

## Maldives : COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project

### 1. Project Information

Project ID:	P000378	Instrument ID:	L0378A
Member:	Maldives	Region:	Southern Asia
Sector:	CRF-Public Health	Sub-sector:	N/A
Instrument type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loan:7.30 US Dollar million <input type="checkbox"/> Guarantee	Lead Co-financier (s):	World Bank
ES category:	B	Borrowing Entity:	Ministry of Finance, Maldives
Implementing Entity:	Ministry of Health, Maldives		
Project Team Leader:	Jana Halida Uno		
Responsible DG:	Rajat Misra		
Responsible Department:	INF1		
Project Team Members:	Susrutha Goonasekera, OSD - Environment & Social Development Specialist; Toshiaki Keicho, Team Member; Liu Yang, Project Counsel; Duran Moy, Alternate Counsel; Shonell Robinson, OSD - Financial Management Specialist; Jurminla Jurminla, OSD - Procurement Specialist; Jinghui Li, Project admin		
Completed Site Visits by AIIB:	Aug, 2021 Virtual mission with the World Bank Mar, 2022 Virtual mission with the World Bank Nov, 2022 Physical Mission from October 30 - November 3, 2022 attended by Jana Halida Uno (PTL) May, 2023 A hybrid virtual & in-person mission		
Planned Site Visits by AIIB:	Nov, 2023 Field Visit		
Current Red Flags Assigned:	1		
Current Monitoring Regime:	Regular Monitoring		
Previous Red Flags Assigned:	0		
Previous Red Flags Assigned Date:	2022/11		

### 2. Project Summary and Objectives

This CRF project loan of USD7.3million, co-financed with the World Bank, was approved by the BOD on June 30, 2020. The project's objective is to respond to and mitigate the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness in the Maldives. The project beneficiaries will be the population at large in the Maldives given the nature of the disease. The project has the following four components:

Component 1 (Emergency Response for COVID-19 Prevention): Procurement of essential protective equipment and other essential items to protect healthcare workers and patients; risk communication, community engagement and behavior change, including social distancing measures and associated mitigation strategies.

Component 2 (Emergency Health System Capacity Strengthening for COVID-19 Case Management): Strengthening the centralized and decentralized health system capabilities for disease surveillance, case management and infection prevention and control.

Component 3 (Implementation Management and Monitoring and Evaluation): Strengthening of public institutions for the coordination and management of the project, including central and regional arrangements for coordination of activities, financial management, procurement and social and environmental management.

Component 4 (Contingent Emergency Response Component): Zero-dollar component to ensure additional flexibility in response to the current and any potential other emergency that might occur during the lifetime of this project.

The project's implementation period is July 01, 2020 to June 30, 2023.

The total project cost of USD14.6 million has been financed by AIIB's loan of USD7.3million and the World Bank's IDA Credit and Grant of SDR2.7 million (USD3.65 million equivalent) each. AIIB's Special Fund Window has been used to buy down the interest rate by 100 bps (amounting to USD0.87 million).

### 3. Key Dates

Approval:	Jun. 30, 2020	Signing:	Jul. 08, 2020
Effective:	Jul. 14, 2020	Restructured (if any):	
Orig. Closing:	Dec. 31, 2023	Rev. Closing (if any):	

### 4. Disbursement Summary (USD million)

Contract Awarded:		Cancellation (if any):	0.00
Disbursed:	4.00	Most recent disbursement (amount/date):	0.46/May. 24, 2023
Undisbursed:	3.30	Disbursement Ratio (%) <sup>1</sup> :	54.77

### 5. Project Implementation Update

The project has successfully achieved most of its intended targets. However, there have been delays in implementing the two high-value contracts (speedboats and the quarantine facility construction in Kulhudhuffushi). The project is 54.77% disbursed, with the current closing date of December 31, 2023. The implementation and disbursement pace are projected to pick up over the next few months, as the speedboat contract is expected to be fully disbursed by the end of September 2023. However, due to the late start, the PMU estimates at least a six-month delay in implementing the second high-value contract, constructing the quarantine facility in Kulhudhuffushi. Furthermore, various information and communication technology packages planned to strengthen the post-pandemic information systems will take time to implement. The PMU plans to request a 12-month extension of the loan closing date, i.e., to December 31, 2024, in order to complete all the planned activities.

<sup>1</sup> Disbursement Ratio is defined as the volume (e.g. the dollar amount) of total disbursed amount as a percentage of the net committed volume.

Components	Physical Progress	Environmental & Social Compliance	Procurement
<p>Component 1- Emergency Response for COVID-19 Prevention</p> <p>Total cost:USD3.35 million AIIB financing: USD0.35 million</p>	<p>a. The Vaccine Risk Communication activities with the Maldives Red Crescent (MRC) were completed.</p> <p>b. Procurement of equipment for the risk communication program has progressed. The agreement was signed for the procurement of Information Technology (IT) requirements requested by Health Protection Agency (HPA)/Health Emergency Operation Center (HEOC), and the delivery is expected by September 2023.</p> <p>c. Stakeholder engagement workshops for regions targeted for 2022 have been completed.</p> <p>d. A complete beneficiary feedback mechanism has been developed and is under implementation. 2022 feedback reports were completed and have been submitted to the WB and AIIB.</p> <p>e. The Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) is being implemented, and information, education, and communication (IEC) materials have been prepared, approved, and circulated. GRM-related training has been completed for the designated regions, and the focal point groups for GRM have been established.</p>	<p>Compliance with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and project's Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMF) is downgraded to "Moderately Satisfactory" by the World Bank, due to the insufficient staffing and process-related delays the project has faced.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement workshops for 8 regions are completed for the year 2021. Year 2022 workshops commenced. A complete beneficiary feedback mechanism has been developed and is under implementation.</p>	<p>Maldives Red Crescent (MRC) Contract - MV-MOH-235802-NC-DIR- delivery is completed and bills settled.</p> <p>Software procurement. Under the new range of activities, multiple software products are procured. Most are primary, low-value standard purchases, so it has been decided to use a streamlined goods document with the necessary information technology specifications.</p>

<p>Component 2- Emergency Health System Capacity Strengthening for COVID-19 Case Management</p> <p>Total cost:USD10.6 million AIIB financing: USD6.5 million</p>	<p>a. The first phase of the UNOPS contract has been completed, and the procurement and distribution of the phase two UNOPS contract is ongoing. The remaining approximately USD500,000 of the UNOPS contract has yet to be committed. The tender for the acquisition of 13 speedboats has been completed. The winning bidder faced pending tax issues, and delayed the contract's signing with MOH. The contract was signed in November 2022. The first payment has been made, all 13 speedboats are expected to be delivered by August 2023, and the contract is expected to be fully paid by September 2023. Final payments will be made after the delivery of the speedboats.</p> <p>b. Expansion of the Intensive Care Unit capacity: equipment procured under the UNOPS contract has been completed. Distribution and installation are ongoing.</p> <p>c. Equipment procured under the Phillips Contract has been fulfilled. The parties have settled the product call-off issues, and the final payments are being processed. Contract completion and reallocation of funds are to be recorded in the Systematic Tracking and</p>	<p>The Bank cleared the Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for the Kulhudhuffushi Quarantine Facility in early 2022, but the groundwork has yet to commence.</p> <p>The Bank recommended that all upcoming civil works for the Health Care Waste Management (HCWM) storage and operational facilities to support healthcare facilities (HCFs) will be subject to Environmental and Social Safeguards (E&amp;S) before the commencement of procurement.</p>	<p>a. Phillips contract Supply of Medical Equipment and Machineries. Although the contractual delegations for the product call-off have been resolved, previously delivered and accepted items still need to be delivered to the beneficiary agency. The delivery must be closely monitored, and the PMU must collect feedback from end users on the functionality of the items.</p> <p>b. UNOPS contract - consumable goods for emergency and routine care. The remaining approximately USD500,000 of the UNOPS contract has yet to be committed. The UNOPS is currently accepting bids for the catalogue of items agreed upon with the PMU. The PMU must closely monitor delivery to ensure on-time delivery before the Project Closing Date (PCD).</p> <p>c. Speedboat Procurement - MV-MOH-233371-GO-RFB. Since the preceding mission, this purchase has yet to be completed. GoM has increased the goods and services tax, influencing the contract price. This will be drafted as a contract amendment and recorded on STEP.</p> <p>d. Quarantine facility-MV-MOH-268050-CW-DIR-2-story prefabricated building. The contract for the facility's construction has been signed with UNOPS. The design firm has been contracted. However, a contractor has yet to be selected. There will be difficulty with importing</p>
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	<p>Exchanges in Procurement (STEP).                  e. Installation of a prefabricated quarantine and isolation facility (Kulhudhuffushi):                  the ESF assessment has been completed, and the MOH has approved the building plan concept. UNOPS has provided a quotation and draft contract indicating the completion date after the project closing date. The MOH requested UNOPS to revise the draft contract and set a completion date before the project closing date. The revised contract was signed on December 11, 2022. A geotechnical investigation was completed. UNOPS hired the design firm, and pre-bid meetings and site inspections were completed. MoH will request to extend the Loan closing date to avoid risking non-delivery by the current planned closing date of December 31, 2023.                  f. The contract with Maldives National University on Infection Prevention Control (IPC) training for healthcare workers is ongoing. Modules developed and training will commence in June and to be completed by the end of September 2023.</p>		<p>building materials and logistical challenges to the Atoll.                  e. Procurement of a four-door truck - MV-MOH-299945-GO-RFQ. The procurement was completed.                  f. Procurement of hybrid ambulances - MV-MOH-359717-GO-DIR. This procurement would be the third high-value contract estimated at USD1.2 million. This procurement is imminent, and the PMU is exploring directly contracting the State Trading Organization (STO), a state-owned enterprise.</p>
<p>Component 3- Implementation</p>	<p>a. Health Care Waste Management (HCWM)</p>	<p>The current staff assigned to the environmental safeguards will not</p>	<p>As per the available data on STEP, there are 70 activities,</p>

<p>Management and Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>Total cost:USD0.65 million AIIB financing: USD0.45 million</p>	<p>surveys were completed, and the procurement process for the consultancy assignment for planning and implementing HCWM for priority healthcare facilities is underway. Priority areas for final disposal of healthcare waste have been identified. Proposals have been collected, evaluated, and submitted for bid committee approval. Once an agreement is signed, the contractor must complete the works within 95 days.</p> <p>b. Planned PMU training for 2022 have yet to be fully completed and is planned for 2023.</p> <p>c. Registry for tracking and monitoring grievances was created and utilized.</p> <p>d. The Year 2022 external audit is ongoing and will be completed by the end of June 2023. The year 2022 Q1 &amp; Q2 internal audit has been completed. Hiring an internal auditor is ongoing for years 2022, Q3&amp;Q4.</p>	<p>undergo a contract renewal, and the Project Director will take on the role for the interim period. The Bank reiterates that while this is sufficient for the interim period to ensure good progress and meet the agreed staffing requirements per the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), a designated person must be hired or seconded to this role. The PMU should send the Bank in writing the planned steps to resolve the staffing gap by June 15, 2023.</p>	<p>of which 34 have been cancelled that mostly due to slight procedural errors, or the learning curve related to using the STEP system; 36 activities in pending implementation; leaving 36 ongoing activities. This project's overall procurement performance is graded by the World Bank as "Moderately Satisfactory," while its procurement risk remains "High".</p>
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**Financial Management:**

The project maintains adequate staffing arrangement and continues to submit Interim Unaudited Financial Report (IUFR) in a timely manner. There are no pending audit reports. The project audit report for the fiscal year 2022 becomes due for submission by June 30, 2023. It is however noted that, there continues to be weaknesses in internal audit arrangement and asset management. The project has not been able to ensure timely execution of internal audit reports. The main weaknesses noted in Asset Management are: (i) Lapses with updating the fixed asset register, (ii) Inability to identify the location of the assets procured under the project, and (iii) No physical verification of assets conducted.

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**6. Status of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)**

The Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) is being implemented, and information, education, and communication (IEC) materials have been prepared, approved, and circulated. GRM-related training has been completed for the designated regions, and the focal point groups for GRM have been established.

**7. Results Monitoring (please refer to the full RMF, which can be found on the last page of this PIMR)**

The project is progressing well towards achieving its intended results. The project met all three project objective level indicators. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) continues to lead the COVID-19 response in the country. The COVID-19 vaccination rate has surpassed 90 percent. The project has strengthened the country's capacity for pandemic response and preparedness, and the state of emergency and mandatory mask rules have been lifted since March 13, 2022. The number of laboratories capable of testing for COVID-19 currently stands at 35, covering all designated regions. The intermediate results indicators also showed success in various areas: all hospitals maintain an adequate stock of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs); all regions have intensive care unit (ICU) capacities; and all COVID-19 laboratories have trained staff. A remarkable expansion of testing capacity has been achieved (currently 9,000 tests per day), and hospitals submit 100 percent of expected monthly reports. Transportation time for samples averages four hours. Conversely, infection prevention and control (IPC) training has not yet reached the target of 70 percent coverage (currently 59 percent), and the project engaged the Maldivian National University to accelerate training. Thirteen grievances have been reported to date, and they have all been addressed, although only one had been addressed within the required 45 days.

**Remarks:**

Progress towards achievement of Project Objective and the overall Implementation progress is satisfactory.

Project Indicators	Objective	Indicator level	Unit Measure	Cumulative Target Values												Frequency	Responsibility	Comments	
				Baseline		2020		2021		2022		2023		End Target					
				Year	Value	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual				Year
GOM has activated its public health National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) or other coordination mechanism for COVID-19	Project	Text	2020												2023	Yes			
Number of designated laboratories with COVID-19 diagnostic equipment, test kits, and reagents	Project	Number	2020												2023	5			
GOM adopted personal and community non-pharmaceutical interventions (school closures, telework and remote meetings, reduce/cancel mass gatherings)	Project	Text	2020												2023	Yes			

Project Intermediate Indicators	Indicator level	Unit Measure	Cumulative Target Values												Frequency	Responsibility	Comments	
			Baseline		2020		2021		2022		2023		End Target					
			Year	Value	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual				Year
Component 1: Proportion of hospitals with adequate personal protective equipment within a given month (%)	Project	Number	2020												2023	70		
Component 2: Number of regions with ICU capacity.	Project	Number	2020												2023	5		
Proportion of health professionals trained in infection prevention and control per MOH-approved protocols (%)	Project	Number	2020												2023	70		
Number of designated laboratories with staff	Project	Number	2020												2023	5		



trained to conduct COVID-19 diagnosis.																		
Number of total daily testing capacity for SARS-CoV-2 in the country including five regional laboratories.	Project	Number	2020									2023	1,500					
Average transport time for COVID-19 lab specimen from health facility to a regional testing center.	Project	Number	2020									2023	12					
Component 3: Proportion of hospitals that have submitted complete monthly reports on the number of suspected cases identified, number of cases tested, number of contacts traced, the presence of personal protective equipment, and the presence of an isolation unit.	Project	Number	2020									2023	80					