



World Data on Education Données mondiales de l'éducation Datos Mundiales de Educación

VII Ed. 2010/11



Maldives

Updated version, July 2011.

Principles and general objectives of education

The goals of education in the country follow from the national development goals. They are:

- to develop capable persons with useful occupational skills, knowledge and attitudes for the national development with a sense of dignity of labour and for preserving environmental resources;
- to promote social justice and equity by ensuring universal primary education and equal educational opportunity for all citizens;
- to develop, within an education system based on Islamic principles, the awareness among all citizens that, as members of the nation, they are also part of the Muslim Ummah;
- to promote a spirit of independence and self-reliance among citizens in order to enable them to improve the quality of their life;
- to strengthen national consciousness and to preserve the culture heritage of the nation by promoting desirable cultural values, traditions and the national language;
- to provide lifelong educational opportunities to all citizens;
- to develop a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity and interdependence of peoples in the national and international communities.

The (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011 envisions the development of:

- successful individuals who are motivated to learn and explore; who are inquisitive and eager to seek, use and create knowledge;
- confident and competent individuals who have a firm belief in Islam, a strong sense of self and cultural identity, and believe in their own capabilities; and
- responsible and productive contributors to their own family, their local community and the global society. (EDC-MOE, 2011).

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

There is no special provision which constitutes an education law in the Maldives. The Ministry of Education was established under the **Parliamentary Act No. 3/68** issued on 11 November 1968. According to this Act, the management of education in the Maldives is a function of the Ministry of Education. The Citizens' *Majlis* (Parliament) has been revising the Constitution and the new text was ratified on 7 August 2008.

In 2009 the Education Act was being drafted by the sector. The Act will establish a strong legal framework for the provision of education from preschool to higher education. It will state the provision of compulsory education, the



establishment of school boards to support decentralization of education management, set standards for higher education providers, and requirement for teacher registration and duties and responsibilities of duty bearers. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

In February 2011 the Maldives College of Higher Education was integrated into the new Maldives National University, established under the **National University Bill Act** law ratified by the President on December 2010.

Article 36 of the **Constitution** of 2008 stipulates that everyone has the right to education without discrimination of any kind. Primary and secondary education shall be freely provided by the State. It is imperative on parents and the State to provide children with primary and secondary education. Opportunity for higher education shall be generally accessible to all citizens. Education shall strive to inculcate obedience to Islam, instill love for Islam, foster respect for human rights, and promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people.

Administration and management of the education system

The traditional school system was comprised of three types of schools: *edhuruge* (or *kiyavaage*), *makthab* and *madhrasa*. These schools, privately-owned or run by the island communities, were self-financing. The overall level of educational attainment in traditional schools was low, but they have contributed towards achieving many educational objectives, including a relatively high rate of literacy and the preservation of national culture and tradition. The *kiyavaage* or *edhuruge* (i.e. neighbourhood Quranic school) was a gathering of children in a private home with the objective of making the pupils learn to read the Quran, to read and write *Dhivehi* (local language) and to provide some rudiments of arithmetic. The *makthab* was more formal, offered almost the same curriculum, but was a separate building. In the *madhrasa* the curriculum was wider.

The introduction of English-medium schools in Male in 1960 marked the beginning of a public school system patterned after the English system in the organization of curriculum and methods of instruction. With the system also came expatriate teachers and English textbooks. Unlike the traditional schools, it was a new system which enrolled pupils in grades that paralleled their age levels. A major historical development in education occurred in 1978 with the decision to move to a unified national education system and to promote a more equitable distribution of facilities. The policy focus was on primary (grades 1-5) and middle (grades 6 and 7) schools and involved creation of a unified curriculum for grades 1-7, improving teacher training, and upgrading or establishing new schools in the atolls. Eventually this led to the establishment of an atoll education centre (AEC) in each atoll and an atoll primary school (APS). Originally the AECs were to serve a variety of administrative, dissemination, non-formal, and model school roles but these have been largely unrealized as the AECs have struggled to meet the high social demand for education. These changes have also led to a move towards a merging of the traditional and the English-medium systems leading to a unified and modern system of education which has incorporated the positive features of both the traditional and English-medium systems. The fourth National Development Policy period (1994-1996) witnessed the shift from five-year basic education to strategies enhancing the universalization of the seven-year basic education programme. The target of universal



primary education was achieved in the year 2000, i.e., every child had access to a place in a primary school. By 2004 primary education was available in all the 199 inhabited islands.

Until the late 1970s the management of the education system was limited to a few government schools in the capital, Male'. With the policy of expanding primary education, the Ministry of Education undertook broader aspects of educational management and administration reflecting the needs of the national development effort. By the mid-1970s the principal functions of the Ministry were administration of the three government schools in Male', and testing and certification of entrants to government jobs and to trades requiring special certification. Schools did exist outside Male', but they were private enterprises and were largely left to operate by themselves. The development and expansion of education has required many new activities. These included state-financed programmes of school construction, curriculum development, textbook production, teacher training, non-formal education and distance education. By 1995, the Ministry of Education administered 50 schools in the outer atolls and nine schools in Male'. Enrolment in government schools in 1995 represented 44.4 % of the total student enrolment in the country.

The 1980s witnessed the establishment of some specialized agencies within the Ministry. Teacher training was separated from the Educational Development Centre to form the Institute for Teacher Education (now integrated into the National University). The textbook production unit became the Printing Section, and the non-formal education section became the Non-formal Education Centre. Each became a separate body within the Ministry of Education.

The process of establishing elected Island and Atoll councils and a functioning local governance system, collectively referred to as regionalization and decentralization, started in 2009 and is currently in progress. The decentralization process will devolve political, administrative and fiscal responsibilities to elected councils. The government has grouped the atolls into seven provinces in order to achieve more effective and efficient service delivery at the local level. The rationale for clustering two or more atolls to form a region or province is to achieve effective and efficient planning, coordination and management as a means to facilitate effective administrative decentralization and accelerate local development. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

In 2009 the **Ministry of Education** (MOE) was comprised of seven divisions/sections (corporate services; human resources; finance and development; planning and external relations; schools; educational supervision and quality improvement; projects and physical facilities development), two units (internal audit and procurement), the Department of Higher Education (created in 2008 within the MOE and previously under the purview of the former Ministry of Higher Education), the Centre for Continuing Education, the Department of Public Examinations, and the Educational Development Centre. The MOE works directly under the President of the Republic. The Minister of Education is assisted by two Deputy Ministers, one State Minister responsible for higher education, and the Permanent Secretary. The Minister receives policy advice from the Higher Education Council and other committees as well (including textbook evaluation). The **Higher Education Council**, chaired by the Vice President of the Republic, is the supreme body for advising the government on



higher education policies and providing oversight and overall direction to the development of the sector.

The **Educational Development Centre (EDC)**, created in 1979, includes the Curriculum Division, the Educational Technology Section, and the Educational Programmes Section. The latter was established in January 2009 to strengthen a balanced educational programme in schools that supports implementation of a diversified curriculum and fosters the holistic development of the child by meeting the goals of Education for All (EFA); it deals with special education, early childhood care and development, co-curricular activities, life skills, school technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and career guidance and counseling. The main task of the **Curriculum Division** is to design and formulate a curriculum that is in concord with the constitution of the Maldives and which caters to the needs of Maldivian students. The Curriculum Division has the following responsibilities: to design the National Curriculum Framework; to design the subject syllabi in accordance with the goals prescribed in the National Curriculum Framework; to produce textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to implement the national curriculum; to monitor and carry on research on the implementation of the curriculum; to revise the National Curriculum Framework, subject syllabi, textbooks and teaching and learning materials in accordance to the changes in the Maldivian society; to assist in the implementation of the curriculum; and to help develop the overall education of the country.

The **Centre for Continuing Education (CCE)**, until 2002 the Non-formal Education Centre) is a pivotal professional institute which essentially carries the responsibility for improving the quality of teaching and learning in the Maldives. It promotes community education, enhances lifelong learning and conducts adult literacy programmes across the islands. The role of CCE has expanded to include many professional development activities within the education sector. Strategic changes were embraced within CCE due to the change in government educational policy in 2009. As a result, professional development programmes were embedded in its mandate, which restructured the institution to facilitate the new demands of the education sector. With the new government (November 2008), significant changes have taken place in the administration. The country has been reorganized into seven provinces and administration became decentralized, with the responsibility to manage the schools delegated to the provinces. This led the CCE to decentralize the professional development programmes and facilitate the smooth running of the **Teacher Resource Centres** established in all the 20 atolls of the country with the technical and professional assistance from the respective provinces.

The **Department of Public Examinations (DPE)**, under the MOE, has the mandate to administer and co-ordinate all the international and local national and general examinations. The DPE liaises with international examination bodies, coordinates, manages, and administers all relevant examinations; and manages the documentation at all stages.

The **Maldives Qualification Authority (MQA)** was first established as Maldives Accreditation Board (MAB) by a Presidential Decree in August 2000. In May 2010 it was renamed as Maldives Qualifications Authority. MQA's mandate is to assure the quality of post-secondary qualifications awarded and to manage the



Maldives National Qualifications Framework (MNQF) developed in 2001. The MNQF provides a comprehensive and coherent national framework that facilitates quality improvement, quality assurance, and private sector participation in post-secondary education. The MNQF also ensures that students, employers, education providers and the community at large easily understand the learning outcomes involved in various qualifications. The MNQF, published in 2009, has been amended in April 2011 and will be fully implemented in September 2011. As a key step to promote international benchmarking of the qualifications, the MAB aligned qualifications to its ten-level framework using the level descriptors of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. In addition, the MAB aimed to formally benchmark its qualifications with the frameworks in the United Kingdom (including Scotland), with the new framework in Malaysia, with the vocational frameworks in Sri Lanka and Singapore, and with the frameworks in Australia and New Zealand. (MAB, 2009).

Traditionally, most island schools have been managed by the local island communities with the island chief as the head. The decentralized approach to governing schools envisages the establishment of **local education authorities**, who will manage all schools in the regions, from preschool to higher secondary level, and will receive advice from a regional board of education. These authorities would be established as part of the local governance system in the provinces and would have the full autonomy to make financial and managerial decisions with regard to education in the province. Furthermore, to increase participation of parents and the community, a **school board** will be established for every school. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

The government supports ward/community and private schools by providing a certain percentage of teachers depending on school size, and by providing infrastructure, facility support and financial subsidies. In order to minimize the differences in giving provisions to schools, 135 community schools in the atolls were converted to government schools in 2005. (MOE, 2008).

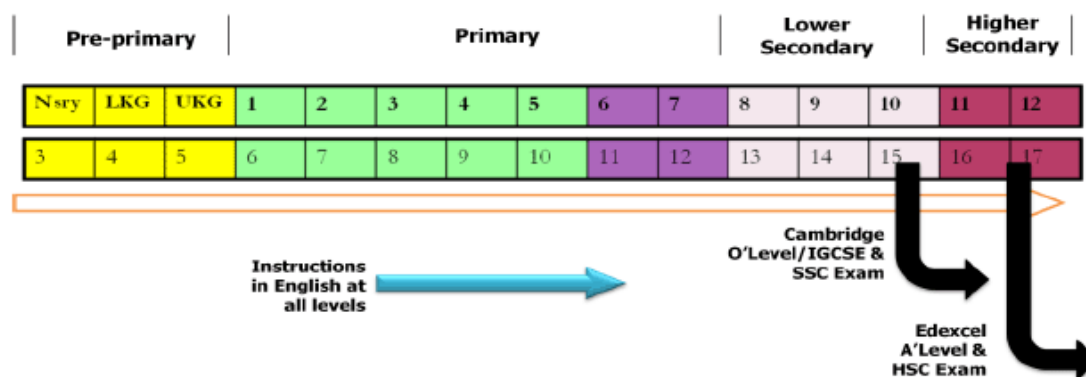
Systematic collection of educational statistics has a short history in the Maldives. In recent years there has been a remarkable improvement in the collection, processing and publication of educational statistics. The Ministry of Education established a section in which all the tabulation and calculation of statistical data are done with the help of four micro-computers. Recent changes in management practices have highlighted the need for making available proper analyses of vital statistics such as enrolment trends, teacher demand/supply, expenditure in the sector, and teacher-pupil ratios so that sound decisions can be made and long term planning facilitated. The strengthening of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) remains the priority for the planning section. In addition to this, a subsection dealing with research at the system level is now being established. The development of the EMIS is essential for the work of the researchers. Work is also underway in strengthening these mechanisms and to facilitate timeliness and accuracy of data collected.

Other ministries and departments involved in education include: the Ministry of Gender and Family; the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture; the Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Transport and Communications; the Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture; and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs. In

many cases, they deal with specific vocational training in some institutes and provide short-term training in various trades and vocations in response to specific sectoral needs. The **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Division** at the Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports has an overall responsibility for the development and management of a comprehensive, partnership-based TVET system.

Structure and organization of the education system

Maldives. Structure of the school system (2010)



Source: Ministry of Education, *Schools information at glance 2010*.

Pre-school education

Formal preschool education caters to children aged 4 to 5 years and lasts two years. In recent years, preschools have expanded into the atolls, as more and more *edhuruge* (gathering of children in a private home to learn to read the Quran) are being transformed into modern preschools, with either fully trained or partially trained teachers. Nursery is for 3-year-olds. On the basis of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011, not yet implemented, preschool education is the foundation phase and lasts two years, divided into lower and upper kindergarten.

Primary education

Primary education starts from age 6. In the past, the five-year primary programme was followed by two years of upper primary education (middle school) leading to secondary education. These two levels of education have been unified into one comprehensive programme (i.e. basic education) lasting seven years (grades 1-7). Students having completed basic education can enrol in vocational programmes leading to a Certificate II (15 weeks full-time training, equivalent to 40 credits, level 2 qualification of the Maldives National Qualifications Framework–MNQF) and a Certificate III (15 weeks full-time training, equivalent to 40 credits, level 3 qualification of the MNQF). On the basis of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011, primary education covers six years, divided into key stage 1 (grades 1-3) and key stage 2 (grades 4-6).



Secondary education

Secondary education comprises two levels: lower secondary lasting three years (grades 8-10), and higher secondary lasting two years (grades 11 and 12). At the end of grades 10 and 12, students are expected to sit the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O-level) and Advanced Level (A-level) examinations administered by the Cambridge International Examinations or the London Examinations, Edexcel International. There are also two national examinations: the Secondary School Certificate examination (for Islamic Studies and *Dhivehi*, the national language) introduced in 1986, and the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination introduced in 1987. Lower secondary education graduates can enrol in vocational programmes leading to a Certificate IV (30 weeks or one year full-time training, equivalent to 120 credits, level 4 qualification of the MNQF). On the basis of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011, lower secondary education covers four years, divided into key stage 3 (grades 7 and 8) and key stage 4 (grades 9 and 10); key stage 5 is higher secondary education, covering grades 11 and 12.

Higher education

Tertiary and university education is offered at the newly established Maldives National University (previously the College of Higher Education) and a number of private training institutions. At the post-secondary level, programmes leading to a diploma (level 5 of the MNQF) take one year (for higher secondary graduates or MNQF level 4 qualification holders) or two years to complete (for lower secondary graduates or MNQF level 3 qualification holders). Programmes leading to the award of an advanced diploma, an associate or a foundation degree (MNQF level 6 qualifications) normally last two years (one year for holders of a MNQF level 5 qualification in the relevant field); professional certificates requiring 15 weeks of full-time training are also included at the MNQF level 6. Programmes leading to a bachelor's degree (MNQF level 7) typically require three years of full-time study (or 360 credits); one-year programmes lead to the award of a professional diploma. A bachelor's degree with honours (MNQF level 8) requires one additional year of study beyond the bachelor's degree; one-year graduate/postgraduate diploma programmes are also contemplated at the MNQF level 8. At MNQF level 9, a master's degree requires two years of full-time study (240 credits), and an advanced professional diploma one year. At MNQF level 10, a doctoral degree requires two to five years of study, and a higher professional diploma requires 120 credits.

The school year 2011 comprises a total of 194 days divided into two terms (9 January-2 June and 12 June-17 November), including 19 days for exams and three days for professional development (e.g. a total of 172 working days). The academic year is divided into two terms, each consisting of 15 weeks of courses.



The educational process

Since the introduction of a unified national curriculum for primary and middle school (grades 1-7) in 1984, the Education Development Centre (EDC) has focused its work mainly on the production of teaching materials, textbooks and teachers' guides for use at this level of education. The Centre also focused on the evaluation and revision of the curriculum and the related revisions of teaching and learning materials.

A major curriculum exercise was undertaken in 1999, which began with broad-based consultations with stakeholders. EDC brought about major revisions to some curriculum materials during the years 2004 and 2005. The English language and mathematics syllabuses have been revised to outcomes-based ones, and similarly, the process of revision of all the other subjects began. An outcomes-based syllabus specifies what students know and what they can do as a result of instruction. Outcomes-based syllabuses also specify clear standards which all students are expected to attain and will help students learn more effectively in all the subjects across the curriculum. (MOE, 2008).

Since 2007, when the curriculum reform process was initiated, three key issues have continued to dominate the discussions. These are: moral education and student discipline; medium of instruction; and streaming of subjects in secondary grades. The Curriculum Reform Steering Committee was established in 2009 to advise the Curriculum Team at the EDC on the reform process and to be responsible for all major decisions regarding the new curriculum. Consultations on the first draft of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) began in October 2009. The series of consultations began with a meeting with professionals from the Centre for Continuing Education, the Department of Public Examinations, and the MOE Division of Educational Supervision and Quality Improvement, and the Educational Programmes Section. Consultations revolved around key aspects of the NCF, including the vision, principles, values, competencies, organization, teaching and learning, and learning assessment. The fifth draft of the NCF was made available in April 2011.

The NCF defines the learning experiences of children aged 4-18 in schools in the Maldives, and describes what they should know, understand, value and be able to do at each stage of their development. It is a framework that provides the structural basis of school education and makes explicit the vision that this curriculum sets out to achieve; the principles that guide its design; the shared values that Maldivian society deems important; and the key competencies that all children and young people are expected to acquire through schooling, upon which all learning is organized. The framework also describes how learning is structured across the stages of schooling and categorized into different key learning areas. It further identifies effective pedagogy to be adopted and the roles of all key players in creating positive learning experiences in schools.

The National Curriculum takes a broad view of curriculum as the entire planned learning experience offered in schools. It does not therefore simply stipulate what needs to be taught. The focus on eight key competencies that all children and



young people must achieve is a major shift in the design of the curriculum. These key competencies will form the common core of achievement. The previously strong focus on subjects and time allocation has been diminished by emphasizing the necessity of achieving the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes identified within each key competency. The National Curriculum shows the links between the key competencies and the key learning areas, encouraging learning at lower levels of schooling to be integrated and for strong links between disciplines to be developed at higher levels. The NCF maps out the learning that students will experience across the stages of schooling. This would ensure that there are smooth transitions between stages, and encourage a developmental and integrated approach to curriculum planning, teaching and learning. By providing a map of the total span of a student's schooling, it provides continuity and consistency in a student's education. Although schooling is divided into six main stages, this approach ensures that at each stage, the focus remains the same: a vision to develop young people who are motivated to learn and explore; individuals who are confident and competent, while being productive and responsible contributors in the society. Using the NCF as its basis, syllabus statements will be developed for each key learning area, incorporating within them, the cross-cutting key competencies.

The National Curriculum places the student at the heart of the teaching and learning process. It asserts that all students must experience a curriculum that challenges, engages and inspires; a curriculum that is relevant to their needs as individuals and as members of the Maldivian society. The following eight principles lay the foundation for all curriculum decision-making, both in terms of design and delivery: Islamic values, principles and practices; identity and culture; human rights, democracy and justice; holistic development (as it focuses on enhancing students' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and mental development, and thereby the overall wellbeing of the individual); personal excellence (as it ensures that students are provided with learning experiences that are challenging at the appropriate level, require deep understanding, involve active participation, and sustain their motivation); inclusivity (as it ensures that the learning needs of all students are identified and recognized, personalizing the learning to respond to individual needs, aptitudes and talents); preparation for life; and relevance (as it ensures that learning is relevant to their present and future lives, by exploring significant contemporary and emerging issues such as technology, sustainability, enterprise and citizenship).

The National Curriculum promotes a holistic approach to education, placing equal emphasis on the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes. The emphasis is laid on building solid foundations of knowledge and skills in the early years of schooling, introducing to students a fundamental understanding of key concepts and processes across a breadth of key learning areas. As a student progresses through the various stages of schooling, the breadth of the curriculum would narrow to some extent, in order to provide adequate time and effort to making rigorous and in-depth study possible. Alongside the development of knowledge, understanding and skills, students would also be exposed to shared values and attitudes that they would be encouraged to adopt, uphold and practise.

The values that the National Curriculum encourages students to hold are those that are deemed vital to grow as an individual, to thrive in the national society, and to live peaceably in a diverse world. Four categories of values have been identified in the

NCF: values related to self and the achievement of own potential (understanding and respecting oneself, and to empower oneself to pursue excellence); values related to others and their rights (understanding and respecting others; being sensitive to individual differences as well as the rights and responsibilities of others); values related to social and civic responsibility (to encouraging civic responsibility and contribution; to accept diversity within a democratic society and to champion social justice); and values related to environmental responsibility (understanding and preserving the Maldivian culture and heritage; and to promote ideas of conservation and sustainable development).

The National Curriculum specifies eight key competencies which are essential for individuals to live, learn and contribute as active members of our nation and the world. These key competencies provide the basis for lifelong learning and employability in a progressive and challenging world. Each key competency is built on a combination of cognitive and practical skills, knowledge, values, attitudes, and other social and behavioural components. These key competencies form the basis of the curriculum. They are not stand alone entities. They form the crucial foundation on which the key learning areas are built. The key competencies are therefore a cross-cutting dimension in the curriculum, as all key learning areas will work towards achieving the eight key competencies. The eight key competencies that the National Curriculum promotes are: practising Islam; understanding and managing self; thinking critically and creatively; relating to people; making meaning; living a healthy life; learning for sustainable development; and using technology and the media.

The National Curriculum recognizes four main phases of schooling: foundation, primary, lower secondary and higher secondary. Each phase targets a specific age group and thereby developmental level. The objectives of schooling differ from phase to phase, and the learning offered at each one ensures that a variety of positive learning experiences are offered to the students so as to foster their holistic development and promote optimum learning. At each phase, the learning outcomes that students are expected to achieve are specified. At primary, lower secondary and higher secondary levels, these learning outcomes are further divided into key stages. The aim of having the key stages is to enable students' progress to be rigorously monitored and to allow achievable future targets to be set.

The NCF identifies eight key learning areas which define the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values that all young people need to acquire in order to be successful, confident, competent, responsible and productive individuals. All eight key learning areas are essential for a broad and balanced education that promotes students' holistic development. The National Curriculum is therefore, organized in such a way that all students undertake learning in all eight areas during the two foundation years (kindergarten) as well as during the six years of primary education (grades 1-6, key stages 1 and 2) and the first two years (grades 7 and 8, key stage 3) of lower secondary education. By the end of key stage 3 it is expected that students would have a strong foundation in all key learning areas, and be ready to focus on some areas in more depth.

The eight key learning areas comprise of the following: (a) in creative arts (structured under three strands: drama, music and movement, and visual arts) students are provided opportunities to communicate and express life experiences, feelings,



ideas and imaginations in a creative and enjoyable way; during the last two key stages, students are provided with the basis for specialist teaching and learning programmes in art and design, music or drama.; (b) in entrepreneurship students gain the knowledge and skills required to take the initiative to become innovators of new ideas and to become competent in business-related fields; (c) in environment, science and technology (organized around five strands: life and living; earth and beyond; matter and material; energy and change; working scientifically) students learn about the physical environment, and about how science and technology impact our lives, and how students can use these to be innovative; (d) in health and wellbeing (organized around three strands: physical, social, and mental and emotional wellbeing) students explore concepts of a healthy lifestyle, including how to be emotionally, physically and socially well adjusted individuals; (e) in Islam and spirituality students learn about the teachings of the Noble Qur'an and Sunnah, develop a firm belief in Allah and practice Islamic principles; (f) in language and communication (comprising three strands: oral, reading, and writing skills, further divided into three sub-strands which are the communicative purpose, language skills and strategies, and language structures and features) students learn how to communicate effectively and confidently in both Dhivehi and English; opportunities to learn other languages are also made available; (g) in mathematics (structured under five main strands throughout all key stages: numbers, measurements, shape and space, chance and data, and patterning and algebra) students learn the process of enquiry, discovery and verification and to apply mathematical ideas, rules and procedures to particular situations and problems; (h) in social sciences (organized in six strands: culture and identity; people, places and environment; economic world; time, continuity and change; power, authority and governance; civic ideals and practices) students learn to value their roots, explore the past and understand their contexts, and learn about interrelationships between people across time, environments and cultures in order to develop civic efficacy.

The pedagogical dimensions in the curriculum support teachers to focus on specific skills, content knowledge and expertise with innovative support systems to help students master the multi-dimensional abilities required of them in today's diverse and complex world. These pedagogical dimensions are strategies which ensure that students experience success through structured support and recognition of their efforts to accomplish the intended learning outcomes. In this regard, it is important for teachers to acknowledge that individual differences exist and that all students do not learn in the same way. Thus, a diverse range of pedagogies must be used to meet student needs, enhance their learning experiences and engage them in active learning. While planning teaching and learning, schools should be flexible and support the development of deep levels of thinking and application. They should also ensure that students receive constructive feedback that support further learning. At the same time, integration of technology into classroom instruction is imperative as technology has become a platform for teachers and students across the globe to communicate and share instructional materials. The NCF is based on five pedagogical dimensions: creating a positive learning environment; connecting prior learning to new learning; fostering reflective practice; making learning meaningful; and recognizing individual differences.

Assessment should focus on the holistic development of the students. Therefore, equal importance should be placed on assessing knowledge, skills, values,



key competencies and attitudes across key stages. Furthermore, assessment should reflect the wholeness and interconnectedness of learning; hence it goes far beyond testing. A wide range of assessment techniques should be used to gain a broader picture of student learning. Furthermore, the type of assessment techniques used should be closely related to the learning outcomes and the purpose of assessment. Some of the techniques which could be used to assess students include observations, concept mapping, portfolio, conferencing, etc. It is important that schools plan and design assessment strategies that align with the curriculum at a whole-school level and not merely by individual classroom teachers. This involves all the stakeholders agreeing on a set criterion for giving scores and assigning bench marks to maintain a set standard. Assessment should be used for learning and it should provide clear information about how students' level of understanding differs from their learning goals, and what they need to do to move towards those goals. Based on the information gathered from assessment the teacher has to modify the teaching in response to the students' needs. At the same time, students must be guided to set new learning goals for the future. Assessment should be used to collect and gather evidence of educational effectiveness at various levels of schooling. Schools should track students' progress based on the assessments and rate their learning against the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are critical for success in their learning. (EDS-MOE, 2011).

Pre-primary education

Prior to the advent of modern day preschools, the traditional *edhuruge* discharged the function of early childhood care and development. *Edhuruge* is a home-based educational service provided by respected members in the community. In general it is free and family members help the teacher. Even where a symbolic small fee is charged, no records are kept of those who are unable to pay.

Attendance in *edhuruge* is flexible. Children may attend short sessions three times a day at times convenient to them and the teacher. The admission age ranges between 3 and 15 years. Because of this wide range, a child-to-child approach is generally adopted with the older children assisting the younger. Each child is assigned work according to his/her own ability. While the immediate function of the *edhuruge* is to help children read the Holy Quran properly and to develop a love for the Quran and the Islamic religion, the *edhuruge* is more than a Quranic school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is also an important component of the *edhuruge*.

Among the weaknesses of the *edhuruge* are: too much emphasis on rote learning; low qualifications of teachers; limited space and inadequacy of furniture; and lack of stationery and learning materials. Despite the introduction of modern types of schooling, the *edhuruge* still survives and provides the first formal learning for more than half of the population in the country. The National Development Plan 1994-96 has identified areas of intervention within a policy of maintaining its uniqueness as a voluntary community education service. It is also part of the government strategy to encourage home-based and community-based approaches to early childhood development.

In Male', primary education is preceded by a two years of pre-primary education (lower and upper kindergarten). In the other atolls this form of pre-primary



education is now becoming common, especially in highly populated islands. In 1999, there were 137 pre-primary schools in the country, with an enrolment of more than 12,000 children. Pre-primary schools are administered mainly by the private sector. However, the government organizes and provides teacher training and some subventions primarily in the form of teachers' salaries. There is an increasing demand from the atolls for the establishment of pre-schools at a wider scale. The government strategy is, however, to strengthen the programme of assistance to traditional preschool centers in order to promote and develop early childhood care and education.

Pre-primary education is in the process of evolving from an elite alternative, primarily restricted to Male', to more commonly available opportunity for all the smallest populated islands. Quality distinctions between Male and the atolls are significant, and substantial differences exist between the best and worst pre-school programmes in most of the atolls. Nevertheless, substantial improvements have been made in both the quality and the broader availability of pre-primary education (Ministry of Education, 1999).

With financial assistance from UNICEF, a project to develop five Integrated Early Childhood Development Centres began in 2002. The aim of this project was to establish five centres across the country that can be used as model setups for play based learning and to facilitate training of teacher and learning methodologies. In 2004 with the establishment of early childhood development (ECD) unit at Educational Development Centre (EDC) this project was transferred to EDC. The project ended in 2004 and its evaluation was completed in 2005. Due to the *tsunami* in 2004, the expansion programme shifted from the atolls where there was a model centre to tsunami-affected preschools. By the end of 2005, 78 preschools have been developed with appropriate outdoor and indoor materials.

As mentioned, in terms of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011, preschool education is the foundation phase and lasts two years, divided into lower and upper kindergarten. The aim of the foundation phase is to ensure that young children have access to holistic, play-based experiences that support their development and learning. Learning at this phase should be fun for children and should motivate them to learn and explore. The early years of learning should, especially, protect and promote children's wellbeing, and should provide a strong foundation for lifelong learning. The focus of learning at this phase is on experience and play, and does not take the form of separate subjects. Instead, an integrated approach to learning and development is adopted. Most of the learning in this phase relates to skills rather than knowledge, and learning activities should be planned in a way that children are engaged in experiencing all the key learning areas. For a smooth transition from this phase to the next, building students' confidence and self esteem should be given priority. Likewise, literacy and numeracy should be emphasized, but this does not mean that children should be pressured to read and write. In addition, teachers should observe and record student achievements in various forms. Over time, a portfolio with annotated samples, teacher notes and photographs and the child's efforts need to be produced as evidence of learning. (EDC-MOE, 2011).

Early childhood care and development (ECCD) targets all children aged less than 5 years and aims at establishing children's full physical, cognitive and psychosocial development in a positive and interactive environment that is conducive

to helping each child reach his/her full potential. In 2005, the total number of teachers was 516 (of whom 490 were females) and the percentage of untrained teachers was estimated at 59%. (MOE, 2008).

In 2008, the total enrolment at the pre-primary level (age group 3-5 years, e.g. nursery, lower and upper kindergarten) was 15,536 children (of whom 7,712 girls); 5,007 children were attending preschools in Male' and 10,529 in the atolls. Out of the total number of children, 5,780 were at the nursery level, 4,996 at the lower kindergarten, and 4,760 at the upper kindergarten level. A total of 14,333 children were enrolled in community and/or private preschools. The total number of preschool teachers was 744 (of whom 721 females), and 495 teachers were untrained. The gross enrolment ratio was estimated at 98% (96.3% for boys and 99.7% for girls), and the net enrolment ratio at 81.1% (80% for boys and 82.2% for girls). (MOE, 2009).

Primary education

Each child who completes formal schooling shall possess the physical, intellectual and psychological competencies needed for his/her own wellbeing in the Muslim Maldivian society, and shall possess the competencies to function as a contributing member of his/her own family, community and country. The national philosophy of education includes four main aspects relating to: pupils' physical and emotional development, cognitive development, social and moral development, and skills development. Teaching subjects are developed so as to enhance these aspects appropriately. Syllabi incorporate these elements in an integrated, cohesive and well-defined manner.

The national curriculum comprises seven subjects: English, *Dhivehi* (the national language), mathematics, religious education (Islam), environmental studies (combined social and science studies), practical arts and physical education. At the middle school level, environmental studies are replaced by social studies and general science. The suggested weekly lesson timetable (around the year 2000) is shown below:

Maldives. Primary education: suggested weekly lesson timetable (around 2000)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade						
	Primary					Upper primary	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Islam	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Dhivehi language	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
English language	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	6	7	7
Environmental studies	6	6	6	6	6	–	–
Social studies	–	–	–	–	–	5	5
General science	–	–	–	–	–	5	5
Practical arts	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
Physical education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total weekly periods	35	35	35	35	35	40	40

Source: Educational Development Centre website, retrieved July 2011. Each period lasts 35 minutes.



In terms of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework (NCF) of 2011, the primary phase of school education begins at key stage 1 (grades 1-3), and continues till the end of key stage 2 (grades 4-6). These six years of primary education are to be compulsory for all. The purpose of primary education is to create a love for learning and to provide a foundation of skills for a lifetime of learning. During this phase, opportunities have to be provided for students to enjoy learning, to explore and discover new things as well as to try different ways of presenting information and creating knowledge. Learning should be geared to ensure that children take risks, learn from mistakes, and progress. Pupils should also be encouraged to take responsibility and become independent learners. In order for pupils to gain these experiences, they need to be exposed to a wide range of activities that develop their essential knowledge, skills and values. As emphasis should be placed on providing integrated learning experiences in the early years. (EDC-MOE, 2011).

As mentioned, the eight key learning areas of the NCF for primary education are: (i) creative arts; (ii) entrepreneurship (integrated within relevant subjects); (iii) environment, science and technology (including science); (iv) health and wellbeing (including health and physical education); (v) Islam and spirituality (including Islamic religious education and the Quran); (vi) language and communication (including Dhivehi and English); (vii) mathematics; and (viii) social sciences (including social studies). (*Ibid.*).

The government began establishing classes for children with special needs in 2006 with a vision to set up by 2010, at least one school in each atoll for children with special needs. In 2008, eleven schools across the Maldives accommodated approximately 184 children with special needs, of which three schools were in Male'. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

In 2005, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) was estimated at 123% (126% for boys and 119.8 for girls). The net enrolment ratio (NER) was 100%. The total enrolment at the primary level was 57,873 children, of whom 13,874 in schools in Male' and 43,999 in the atolls. Most of the children (e.g. 56,095) were attending government schools. There were 2,882 teachers at the primary level (grades 1-7), of whom 1,909 or 66.2% were females. The percentage of untrained teachers was estimated at 36%, and 16% of the teachers employed were expatriates. (MOE, 2008).

In 2008, the total enrolment at the primary level was 46,994 children (of whom 22,478 girls); 11,925 children were attending schools in Male' and 35,069 in the atolls. The GER was estimated at 109.6% (110.7% for boys and 108.5% for girls), and the NER at 95.8% (95.2% for boys and 96.6% for girls). The total number of teachers was 3,551 (including 365 expatriates), of whom 2,555 were females; a total of 1,139 teachers were untrained. The transition rate from primary to (lower) secondary education was estimated at 96%. (MOE, 2009). By January 2010, there were 37 primary schools (grades 1-7), 139 schools offering grades 1-10 (combined primary and lower secondary), and 34 schools offering grades 1-12 (combined primary, lower and higher secondary). (MOE, *Statistical summary 2010*).

Secondary education

Secondary education comprises two levels: lower secondary lasting three years (grades 8-10), and higher secondary lasting two years (grades 11 and 12). At the end of grades 10 and 12, students are expected to sit the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (GCE O-level) (both at the end of grade 10) and Advanced Level (A-level, at the end of grade 12) examinations administered by the Cambridge International Examinations or the London Examinations, Edexcel International. There are also two national examinations: the Secondary School Certificate examination at the end of grade 10 (introduced in 1986), and the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination at the end of grade 12 (introduced in 1987).

The number of government schools in the atolls has been steadily increasing. Lower secondary education once provided only in the capital, Male', is now being extended to the atolls through the addition of secondary level classes.

The suggested weekly lesson timetable (around the year 2000) is shown below:

Maldives. Lower secondary education: suggested weekly lesson timetable (around 2000)

Subject	Number of weekly periods in each grade		
	8	9	10
<i>Core subjects:</i>			
Islam	3	3	3
Dhivehi language	4	4	4
English language	7	7	7
Mathematics	6	6	6
<i>Stream subjects:</i>			
Two subjects (5 weekly periods each) from any one stream	10	10	10
<i>Elective subjects:</i>			
Two subjects (5 weekly periods each)	10	10	10
Total weekly periods	40	40	40

Source: Educational Development Centre website, retrieved July 2011. Each period lasts 35 minutes. Stream subjects include: geography, history and literature (Arts stream); accounting, commerce and economics (Business stream); chemistry, physics and biology (Science stream). Elective subjects include: accounting; Arabic; arts; biology; chemistry; commerce; computer studies; economics; English literature; geography; history; physics; fisheries science; travel and tourism; geometrical and mechanical drawing. Some schools limit the number of streams and the range of elective subjects as per available resources, while some schools can offer additional subjects in consultation with the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, some schools no longer propose rigid stream boundaries and have stopped using the word streams altogether.

In 2008, secondary education was offered in 168 schools. However, given that all schools do not offer all academic subjects, a significant percentage of students



choose to follow the commerce stream while the development of science and arts subjects are neglected. The net enrolment percentages were low: 67.3% for lower secondary (67% for girls and 67.8% for boys), and 5.9% for higher secondary (5.7% for girls and 6.1% for boys). Twenty-seven schools in 15 atolls were offering higher secondary education in 2008. Secondary education with emphasis on Islamic education and Arabic language is provided at the Institute of Islamic Studies. This institute also organizes and offers courses on legal affairs and its graduates enter the legal profession. Specific technical and vocational training is carried out by institutes and training centers under different ministries and departments. Vocational and technical education was introduced in schools in 2006, but a strategic approach to development was not formulated. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

Since 1995, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector has been mandated to identify the skills required in the market and to train Maldivians for these jobs. To address the matter further, 16 job centers have been established in three regions of the country offering career guidance, and to act as an employment exchange. Approximately 3,000 youths make use of these job centers annually. However, these centers are established at different levels, and need to cater to island level in order to provide youth-friendly services across the nation. More centers are planned for each of the seven provinces in the near future. (*Ibid.*).

In terms of the (draft) National Curriculum Framework of 2011, lower secondary education is a four-year phase, divided into two key stages (key stage 3 and 4). During this phase, students continue to develop a range of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that enable them to become enterprising, productive, creative, and law abiding members of the society who have a firm grounding in moral and Islamic values. This phase of schooling allows students to explore possible career pathways, and prepares students for higher education, for employment and for life. Key stage 3 acts as a bridging stage between the primary and secondary phases, with students being offered a balance of subjects from all key learning areas. When they progress to key stage 4, students have a range of electives to choose from, and it is expected that the foundation laid for the different key learning areas in previous key stages, will assist students to make the right choices and allow them to understand where their skills and interests lie. The higher secondary phase is the two-year period students spend at key stage 5. These last two years of school education provide a platform for exploring an in-depth understanding of specialized areas that would prepare students for higher/further education and employment. (EDC-MOE, 2011).

As mentioned, the eight key learning areas of the NCF for lower secondary education (grades 7 and 8) are: (i) creative arts (including drama, music and movement, and visual arts); (ii) entrepreneurship (including business studies); (iii) environment, science and technology (including physics, environmental science, chemistry and biology); (iv) health and wellbeing (including health and physical education); (v) Islam and spirituality (including Islamic religious education and the Quran); (vi) language and communication (including Dhivehi and English); (vii) mathematics; and (viii) social sciences (including history, geography, civics and citizenship education). As regards grades 9 and 10, the core subjects should be Islam, Dhivehi, English, mathematics, health and physical education, and social studies; four elective subjects should be chosen by the students from at least two key learning areas



(at least one subject should be selected from the area environment, science and technology). (*Ibid.*).

In 2005, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) at the lower secondary level was estimated at 118% (110% for boys and 126.1 for girls); at the higher secondary level the GER was 11.5% (11.9% for boys and 11.1% for girls). The net enrolment ratio (NER) was estimated at 64.6% (58.8% for boys and 70.7% for girls) for lower secondary and at 7.2% (6.7% for boys and 7.8% for girls) for higher secondary. A total of 28,646 students were enrolled in lower secondary, of whom 10,016 in Male' (5,581 in government, 2,146 in community, and 2,289 in private schools) and 18,630 in the atolls (mainly in government schools). The total enrolment in higher secondary was 1,942 students, of whom 1,477 in Male' (1,372 in government and 105 in private schools) and 465 students attending government schools in the atolls. There were 2,067 lower secondary teachers, of whom 748 or 36.2% were females, and 151 higher secondary teachers, of whom 41 or 27.2% were females. The percentage of untrained lower secondary teachers was estimated at 15%, and 72% of the teachers in lower secondary and 77% in higher secondary were expatriates. The percentage of students passing the O-level and A-level examinations dropped from 25% to 20.8% and from 44.4% to 39.4%, respectively, in 1999 to 2005. (MOE, 2008). In 2009, the overall percentage (A-C) of students passing the O-level examination in five (or more) subjects was at 32% with significant differences across the provinces: 55% in Male', 40% in the South province, 28% in the Upper South, 25% in the Central province, 22% in the Upper North and Upper provinces, 17% in the South Central, and 13% in the North Central province.

In 2008, the total enrolment at the lower secondary level was 28,164 students (of whom 14,185 girls); there were 2,651 students enrolled in higher secondary, of whom 1,280 girls. The lower secondary GER was estimated at 123.5% (117.9% for boys and 129.6% for girls), and the NER at 69.2% (64.4% for boys and 74.5% for girls). The higher secondary GER was estimated at 16.4% (16.5% for boys and 16.4% for girls), and the NER at 6% (5.9% for boys and 6.1% for girls). The total number of lower secondary teachers was 3,004 (including 2,015 expatriates), of whom 1,181 were females; a total of 152 teachers were untrained. The total number of higher secondary teachers was 235 (including 178 expatriates), of whom 87 were females; three teachers were untrained. (MOE, 2009). By January 2010, there were 139 schools offering grades 1-10 (combined primary and lower secondary), 34 schools offering grades 1-12 (combined primary, lower and higher secondary), 12 schools offering grades 8-10 (lower secondary), three schools offering grades 8-12 (combined lower and higher secondary), and one higher secondary school (grades 11-12). (MOE, *Statistical summary 2010*).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

With the introduction of reforms in the national curriculum since 1984, pupils were required to achieve certain specified learning standards in all the subjects. While no quantitative targets were set, teachers were required to ensure that pupils attain the objectives of the national curriculum. A standardized test is administered for selection purposes at the end of grade 7 in atoll schools. The Ministry of Education (MOE) has made grade 1 teachers accountable for the acquisition of a certain standard of literacy in *Dhivehi* by all children.



A strategy to support quality improvement has been the launching of a systematic programme of supervision extending to the atolls and initial work on preparing national standards for achievement in selected subjects at grades 4 and 5 levels. Supervision of atoll schools has started in a planned way with adequate staff and tests have been administered and analyzed. (Ministry of Education, 1999).

According to the Asian Development Bank (2004), the performance of students sitting for the O-level exams needs much improvement. Only about 50% of students pass most subjects, and less than 10% of students pass some of the subjects. Performance is worse for the students educated in the atolls. This is partly attributed to the ineffectiveness of learning materials. Results of national assessments indicate low achievement in all levels of education, as well as a difference in the quality of education between Male' and the atolls. (Government of Maldives, 2009).

The Educational Supervision and Quality Improvement Section (ESQIS) of MOE is responsible for improving the quality of the teaching and learning process in all the schools. Teams of internal and external supervisors are mobilized to implement their schools' monitoring and evaluation programmes. The evaluation concentrates on five major areas: standard of students, teaching and learning, leadership and academic management of the schools, financial management, infrastructure and the physical learning environment of the school. ESQIS provides the necessary training and guidance to school managers and strengthen the internal supervision of schools. In addition, ESQIS conducts a programme on national assessment of learning achievement levels of students that is aimed at understanding and improving students' learning. This programme incorporates planning and developing tools for monitoring of national assessment of student achievement, and the implementation and analysis of assessment, in grades 4 and 7. ESQIS is also responsible for the monitoring of the implementation of the school health programme.

Under the World Bank funded Third Education and Training Project, which was completed in 2004, a pilot of a national assessment of student achievement levels was carried out in 2003. Students in grades 4 and 7 were given tests measuring their literacy (in English) and numeracy levels. The test results were correlated with questionnaire data to get a comprehensive picture of the achievement levels as well as understand the significant variables that contributed to the quality of education in the country. Since 2006, national level tests are being administered for all the students in grade 7. (MOE, 2008).

Teaching staff

In 2010, the Faculty of Education at the Maldives College of Higher Education (MCHE, now the Maldives National University) was offering courses in the following areas: one-year diploma in teaching Dhivehi; one-year diploma in school management; two-year advanced diploma in teaching (primary education); two-year diploma in teaching (middle school, e.g. grades 6 and 7), two-year advanced diploma in applied statistics; two-year advanced diploma in teaching English as a foreign language (for lower secondary teachers); two-year diploma in early childhood education (from 2011); three-year bachelor of education (primary education) or bachelor of education (secondary); four-year bachelor of education (primary



education) for higher secondary education graduates (introduced in 2010); and three-year bachelor of arts in teaching English as a foreign language.

The two-year diploma in early childhood education has been designed by taking into consideration the existing Advanced Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Development conducted at Centre for Continuing Education. This diploma will be a platform to upgrade the preschool teachers who have successfully completed the Advanced Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Development. The students who successfully complete this programme will be eligible to join the third year of the four-year Bachelor of Early Childhood Education course. The admission requirements are: completion of grade 10 with 4 O-Level passes plus one pass in SSC, or completion of the Advanced Certificate in Early Childhood Education, and certificate proficiency in English or satisfactory performance in a written test of English.

The Bachelor of Education Primary (B.Ed.–P) is a four-year full-time course designed for interested students who have completed their higher secondary education. Student having at least an advanced certificate are also eligible to enrol in the course. The admission requirements are: (i) two passes at GCE A-Level or equivalent, and five passes at GCE O-Level/SSC including Dhivehi and mathematics, and certified proficiency in English or satisfactory performance in a written test of English; or (ii) pass in MCHS Foundation Studies Level II (target course for Bachelor of Education Primary); or (iii) an accredited teaching qualification (at least at advanced certificate level) having five passes at GCE O-Level/SSC including mathematics and Dhivehi with two years' experience of teaching after teaching qualification, and certified proficiency in English or satisfactory performance in a written test of English.

The four-year programme is comprised of eight semesters of 15 weeks each. The course encompasses 39 subjects (with a total of 366 credit points), divided into three major strands: curriculum studies, education studies, and professional studies. The curriculum studies strand aims at equipping prospective teachers with the knowledge and skills in developing the methods and styles of teaching required for the successful teaching of subjects in the primary school. The professional studies strand aims to facilitate the professional growth of prospective teachers. There is a focus on professional practice time in schools using a range of contexts (three weeks in the fifth semester, five weeks in the sixth semester, three weeks in the seventh semester, and five weeks in the eighth semester). The education studies subjects aim to provide the psychological, sociological and physical basis of learning. These units are the underpinning of the entire programme and establish the groundwork for both professional and curriculum studies.

The Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) is a three-year full time course structured in four strands: professional studies, curriculum studies, education studies, and academic studies. The admission requirements are: (i) two A-Level passes or equivalent in the subjects of their chosen combination; (ii) three O-Level passes including English language in subjects other than the chosen combination in (i); or pass in Foundation Course Level II with an average of 65% or above. Advanced standing may be granted to students who have already completed post-secondary qualifications at diploma level. Students are trained to teach two subjects chosen from the academic studies strand which includes: accounting, economics, chemistry,



mathematics, biology, marine biology, commerce, and physics. Students who complete this course will have to serve the government for duration of four years. Upon graduation students can seek employments in both government and non-government schools.

In 2008, there were 7,534 teachers (all educational levels, including 833 temporary teachers) in the country: 5,745 teachers were reported as trained (e.g. holders of a Maldives Accreditation Board accredited advanced certificate or higher teaching qualification), and 1,789 or 24% as untrained. A total of 1,576 teachers (of whom 122 untrained) were in Male' and 5,958 teachers (of whom 1,667 untrained) were serving in schools in the atolls. Out of the 7,534 teachers, 2,560 were expatriates: two at the pre-primary level, 365 at the primary level, 2,015 at the lower secondary, and 178 at the higher secondary level. (MOE, 2009).

On the basis of the Professional Development Policy of Education, professional development or professional advancement is termed as activities conducted for individuals employed in advancement of learning and teaching in the schools, working in the professional field and for those working for the development of physical and mental health of school students. This includes seminars, workshops, induction, online programmes, and content upgrading courses for upgrading the professional level of teachers. In addition to this, introduction of new strategies related to teaching and professional activities which are assured to be successful and which are cultivated in the schools are included in the professional development programmes. The aim of the policy is to establish, plan and execute professional development required by the individuals in the professional field of the schools and also to convey the regulations set to hold the standard of such programmes. Apart from this, to help enhance the behavioural and educational standard of the students, establishing a school-based professional environment in the schools is incepted in this policy.

In the case of the professional development programmes self-initiated and organized by the schools, the school should send details of the execution of this activity to the Teachers Resource Centre (TRC) in the atoll. The Education Unit of the province would state the reporting TRC in case of islands or atolls having more than one TRC. The policy stipulates that every professional employee of the school should participate in at least 15 hours of professional development activity every academic year. To make way for the school-based professional development, three days are specially allocated in the academic calendar of the Ministry of Education. These three days should be stated for professional development in the school's yearly academic plan. The duration of participation in professional development would be considered while registering teachers, renewal of teaching licence, raise in wage and promotion of job. Planning and execution of the profession development programmes at a central level would be carried out by the Centre for Continuing Education. Programmes organized at regional levels should be carried out with the advice and opinion of the Education Unit of the province.



References

Abdul Muhsin Mohamed; Maryam Azra Ahmed. *Country paper. Maldives*. Document presented at the “Pilot Intensive Training Course on Curriculum Development”, New Delhi, 9-17 March 1999.

Asian Development Bank. *Technical assistance to the Republic of Maldives for strengthening the framework of education towards Vision 2020*. May 2004.

Educational Development Centre, Ministry of Education. *The National Curriculum Framework*. Fifth working draft, Male’, April 2011.

Government of Maldives. *Strategic Action Plan. National Framework for Development 2009 – 2013*. Male’, November 2009.

Maldives Accreditation Board. *The Maldives National Qualifications Framework*. Male’, September 2009.

Ministry of Education. *Developments in education 1992-1994. Maldives country report*. Presented at the 44th session of the International Conference on Education, Geneva, 1994.

Ministry of Education. *Developments in education 1994-1996. Maldives country report*. Presented at the 45th session of the International Conference on Education, Geneva, 1996.

Ministry of Education. *Education for All 2000 Assessment: country report of Maldives*. (Under the co-ordination of A.A. Didi). Male’, October 1999.

Ministry of Education. *Education for All Mid-decade Assessment 2007. National report of the Republic of Maldives*. Male’, July 2008.

Ministry of Education. Policy Planning and Research Section. *School statistic 2008*. Male’, 2009.

Web resources

Centre for Continuing Education: <http://www.cce.edu.mv/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Department of Higher Education: <http://dhe.gov.mv/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Educational Development Centre: <http://www.edc.edu.mv/> [In English and Dhivehi. Last checked: July 2011.]



Maldives National University: <http://mnu.edu.mv/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Maldives Qualifications Authority: <http://www.mqa.gov.mv/> [In English; several resources also in Dhivehi. Last checked: July 2011.]

Ministry of Education: <http://www.moe.gov.mv/> [In English and Dhivehi. Last checked: July 2011.]

TVET Division, Ministry of Human Resources, Youth and Sports:
<http://www.tvet.gov.mv/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/>