strategies, including adoption of Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and mobile technologies
- Build capacity to undertake analyses of fisheries catch data, as well as produce analytical reports, through trainings, technical assistance and other means
- Review and strengthen the Male market produce data that has been collected over recent years

Towards a Statistics Secure Future

The Maldives has made measurable progress toward its goal of improved agricultural and fisheries statistics through receiving three Global Strategy missions that have produced four major reports. An In-depth Country Assessment, proposal for technical assistance activities and Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Statistics (SPARS) roadmap were completed in 2015 and 2016. In late 2016, a first draft of the SPARS was completed, with a final draft expected in the first half of 2017. Global Strategy collaboration has also led to a plan for an upcoming agricultural survey.



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