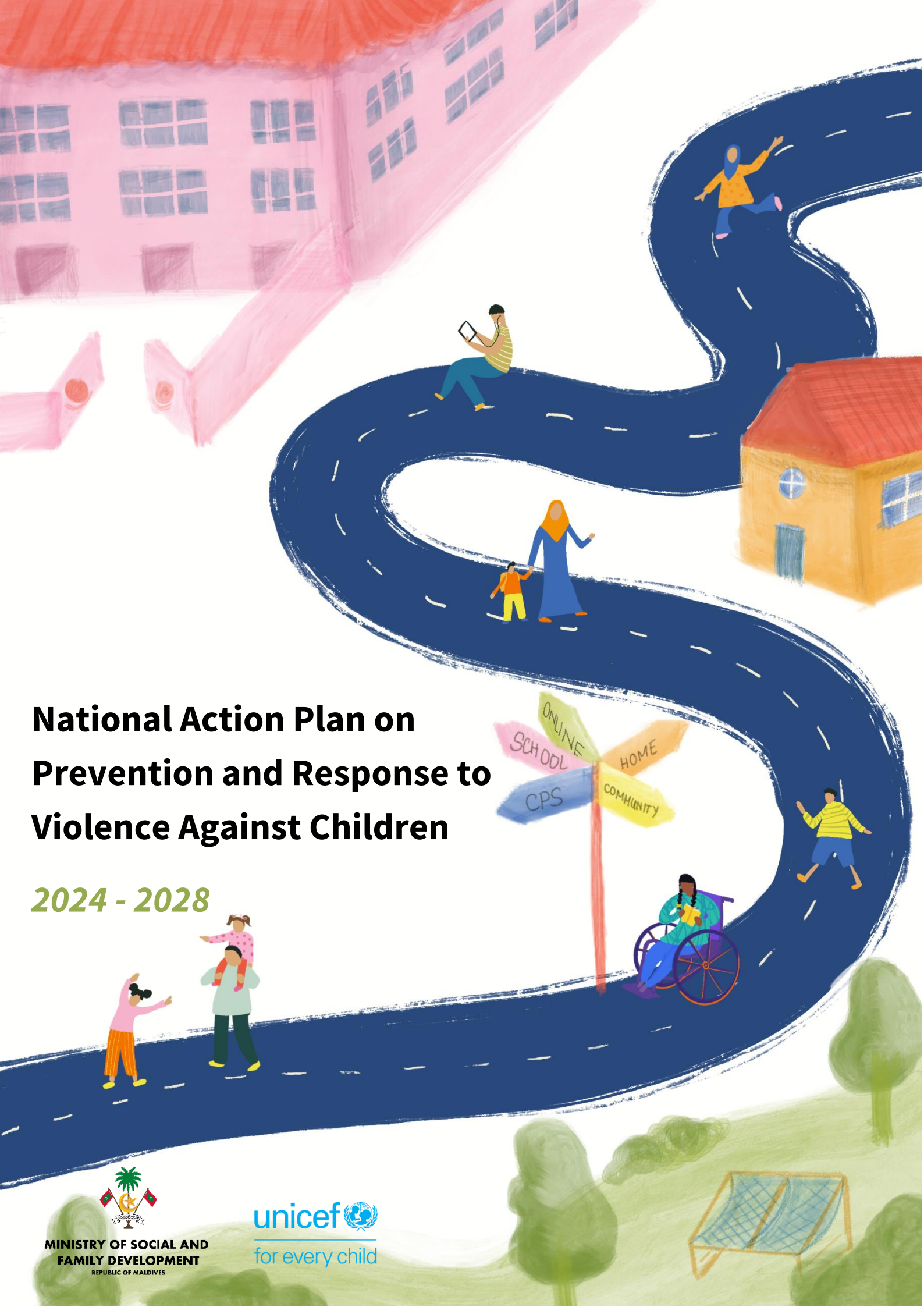


A colorful illustration featuring a winding blue road that curves through the scene. On the road, a person in a yellow shirt and blue pants is running towards the top right. Further down, a person in a blue dress and orange headscarf is walking with a small child. A person in a yellow shirt is sitting on the road, looking at a tablet. A person in a blue shirt is walking towards the bottom left. A person in a blue shirt is sitting in a wheelchair on the road. A person in a yellow shirt is running towards the bottom right. The road is surrounded by a pink building with many windows on the left, a yellow house with a red roof on the right, and green trees and bushes at the bottom. A signpost with four arrows points in different directions, labeled 'ONLINE', 'SCHOOL', 'HOME', and 'CPS'.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024 - 2028



The Government of Maldives and UNICEF stand united in our resolute commitment to uphold the rights established in the Child Rights Protection Act and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We pledge to prioritise the dignity, safety, and well-being of every child. Our unwavering dedication drives us to champion their right to education, protect them from violence and exploitation, and ensure their voice is heard in decisions that shape their future. We commit fully to the implementation of the National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence against Children 2024 – 2028. Safeguarding and promoting these rights is not just our duty; it is our shared mission to build a society where every child's well-being is respected and protected ensuring that no child is left behind.

29th August 2024

Dr. Aishath Shiham
Minister of Social and Family Development

Dr. Ismail Shafeeu
Minister of Education

Dr. Abdulla Khaleel
Minister of Health

Mr. Ali Ihusaan
Minister of Homeland Security
and Technology

Dr. Maryam Mariya
Minister of Higher Education,
Labour and Skills Development

Mr. Ali Shujau
Commissioner of Police

Mr. Adam Shareef Umar
Ministry of Cities, Local Government and Public Works

Mr. Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon
Minister of Defence

Dr. Mohamed Shafeeq
Minister of Finance

Uz. Ahmed Usham
Attorney General

Dr. Edward Addai
UNICEF Representative to the Maldives

FOREWORD

We are proud to present the 'National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028', reflecting our commitment to protecting children's well-being and rights. This plan consolidates our collective efforts to address and mitigate violence, ensuring children's safety and integrity in all aspects of their lives.

The development of this National Action Plan is deeply rooted in the principles established by the Child Rights Protection Act enacted in 2019. This law underscored the critical need for effective measures to protect and safeguard children. Through a thorough review of the law, we have recognized that responding and prevention of violence against children requires a collaborative effort.

To effectively mitigate such violence, it is crucial for all organizations to work in partnership, leveraging their expertise and insights. This plan underscores the necessity of coordinated efforts in strategizing, supporting, and promoting awareness about child protection. By fostering a unified approach and openly addressing challenges, we can refine our response strategies and deliver comprehensive support to children impacted by violence. Such collective action is essential for overcoming obstacles and ensuring that every child receives the protection and the care they deserve.

As a result, to finalize the Action Plan, we conducted extensive consultations, incorporated expert contributions, and engaged in collaborative efforts with various organizations, including government, non-governmental organizations and vital members of the community. The outcome is a strategic framework that outlines specific actions and responsibilities for preventing and addressing violence, along with mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

This plan is a vital instrument in our mission to create a safer environment for every child. It demonstrates our steadfast commitment to upholding children's rights and ensuring that our responses to violence are both effective and compassionate. By implementing the strategies outlined in this document, we aim to build a setting where every child can flourish free from violence and exploitation.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and insights to this crucial initiative. Through our collective efforts and shared dedication, we are working towards a violence-free environment for all children.

Let us move forward with determination and commitment to realize this vision and make a meaningful impact on the lives of children across our nation.

Dr. Aishath Shiham

Minister of Social and Family Development

FOREWORD

Maldives has made notable progress in advancing the rights of children including enactment of a robust Child Rights Protection Act, to complement and accelerate this progress. However, in the Maldives and around the world, children experience violence at home, in schools, online and in their communities. And tragically, at the hands of people they trust the most.

Unfortunately, many children who experience violence live with the scars of violence because they do not receive justice and the help they need and deserve to heal and recover fully. Therefore, it is imperative, that we need to do more, and do better in prevention, protection, and response, to break the cycle of violence and ensure that every child grows up in a safe environment.

This is what the National Action Plan seeks to do over the next 4 years. The process of developing the “National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in the Maldives 2024 - 2028”, has been a productive journey led by the Ministry of Social and Family Development in partnership with child protection sector stakeholders.

I am convinced that the consultative and inclusive process undertaken to formulate this plan has translated into a comprehensive framework which will enable all partners to work together to address violence holistically, focusing on creating safe homes, schools, communities, online spaces, and industries for children.

UNICEF is honored to have been a partner in the development of the National Action Plan and is thankful to all stakeholders for their invaluable contributions to this process. The launching of the plan marks a milestone moment for all of us, but the journey ahead is far from over. Now is the time for us to continue our work together with the Government, civil society, private sector, development partners, children, and young people to transform this plan into action and results.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

I reaffirm UNICEF's commitment and collaboration with the Government and partners as we start rolling out this National Action Plan. I hope that this plan will be a step forward in our road to building a safer, more just world where every child can grow up free from violence.

Dr. Edward Addai

UNICEF Representative to the Maldives

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence against Children 2024 - 2028 has been formulated through an extensive consultative process. The invaluable insights received during this process have been instrumental in ensuring that the action plan is both comprehensive and effective.

We extend our gratitude to all the government and non-government stakeholders including the CSOs, community leaders, parents and children who were involved in the preliminary consultations and the validation process confirming that the plan truly addresses all the elements required to strengthen child protection in Maldives.

We sincerely acknowledge the guidance, and the technical advice provided by the members of the steering committee. The expertise shared by the members in their relevant field ensured the effectiveness of the Action Plan ensuring it achieves the intended collective goals.

Finally, our profound appreciation to UNICEF for being our key partner and the continuous financial and technical support provided in developing the National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence against Children 2024 – 2028.

Prepared By:

Dr. Mariya Ali

Aneesa Yoosuf

Mariyam Ishraag Waheed

Reviewed By:

Aneesa Yoosuf

Dr. Mariya Ali

Layout and Design:

Mariyam Ishraag Waheed

Fathimath Ema Ziya

Consultant



RIYAN PRIVATE LIMITED

ABBREVIATIONS

ACEs	Adverse Childhood Experiences
AGO	Attorney General's Office
ARC	Advocating for the Rights of Children
CAM	Maldives Communication Authority
CAMHS	Child and adolescent mental health service
CFPS	Child and Family Protection Service
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPA	Child Rights Protection Act
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CWDs	Children with Disabilities
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
DJA	Department of Judicial Administration
DJJ	Department of Juvenile Justice
DV	Domestic Violence
EC	Elections Commission of Maldives
EPO	Emergency Protection Order
FAM	Football Association of Maldives
FCPD	Family and Child Protection Department, Maldives Police Service
FCSCs	Family and Child Service Centres

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FPA	Family Protection Authority
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDC	Housing Development Corporation
HEPs	Higher Education Providers
HPA	Health Protection Agency
HSPs	Health Service Providers
IBAMA	Ijuthimaaee Badhahi Madhadhuverin
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organizations
ISPs	Internet Service Providers
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LGA	Local Government Authority
LRA	Labor Relations Authority
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MBC	Maldives Broadcasting Commission
MMC	Maldives Media Council
MNDF	Maldives National Defense Force
MNU	Maldives National University
MOC	Maldives Olympic Committee
MoCLPW	Ministry of Cities, Local Government and Public Works

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children
2024-2028

MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEDT	Ministry of Economic Development and Trade
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHELSD	Ministry of Higher Education, Labour and Skills Development
MoHLUD	Ministry of Housing, Land and Urban Development
MoHST	Ministry of Homeland Security and Technology
MoIA	Ministry of Islamic Affairs
MSFD	Ministry of Social and Family Development
MoSFR	Ministry of Sports, Fitness and Recreation
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
MoTCA	Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation
MoYEIA	Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Information and Art
MPS	Maldives Police Service
MRC	Maldivian Red Crescent
NAP	National Action Plan
NAP-PRVAC	National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children
NCMH	The National Centre for Mental Health
NDA	National Drug Agency
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIE	National Institute of Education

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

NRC	National Reintegration Centre
NSPA	National Social Protection Agency
OCO	Children's Ombudsperson's Office
PGO	Prosecutors General Office
PO	President's Office
Q4	Quarter four
QAD	Quality Assurance Department
RTL	Raajje Transport Link
SHE	Society of Health Education
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TIC	Trauma Informed Care
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
VAC	Violence Against Children
WHO	World Health Organization

CONTENTS

Foreword	4
Acknowledgement.....	8
Abbreviations	9
1 Introduction	15
2 Framework of the Action Plan.....	17
2.1 Methodology and the development of the National Action Plan.....	17
2.2 Key Concepts and Definitions	18
2.2.1 Violence Against Children.....	18
2.2.2 Trauma Informed Care	19
2.2.3 Child Protection.....	20
2.2.4 Child in Need	20
2.2.5 Threshold Criteria and Multi-Agency Assessment.....	21
2.3 Key Principles.....	22
2.4 Theory of Change	23
2.4.1 Home: Safer Families.....	24
2.4.2 School: Safer Educational Setting	25
2.4.3 Community (incl. businesses): Safer Communities	25
2.4.4 Online: Safer Online Spaces	26
2.4.5 Child Protection System and Services: Improved response is prevention & protection.....	26
2.5 Scope of the plan	26
2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).....	28
3 Action Plan and Results Framework.....	30
3.1 Strategic Area I – Home: Safer Homes.....	30
3.2 Strategic Area II – School: Safer Educational Settings	40

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

3.3	Strategic Area III – Community (incl. businesses) : Safer community.....	47
3.4	Strategic Area IV – Online: Safer Online Spaces	58
3.5	Strategic Area V – Child Protection System and Services: Better Response is prevention and protection	63
4	Glossary	76
5	Bibliography.....	80

List of Figures

Figure 1 Disaster Risk Dimensions, Categories and Components for VAC in the Maldives	17
Figure 2 Socio-ecological model for understanding violence against children and adolescents.	23
Figure 3 The five strategic areas of the NAP-PRVAC	24
Figure 4 Key Duty Bearers under the Scope of the Action Plan	27

1 INTRODUCTION

In 2023, a total of 2936 cases were received and attended by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSFD), of which 1,278 cases (43.5%) were Violence Against Children (VAC) cases. The most common types of VAC cases included negligence (22%), sexual abuse (21%), physical abuse (19%), witness to domestic violence (DV; 16%), and emotional abuse (11%). Additionally, as of December 2023, a total of 159 children were under state care (MSFD, 2024). As for Maldives Police Service (MPS) records for the fourth quarter of 2023 (Q4), 112 cases of child victims were reported, majority of which were sexual offenses (48) and domestic violence (30) (MPS, 2024).

These national statistics highlight the dire need for interventions and a stronger focus on protecting children and adolescents. The National Study on Violence against Children in the Maldives (2009, unpublished) indicates that VAC in the Maldives is deeply embedded in the fabric of society. Despite increased awareness and reporting, prevailing social norms—such as viewing VAC as a “family issue” to be resolved at home, the stigma and shame from the community towards victims and their families, and legal obstacles wherein victims themselves might be held liable —hamper and discourage reporting (Engelhardt K., 2009).

Previous efforts to combat VAC through the formulation of a National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children (NAP-PRVAC) in 2017 highlighted the lack of a systematic and holistic approach to preventing and responding to VAC, the absence of a formal coordination mechanism, and the need to strengthen the implementation of the existing legal framework. Limited baseline data on VAC, limited understanding, capacity, and roles of duty bearers in prevention and response to VAC, and inadequate service delivery compared to demand have led to fragmented interventions, which could fuel growing public mistrust towards key institutions working in the sector.

Similar challenges were identified during consultations for the formulation of the renewed NAP-PRVAC 2024-2028. Legislative challenges and misalignments of legal frameworks in combatting VAC, difficulties in establishing collaborative efforts with institutions working in silos, lack of resources, challenges in navigating sensitivities in balancing child rights versus

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children **2024-2028**

child responsibilities, and the need to increase preventative efforts and early interventions to mitigate the reactive approach to addressing VAC were indicated by stakeholders.

Thus, these issues underscore the gaps still present in the system and the need for continued efforts from government institutions, policymakers, and the community to strengthen all child-protection domains.

2 FRAMEWORK OF THE ACTION PLAN

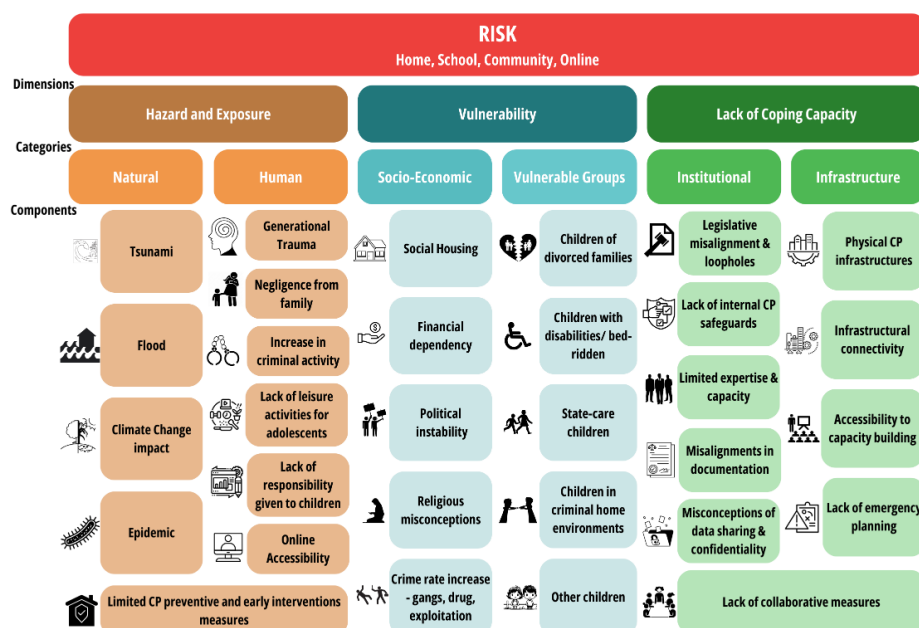
2.1 Methodology and the development of the National Action Plan

Prior to the development of the Action Plan, from November 11, 2023 to January 14, 2024, a participatory research approach guided by the UNDRR disaster risk dimensions, categories, and components framework was utilized to understand the current situation of VAC in the Maldives. Stakeholder consultations were conducted with 23 national-level institutions, including government institutions, state bodies, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Additionally, 10 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were held with local-level institutions in three regions of the country; B.Eydhafushi, Sh. Funadhoo and Gn. Fuvahmulah were conducted.

Community perception regarding the issues and gaps in the prevention and response to different forms of VAC were also explored through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). In total, 100 children (62 female and 38 male), 41 youth (26 female and 15 male), and 61 parents (59 female and 2 male) participated in the group discussions.

Figure 1 illustrates the thematic analysis of data from the consultations, showing how various factors contribute to violence against children (VAC) in the Maldives. It categorises these factors into different risk dimensions, highlighting categories and components that need focus in the plan for effective prevention and response strategies.

Figure 1 Disaster Risk Dimensions, Categories and Components for VAC in the Maldives



2.2 Key Concepts and Definitions

2.2.1 Violence Against Children

VAC takes many forms; it can be physical, emotional, sexual, and developmental trauma through unattuned parenting. It happens in all countries and/or in any setting – in a child’s home, community, school, and/or online. In some parts of the world, violent disciplining is socially accepted and common (UNICEF, n.d.) as well.

VAC includes all forms of violence against people under 18 years of age. For infants and younger children, violence mainly involves child maltreatment (i.e., physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and neglect) at the hands of parents and other authority figures. Boys and girls are at equal risk of physical and emotional abuse and neglect, and girls are at greater risk of sexual abuse. As children reach adolescence, peer violence and intimate partner violence, in addition to child maltreatment, become highly prevalent (WHO, 2019). World Health Organization (WHO) categorizes six main types of interpersonal violence that children experience in different stages of their development; (1) maltreatment, (2) bullying, (3) youth violence, (3) intimate partner violence, (4) sexual violence, (5) emotional and (6) psychological violence (WHO, 2022).

In 2019, the Child Rights Protection Act (CRPA) of the Maldives introduced definitions that are aligned with Article 133 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). These definitions include:

1. (b) “**Mental Abuse**” means where there are apparent reasons to believe that a Child may have a disability of the mind or mental well-being and where there are apparent reasons to believe that the circumstance is caused due to the mental abuse given to the Child by someone, the disability of the Child’s mind or mental well-being, anxiety, depression, loneliness, rage and stunted growth and evidence of any other mental abuse.
2. (g) “**Exploitation**” means all inhumane acts which will hurt the physical and mental well-being and growth of the Child, for any kind of benefit.

3. (h) **“Negligence”** means all those acts or omissions of the parents or guardians or persons under whose care the Child is, which could or would cause physical or mental harm to the Child.
4. (n) **“Physical Violence”** means the intentional harm to part of the Child’s body by the use of an item or force. Such harm includes lacerations, bruises, cuts, scars, fractures or other damages to bones, dislocation of joints, twists, bleeding, rupture of blood vessels, burns, blisters, a stop or change in physiological functioning or consciousness, and damage to hair or teeth.
5. (o) **“Sexual Abuse”** means any sexual act towards, against, or exhibited to a Child, whether by a person in a family relationship with the Child or otherwise.
6. (s) **“Violence”** specified in Section 116 (b) of this Act means causing physical or materialistic or life-threatening or bodily harm or abuse to a Child.

2.2.2 Trauma Informed Care

Trauma Informed Care (TIC), which is gaining recognition around the world, is a framework for relating and helping individuals including children who have experienced trauma resulting from exposure or experiences of maltreatment, abuse, and violence. TIC involves:

- (1) Firm and consistent boundaries to promote safety and stability,
- (2) Client involvement in services to promote control and agency over their own life,
- (3) Minimize the possibility of being overwhelmed and maximize opportunities to build strengths and coping strategies
- (4) Adopting an active, warm, connected approach to reduce trauma-associated shame.

The trauma-informed approach has 6 key principles that overlap the TIC’s principles:

- (1) Safety
- (2) Trustworthiness and transparency
- (3) Peer support
- (4) Collaboration and mutuality

- (5) Empowerment, voice, and choice
- (6) Cultural, historical, religious, and gender issues

2.2.3 Child Protection

Under Article 19 of the UNCRC, State Parties should take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child (Article 19 of CRC) (CRC, 1989).

2.2.4 Child in Need

“Child in need” is not defined in the CRPA, however, it is important to make a clear distinction between “child in need” and a “child needing child protection services”, especially in the Maldives where the social workforce is limited.

The UK Children’s Act 1989 (Section 17(10), Children Act 1989) offers a way of understanding this distinction and defines child in need as:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a Local Authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired without the provision for him/her of such services;
- He/she is disabled.

The Section 17(11) further explains that: “a child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed; and in this Part—

“development” means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development; and “health” means physical or mental health.”

2.2.5 Threshold Criteria and Multi-Agency Assessment

CRPA is not clear on threshold criteria or multi-agency assessments for decision-making. In the UK, Section 47 on investigation of inquiry is initiated to decide what type of action is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child(ren) suspected of or likely suffering harm.

As per Section 47 of the UK Children’s Act 1989 an inquiry must always be commenced immediately following a Multi-Agency Strategy Meeting when:

- There is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm in the form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect.
- Following an EPO (Emergency Protection Order) or the use of Police Powers of protection is initiated.

2.3 Key Principles

The following key principles guide the formulation of the NAP-PRVAC:

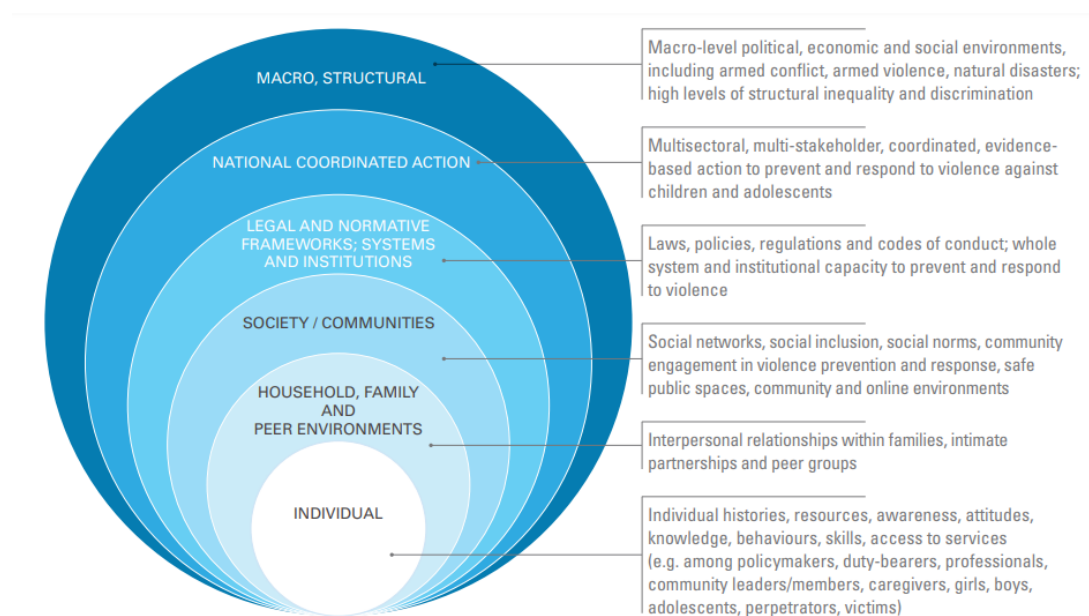
- (1) Do no harm.
- (2) Parents have the primary responsibility to look after children.
- (3) Working in partnership with parents.
- (4) Age-appropriate participation of the child when the decision is being made regarding the child's life and future.
- (5) The Children's best interest is paramount.
- (6) Children are best looked after by their own families unless intervention is essential to keep them safe.
- (7) Any delay in resolving children's court process is likely to prejudice the welfare of the child.
- (8) No child should be discriminated against based on their gender, child's parents or legal guardian's background, ethnicity, social origin, disability, birth status or other status, political views, etc. However, any needs arising from their culture, religion, or language must be taken into account when providing child protection services.
- (9) *Maslahah* (public welfare) providing children with the following:
 - a. Indispensable benefits: protection of life, religion, intellect, lineage, and property
 - b. Necessary benefits: neglect may lead to hardship but not collapse of society
 - c. Improvement benefits: Improve and embellish life in general

2.4 Theory of Change

Violence Against Children is the result of the intricate interactions between individual, familial, societal, cultural, and environmental factors. Violence can take many different forms and is ingrained in social, cultural, and economic norms (Krug et al., 2002).

Guerrero and Rojas' (2016) socio-ecological model (**Figure 2** below), perceives violence affecting children through a system of risk and protective factors that interact on five different levels: the individual level, the interpersonal level (relationships and situations that change), the community level, the institutional level, and the structural level.

Figure 2 Socio-ecological model for understanding violence against children and adolescents.



Source: UNICEF. (2017, October). *Preventing and Responding to Violence against Children and Adolescents: Theory of Change*.
<https://www.unicef.org/documents/preventing-and-responding-violence-against-children-and-adolescents-theory-change>

The NAP-PRVAC uses the socio-ecological model for identifying the key child-related strategic areas to focus to prevent and respond to VAC. This allows to understand the key challenges and necessary actions for five strategic areas at three levels.

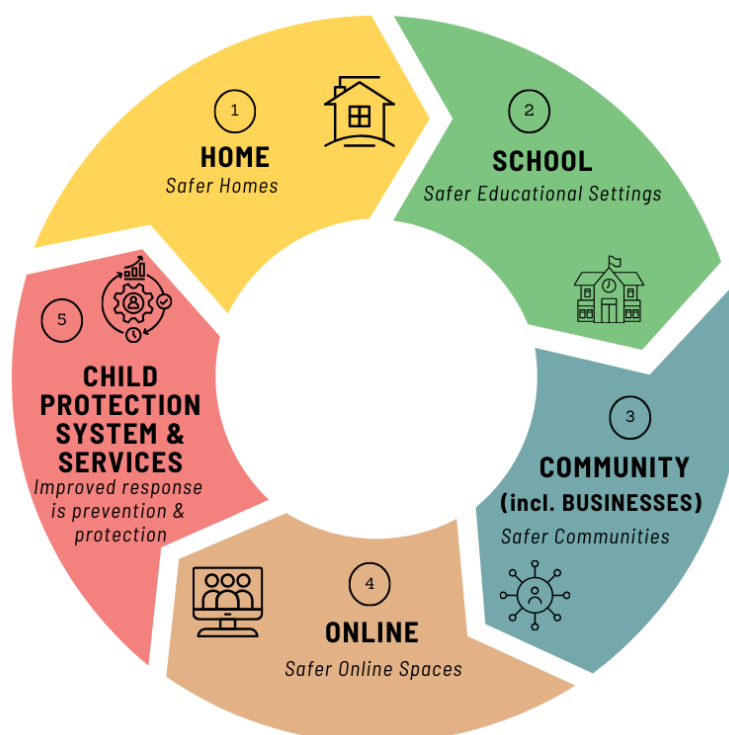
1. Interpersonal level: Home and School
2. Community level: Community and Online
3. Institutional level and Structural level: Child Protection System and Services.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

A theory of change outlines and explains the mechanism and rationale behind the anticipated change within a particular setting. It describes the connections between the issues at hand, proposed actions, outputs, outcomes and achieving the desired goal (Theory of Change Community, 2023).

The NAP-PRVAC theory of change provides a strategic vision to ensure that all children, and adolescents can live free from all forms of violence in the Maldivian society. The overarching goal is to reduce violence experienced by children in the Maldives by addressing gaps in the current child protection system, strengthening multisectoral mechanisms, and aligning preventative measures in the forefront. The goal will be achieved through the following outcomes and outputs proposed under five strategic areas (Figure 3).

Figure 3 The five strategic areas of the NAP-PRVAC



For these areas, the following key strategies and actions has been identified:

2.4.1 Home: Safer Families

Overall Objective: Every child in the Maldives lives in a protected, safe, and secure home environment, free from violence and neglect.

Outcomes:

1. By 2028, clear pathways will be established for agencies that come in contact with children and families for early detection and intervention.
2. By 2025, parents will be empowered to create positive, nurturing environments and to seek help to prevent crisis and family breakdown.
3. By 2028, strategies and policies will be strengthened for preventing and responding to VAC in the Maldives with evidence-based findings.

2.4.2 School: Safer Educational Setting

Overall Objective: All types of violence, bullying, and harassment experienced by children and adolescents will decrease in all educational settings through evidence-based approaches.

Outcomes:

4. By 2028, children feel protected in all educational settings from any forms of bullying, violence, and harassment.
5. By 2028, educators, trainers, and all workers in educational settings will have increased capacity to recognize, prevent, and address any form of bullying or violence through effective training.

2.4.3 Community (incl. businesses): Safer Communities

Overall objective: Ensure a safe community environment, business practices, and mobilize community efforts to prevent VAC.

Outcomes:

6. By 2028, children feel protected in their communities, through active participation of all members in ensuring their inclusion, safety, and secureness.
7. By 2028, the creation of a child-friendly community environment with a culture of understanding and compassion, through increased promotion of gender-equitable and non-violent social norms by public officials.
8. By 2028, children are protected through established child safeguarding policies and practices in businesses including travel and tourism sector.

2.4.4 Online: Safer Online Spaces

Overall Objective: Children know how to act and feel safe online, with a decline in the number of VAC cases in digital spaces.

Outcomes:

9. By 2026, children will be protected from online violence by institutional and legislative frameworks.
10. By 2027, children are protected from online violence through increased capacity and awareness.

2.4.5 Child Protection System and Services: Improved response is prevention & protection

Overall Objective: Multi-stakeholder child protection structures and systems are functioning at national, regional, and island levels effectively.

Outcomes:

11. By 2028, every child will be protected through a strengthened, expanded and integrated child protection system.
12. By 2028, a resilient child protection system that prevents VAC during disasters and shocks will be established through increased investment and resource development in the social sector.
13. By 2025, children, adolescents, and families will have increased access to child protection services through the involvement and strengthening role of civil society in the social sector.

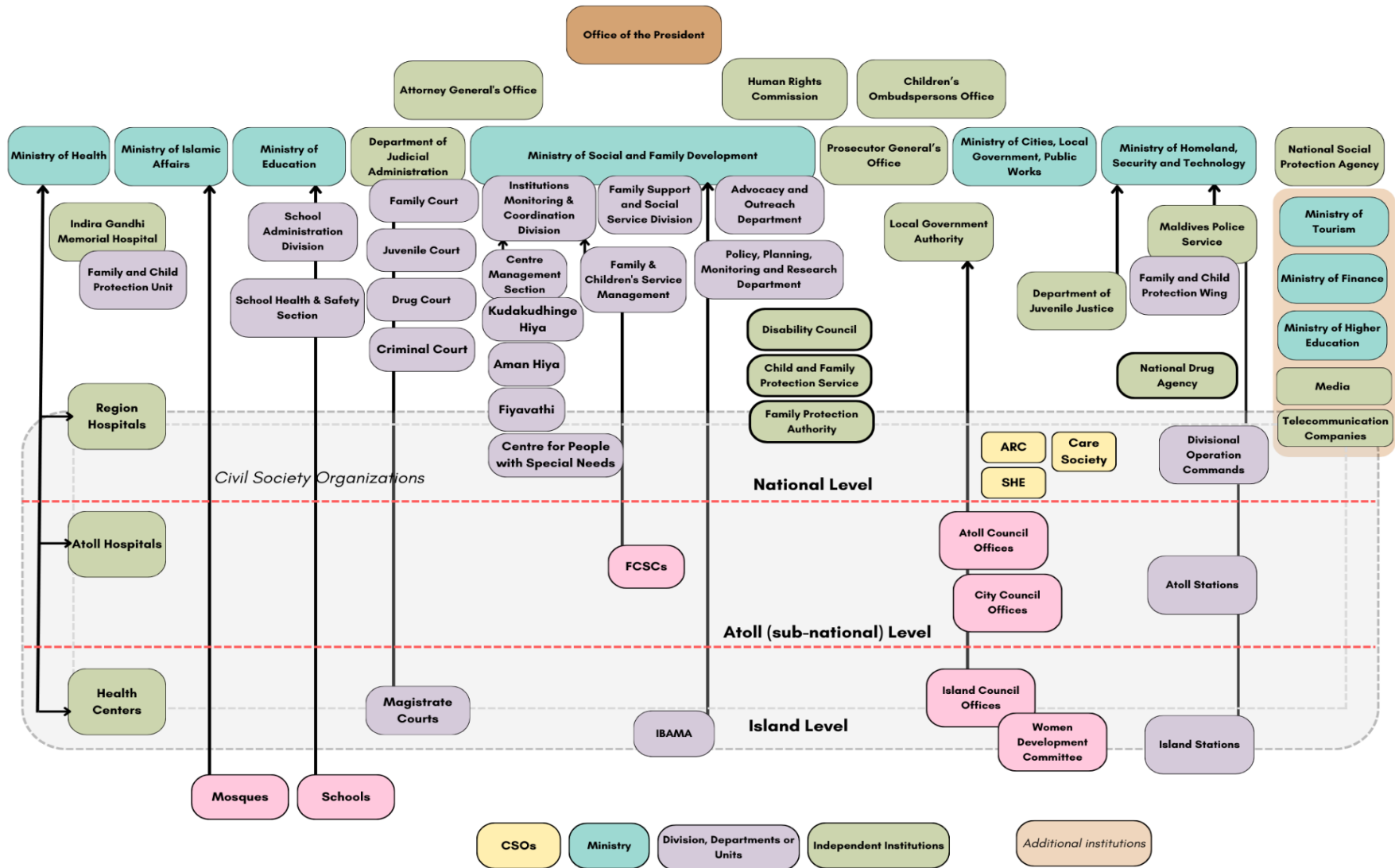
2.5 Scope of the plan

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. As a result, the National Action Plan encourages active participation from all sectors of society to ensure the safety, inclusion, and wellbeing of all children. The NAP-PRVAC covers the following:

1. All relevant government ministries and institutions at national, regional and island level
2. State-bodies, public and private companies
3. Developmental partners
4. Civil society (non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations)
5. General public including survivors and vulnerable individuals

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Figure 4 Key Duty Bearers under the Scope of the Action Plan



2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

The coordination, monitoring, and evaluation aspect will enhance both national and local mechanisms for planning, executing, and reporting on the NAP-PRVAC. Through monitoring and evaluation, the effectiveness and efficiency of implementing various priority actions and interventions under the NAP will be ensured at all levels. This process will also guide potential adjustments to strategic areas of intervention and their associated activities based on informed insights.

The primary objectives of monitoring the NAP-PRVAC include:

1. Defining the primary indicators for monitoring the proposed activities at output, outcome and impact level.
2. Defining the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders, along with M&E coordination mechanism.
3. Outlining methodology for conducting research, studies, and reviews to enhance the evidential basis of data and information.
4. Enhancing the organization, retrieval, accessibility, and utilization of data by governmental bodies and stakeholders.
5. Advancing evidence-based practices in the realms of planning, execution, and reporting.
6. Ensuring the timely availability of accurate and comprehensive data concerning VAC.

The following section - Action Plan and Results Framework, includes outcomes, outputs and indicators that are SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound, developed for each of the five strategic areas. This includes sector-specific contributions, highlighting the lead and supporting role agencies.

In addition to the overall results matrix, existing monitoring systems needs to be enhanced, and the framework need to be aligned with the strategic plans of the stakeholders. As such, the following actions will be undertaken to ensure the efficiency and efficacy of the NAP-PRVAC monitoring:

1. Developing a data collection, reporting and usage system to collect data and reports for analysis, review and dissemination among ministries, development partners, civil

society organizations and other stakeholders. The reports will be used to identify progress, challenges, lessons learned and gaps in prevention and response to VAC. The data collection system should include the frequency of data collection and the data sources for marking the progress of the achievement of the outcomes of the NAP-PRVAC.

2. Formulating a coordination mechanism for collaborative monitoring and evaluation of the NAP-PRVAC implementation.
3. Establishing a review process to reflect on progress, lessons learned, good practices, recommendations for improvement and areas that require change. This will include compilation of the monitoring and evaluation reports for presentation and discussion at national-level forums and annual consultative meetings.

3 ACTION PLAN AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

3.1 Strategic Area I – Home: Safer Homes

Overall Objective: *Every child in the Maldives lives in a protected, safe, and secure home environment, free from violence and neglect.*



By 2028, clear pathways will be established for agencies that come in contact with children for early detection and intervention.



By 2025, parents will be empowered to create positive, nurturing environments and to seek help to prevent crisis and family breakdown.



By 2028, strategies and policies will be strengthened for preventing and responding to VAC in the Maldives with evidence-based findings.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 1: By 2028, clear pathways will be established for agencies that come in contact with children for early detection and intervention

Outcome indicator 1.a: % of families identified to be at high risk or in crisis including Children with Disabilities (CWDs) receiving primary-level intervention from trained service providers.

Outcome indicator 1.b: % of social service providers trained for identifying and intervening for the early prevention and response to VAC.

Output 1.1: Families and children at risk have increased accessibility to psychosocial support and care and home healthcare services.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.1.1 Review and strengthen mechanisms to identify families and register CWDs at risk, in need of immediate primary level interventions through home healthcare services.	Minimum standards for identifying at risk families reviewed	Maldives Healthcare Quality Standards 2020 (Criteria 16, Criteria 20)	Minimum standards reviewed and endorsed	●	●	●			MSFD	MoH, IBAMA
1.1.2 Review on the feasibility of a healthcare visitors’ programmes in Health centres by enhancing their capacity for the families including those at risk and CWDs (to be linked to National Action Plan on Disability Inclusion).	Feasibility conducted on home healthcare visit programme strengthened	None	Home healthcare programme conducted in all atolls	●	●	●	●	●	MoH	HSPs, Councils, IBAMA
1.1.3 Monitor implementation of primary level services such as psychosocial support and care, and home healthcare visits for families including those at risk and CWDs (to be linked to National Action Plan on Disability Inclusion).	# of at-risk families supported via primary-level services	None	All identified high-risk families	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	MoH

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 1.2: Families in crisis have increased accessibility to necessary home services that assists the wider family support network as part of social services.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.2.1 Establish mechanisms to identify families in crisis that are in need of psychosocial support and care via home healthcare services.	Threshold criteria for identifying families in crisis formulated	None	Threshold criteria for identifying families in crisis endorsed	●	●	●			MSFD	MoH, MoE
1.2.2 Provide and monitor implementation of home healthcare services including divorce counselling and children’s psychosocial support for families in crisis.	% of families in crisis supported via social services	None	30% increase in services provided families in crisis			●	●	●	MSFD	DJA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Output 1.3: *Systematic usage of tools such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) for assessments of parents in domestic violence (DV) to provide referral system for more effective secondary interventions.*

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.3.1 Conduct trainings for healthcare workers and public health officers on the usage of ACEs tool.	% of trained healthcare workers & public health officers per health facility	None	70% of healthcare workers and public health officers in each health facility	●	●	●			MSFD	MoH
1.3.2 Assess both parents in DV cases individually using ACEs tool.	% of assessed individuals in DV cases	None	40% of parents involved in DV cases assessed	●	●	●			MoH	MSFD, FPA
1.3.3 Develop a referral system to assist parents based on results of ACEs tool.	% of assisted individuals based on screening assessments.	None	50% of parents assisted through referral system	●	●	●			MSFD	MoH, FPA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 1.4: Decreased violence and impact to children, their development, safety and security during high conflict divorces.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.4.1 Establish Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to assess risk to the emotional, physical, and sexual development, safety and security of the children in divorces.	SOP for assessing risk to children in divorces formulated	None	SOP for assessing risk to children in divorces endorsed		●	●	●		MSFD	Family Court, DJA
1.4.2 Establish mandatory drawing and following of co-parenting plans in high conflict divorces under the custody provisions in the family law.	Drafting of Co-parenting plan	None	Drafted co-parenting plan endorsed	●	●	●			MSFD	Family Court, DJA
1.4.3 Implement co-parenting plan depending on necessity.	% of divorces in which co-parenting plans are drawn up	None	50% of high-risk divorces		●	●	●	●	MSFD	Family Court, DJA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Output 1.5: Strengthened social protection services through understanding the impact of current protection benefit programmes on families.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.5.1 Review the recommendations from “The Impact of the Disability Allowance on Financial Well-Being in the Maldives: Quasi-experimental Study” ¹ and "Evaluation of the Single Parent and Foster Care Social Protection Schemes in the Maldives” ² .	# of recommendations implemented	Banks et al. (2023), Drucza and Tran (2021)	All recommendations identified as aligning with the government's action plan during the review implemented		●	●	●		NSPA	FPA, MSFD
1.5.2 Conduct a national follow-up study of social protection benefits and its impact on families and VAC.	Disseminated findings of follow-up impact study	Banks et al. (2023), Drucza and Tran (2021)	Findings of the study published in public domain					●	NSPA	FPA, MSFD

¹ Banks, L. M., Hameed, S., Usman, S. K., Davey, C., & Kuper, H. (2023). The Impact of the Disability Allowance on Financial Well-Being in the Maldives: Quasi-experimental study. *the European Journal of Development Research/European Journal of Development Research*, 36(2), 411–427. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41287-023-00607-8>

² Drucza, K., & Tran, A. (2021). Evaluation of the Single Parent and Foster Care Social Protection Schemes in the Maldives. In <https://www.unicef.org/>. UNICEF Regional Office for the Maldives. <https://www.unicef.org/maldives/reports/evaluation-single-parent-and-foster-care-social-protection-schemes-maldives>

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 1.6: Increased family centric wraparound services that include intensive behavioural healthcare, educational planning and social work case to prevent breakdown of families.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.6.1 Review existing services to ensure family centric wraparound services are provided for at-risk children.	Desk review of current existing services provided for at-risk children	Some fragmented services exist	Findings of the review disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders		●	●			MSFD	MoE, MoH
1.6.2 Strengthen existing services and establish additional services to ensure family centric wraparound services and court mandated rehabilitation services are provided for at-risk children.	% of family centric wraparound services established	Some fragmented services exist	70% increase in the provision of wraparound services				●	●	MSFD	MoE, MoH
1.6.3 Implement crisis intervention programmes through IBAMA to support social services in order to reduce the number of children in state care, and to only be placed under state care as a last resort.	# of islands with crisis intervention programmes established through IBAMA	None	Initiated in all IBAMA teams	●	●	●	●		MSFD	IBAMA
1.6.4 Ensure formulation and implementation of a permanency planning when the child enters the alternative care system (to be linked to Government's Strategic Action Plan for detailed actions relating to alternative care).	# of permanency plans formulated corresponding to children entering the alternative care system	None	All children in alternative care have a permanency plan formulated and being followed through	●	●	●	●		MSFD	
1.6.5 Strengthen existing services targeted at Children with Disabilities (CWDs) to meet the needs of these families (to be linked to National Action Plan on Disability Inclusion).	% of families supported by the services	Some fragmented services exist	90% of CWD families	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	NSPA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 1.7: *Increased capacity of professionals that work in the child protection system: case management (social workers, healthcare workers, counsellors, teachers), Legal (police officers, prosecutors, judges , magistrates), and social care providers (NGOs, & Civil Society) on identifying and intervening for the prevention and response to VAC.*

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
1.7.1 Conduct continuous trainings for all social service providers on early identification and intervention of VAC (to be linked to Child Protection System and Services: activity 11.3.4 and activity 12.2.1).	% of social service providers trained on early identification and intervention of VAC yearly	None	80% of social service providers trained yearly	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 2: By 2025, parents will be empowered to create positive, nurturing environments and to seek help to prevent crisis and family breakdown.

Outcome indicator 2.a: % of parents equipped with information on how to create safe, stable and nurturing environments for their children and discipline in non-violent and non-harmful ways.

Outcome indicator 2.b: % of parents equipped with information on how to seek help in situations of crisis.

Output 2.1: Increased capacity and awareness of parents to handle different situations pertaining to their children, including when and how to seek help.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
2.1.1 Develop a Joint Positive Parenting Programme ³ available for all parents; with trained facilitators.	Completed parenting programme manual	Draft manual on JPP training	Parenting programme manual endorsed	●					MoE	MSFD, MoH, DJJ, MPS
2.1.2 Train facilitators on the developed Joint Positive Parenting Programme.	# of trained facilitators on the developed package	71 facilitators trained	350 facilitators trained	●	●				MoE	MSFD, MoH, DJJ, MPS
2.1.3 Conduct Joint Positive Parenting Programme available for all parents; with trained facilitators.	% of parents receiving the programme	None	70% of parents have completed the programme	●	●	●	●	●	MoE	MSFD, MoH, DJJ, MPS
2.1.4 Develop referral mechanism for parents and caretakers to be linked with the appropriate joint positive parenting programmes based on child’s age and developmental stage.	# of parents linked to joint positive parenting programmes per year	None	All parents seeking help from a relevant agency linked to the appropriate positive parenting programme		●	●	●	●	MSFD	MoH, MoE

³ Joint Positive Parenting Programme is a universal package targeting training for parents of children 0 to 5 years of age, 6 to 11 years of age, 12 to 18 years of age, and two targeted programmes for children in conflict of the law and those involved in substance abuse.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 3: By 2028, strategies and policies will be strengthened for preventing and responding to VAC in the Maldives with evidence-based findings.

Outcome indicator 3.a: Policy level strategies and practices formulated to address root-causes and risk factors for VAC based on research.

Output 3.1: Strengthened mechanisms and policies to address VAC based on root cause and risk-factors identification.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
3.1.1 Conduct nationally representative sample study on the root cause of high divorce rates in the Maldives, highlighting protective and risk factors.	Conduct study	None	Study conducted			●			MSFD	Family court, DJJ, MNU and other HEPs
3.1.2 Review the impact of the “mandatory reporting” on seeking therapeutic and social services by victims of violence.	Impact study findings	None	Findings of the study disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders		●	●			MSFD	Family court, DJJ, MNU and other HEPs, CSOs
3.1.3 Conduct national research on root causes of VAC including exploitation into crimes and criminal behaviour	Root cause study findings	None	Findings of the study disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders			●			MSFD	Family Court, DJJ, MoIA, NRC, MPS, MNU and HEPs, CSOs
3.1.4 Implement the recommendations from the national research on root causes of VAC.	# of recommendations implemented	None	All the recommendations implemented				●	●	MSFD	

3.2 Strategic Area II – School: Safer Educational Settings

Overall Objective: *All types of violence, bullying, and harassment experienced by children and adolescents will decrease in all educational settings through evidence-based approaches.*



By 2028, children are empowered and feel protected in school and all educational settings from any forms of bullying, violence, and harassment.



By 2028, educators, trainers, and all workers in educational settings will have increased capacity to recognize, prevent, and address any form of bullying or violence through effective training and policy.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 4: By 2028, children are empowered and feel protected in schools and all educational settings from any forms of bullying, violence, and harassment.

Outcome indicator 4.a: % of children reporting VAC cases to school appointed child protection leads or teachers.

Outcome indicator 4.b: % decrease in bullying and harassment cases reported in educational facilities.

Output 4.1: Strengthened delivery of national curriculum to address bullying, violence and harassment, ensuring age appropriate and gender equitable care.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
4.1.1 Complete the mapping of the national curriculum and current programmes to understand how concepts of bullying, violence and harassment are prevented and addressed, and how the implementation of actions is monitored.	# of provisions identified in the curriculum that addresses VAC	Some mapping already done to study HAT	Incorporate provisions that promotes VAC into the national curriculum		●	●			MoE	UNICEF, NIE
4.1.2 Develop a comprehensive toolkit to strengthen existing curriculum on bullying, violence, and harassment; ensuring age appropriate, gender equitable, and trauma informed care when responding.	Toolkit developed to support existing curriculum to address VAC	None	Toolkit endorsed and disseminated to schools and all educational settings		●				MoE	DJJ, NIE, MPS

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Output 4.2: Strategically addressing the hidden cost and impact of discrimination and bullying in schools and all educational settings on children's sense of safety.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
4.2.1 Conduct research on the prevalence and hidden costs of discrimination in schools and all educational settings by educators.	Disseminated study findings	Ministry of Education & UNICEF Maldives, (2015) ⁴	Findings of the study disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders		●	●			MoE	MNU, UNICEF
4.2.2 Conduct inspections of schools and all educational settings every 4 years, focusing on implementation of actions to prevent and address both bullying and the hidden cost of discrimination.	% of annual audit inspections conducted in schools and all educational settings	QAD annual audits in 60-70 schools (27%)	50% of schools and educational settings have inspections completed within 4 years' time	●	●	●	●	●	MoE	QAD
4.2.3 Strengthen the implementation of inspection findings and recommendations.	% of schools and educational settings wherein audit inspection findings and recommendations are implemented	None	50% of schools and educational settings have inspection findings and recommendations implemented				●	●	MoE	

⁴ Ministry of Education & UNICEF Maldives. (2015). Assessment of the situation of students who migrate to Male' for education and strategies to address vulnerabilities : abridged report.
<http://saruna.mnu.edu.mv/jspui/bitstream/123456789/5518/1/Abridged%20Report%3a%20Children%20who%20migrate%20to%20Male%e2%80%99%20for%20Education>

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 4.3: Increased implementation of institutional and regulatory child protection framework in educational settings.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
4.3.1 Assign trained designated child protection leads in schools and all educational settings that will liaise with CFPS and FCSCs.	# of schools and educational settings with trained designated child protection lead	All schools have liaison officers but require capacity building	All schools and educational settings				●		MoE	MSFD, UNICEF
4.3.2 Conduct annual skill building workshops and trainings for all school staff by designated child protection lead in every educational setting (to be linked to School: Activity 5.1.2).	# of schools and educational settings at which annual skill building workshops and trainings is conducted	None	All schools and educational settings				●	●	MoE	
4.3.3 Ensure the presence of a trained social worker or counsellor in schools and all educational settings.	# of schools and educational settings with social worker or counsellor	30% schools and educational settings have school counsellors	All schools and educational settings					●	MoE	MNU, MoF
4.3.4 Establish well-being clubs among the school children to work closely with the child protection lead, in helping children who are bullied or harassed.	% of schools with support groups	None	75% of schools have a minimum of one support group					●	MoE	Councils, UNICEF
4.3.5 Strengthen the implementation of child protection and safeguarding policy in schools and all educational settings, and conduct annual review.	% of schools and educational settings with annual review conducted	National Child Protection Policy	30% decrease in reported cases of VAC occurring within schools and educational settings					●	MSFD	MoE

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline						Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028		Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
4.3.6 Introduce safety ranking of schools and all educational settings based on the implementation of child protection and safeguarding policy.	Safety ranking of schools and educational settings completed	None	Safety ranking of schools and all educational settings published in public domain				●	●		MoE	CSOs
4.3.7 Strengthen annual assessment of physical safeguarding measures implemented in schools and all educational settings, including fire evacuation drills, and disaster management.	# of schools and educational settings with proper physical safeguarding measures implemented	SOPs developed for all schools, 10% of schools conducts drills annually	All schools and educational settings					●		MoE	MNDF, Council, MPS, MRC
4.3.8 Pilot and roll out the early detection risk assessment developed for all grades, including substance abuse within schools and all educational settings.	# of schools and educational settings in which early detection risk assessment tool is piloted	Early detection risk assessment tool rolled out in 5 schools	All schools and educational settings					●		MoE	MSFD
4.3.9 Develop an anonymous online reporting system for students to report incidents of bullying and discrimination.	# of schools and educational settings in which the online reporting system has been rolled out	Research findings from 4.2.1	All schools and educational settings				●	●		MoE	UNICEF, MSFD
4.3.10 Strengthen the mechanism for providing the necessary psychosocial services for all students involved in incidents of bullying, harassment and violence.	# of schools and educational settings in which the mechanism for providing psychosocial services for all students involved in incidents of bullying, harassment and violence is rolled out	30% schools and educational settings have school counsellors.	All schools and educational settings					●		MoE	MSFD, MoF, UNICEF

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 5: By 2028, educators, trainers, and all workers in educational settings will have increased capacity to recognize, prevent, and address any form of bullying or violence through effective research, training and policy.

Outcome indicator 5.a: % of trained staff in educational settings with the capacity to address and respond to cases of VAC.

Output 5.1: Increased capacity of educational settings and educators to prevent and address any form of VAC.											
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies		
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	
5.1.1 Develop a pre-service and in-service training toolkit for teachers, counsellors and other key school staff on early identification and addressing of VAC including bullying, sexual abuse and harassment in a gender-equitable and trauma-informed approach.	Training toolkit developed	None	Disseminated training toolkit to all schools and educational settings of the country		●					MoHELSD	MoE, MNU and other HEPs, MPS, MSFD
5.1.2 Conduct continuous training to all staff in educational settings, including teachers, counsellors, and administrative and support staff on VAC and Child Protection.	% of trained teachers, counsellors, and administrative and support staff per year	None	75% of the school staff has taken part in a child protection training in the last two years		●	●	●	●		MoE	MoHELSD, FPA, MSFD
5.1.3 Revise, strengthen and implement the policy for mandated child protection training for all staff in educational settings, including teachers, counsellors, coaches (non-school staff who come into contact) and administrative and support staff.	# of schools in which revised training policy is implemented	National Child Protection Policy for education institutions	All schools and educational settings have implemented the training policy for the staff	●						MoE	FPA, MSFD
5.1.4 Introduce and enforce regular enhanced police checks for professionals who come in contact with children, such as educators, coaches, health workers or others that come into contact with children, every 3 years.	# of professionals working with children whose enhanced police clearance has been conducted per year	Draft Working with Children Check available	All professionals working with children had an enhanced police clearance check done in the last 3 years	●	●					MSFD	MoE, MPS, MoH, Employers of educators , MPS, PGO, DJA, FPA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
5.1.5 Monitor the implementation of enhanced safer recruitment checks for temporary contracts with teachers, tutors, coaches, cleaners, builders, educators, support staff and any other personnel that enters the school property and all educational settings.	# of schools and educational settings with safer recruitment practices for temporary contracts	Draft Working with Children Check available	All temporary contracts in schools and educational settings are issued only after the completion of safety checks			●	●	●	MoE	Employers of educators, MPS, PGO, DJA
5.1.6 Review, draft and enact the regulation on child protection under the Education Act for schools and all educational settings focusing on safeguarding children and safer recruitment.	Regulation on child protection reviewed, drafted and enacted under the Education Act	Education Act	Draft regulation on child protection reviewed and enacted under the Education Act			●	●		MoE	

3.3 Strategic Area III – Community (incl. businesses) : Safer community

Overall objective: *Ensure a safe community environment and mobilize community efforts to prevent VAC.*



By 2028, children feel protected in their communities, through the active participation of everyone in ensuring their inclusion, safety, and secureness.



By 2028, children are protected through established child safeguarding policies and practices in businesses including travel and tourism sector.



By 2028, the creation of a child-friendly community environment with a culture of understanding and compassion, through increased promotion of gender-equitable and non-violent social norms by public officials.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 6: By 2028, children feel protected in their communities, through the active participation of everyone in ensuring their inclusion, safety, and secureness.

Outcome indicator 6.a: % of VAC cases identified and reported by community-focused groups such as IBAMA and informed individuals in the community.

Outcome indicator 6.b: % of population reached through awareness-raising campaigns.

Outcome indicator 6.c: % of VAC cases reported by children.

Output 6.1: Increased capacity of community-based key stakeholders such as IBAMA on identification and prevention of VAC.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
6.1.1 Establish IBAMA teams on every island to support the council in early identification, intervention and addressing of VAC issues of the communities.	# of islands with IBAMA teams established	IBAMA established in 129 islands.	All islands have IBAMA teams established	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	LGA, IBAMA
6.1.2 Conduct continuous training programmes for IBAMA members to strengthen their expertise on prevention and identification of VAC.	% of trained IBAMA members	None	80% of IBAMA members of each island is trained on VAC	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	LGA, IBAMA
6.1.3 Assign a designated child protection lead in the IBAMA teams; responsible to bring forth any child protection issues to the notice of the Council.	# of IBAMA teams with designated child protection lead	None	All established IBAMA teams has an assigned child protection lead	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	Councils

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 6.2: Increased public-awareness on community role and responsibility in the prevention of VAC.								
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline				
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
6.2.1 Develop awareness materials on links between inclusion, safety and security in the prevention of VAC, by ensuring the participation of children and youth.	# of awareness materials developed	'AHAN' campaign materials, 'Mikan Huttubaanan' and 'Kihineh' Campaign Materials	Awareness materials disseminated publicly	●	●	●	●	●
6.2.2 Conduct awareness sessions on existing laws and policies relating to social sector.	# of awareness sessions conducted	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	Awareness sessions conducted in every island	●	●	●	●	●
6.2.3 Develop and conduct comprehensive public-awareness campaigns and targeted smaller group activities aimed at promoting behaviour and mindset change on the following topics: "child protection as everyone's responsibility," "prevention through response in violence against children," "children's rights versus responsibilities," "conflict management and problem-solving," and "understanding and responding to children's emotional and mental well-being."	% of people reached by the campaign	'AHAN' campaign materials, 'Mikan Huttubaanan' and 'Kihineh' Campaign Materials	70% of adult population	●	●	●	●	●
6.2.4 Conduct trainings for all media professionals to ensure all forms of reporting are in a child safe, gender-equitable and trauma informed manner.	# of media professionals trained	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	All media professionals trained		●	●	●	●

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 6.3: Increased capacity of children and youth leaders to advocate for their rights and be involved in addressing VAC.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
6.3.1 Develop and roll-out a programme to build the capacity of children and youth to advocate for their rights and to address VAC in the nation. [to be linked to School: Activity 4.3.4]	# of children reached through the programme	None	30 children trained and retained through the program	●	●	●	●	●	MoE	MoYEIA, MSFD, CSOs
6.3.2 Conduct a midway review on the effectiveness of the programme for child and youth leaders' consultations and participation in policy making discussion and make changes accordingly.	Review completed and necessary changes brought to the program	None	Program mid-way review completed with amendments to the programme brought forth				●	●	MoE	MNU

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 7: By 2028, the creation of a child-safe community environment with a culture of understanding and compassion, through increased promotion of gender-equitable and non-violent social norms by public officials.

Outcome indicator 7.a: % of political parties implementing a Code of Conduct for its members and practicing compassionate politics.

Outcome indicator 7.b: % of public officials trained in basic understanding of VAC, and impact of community activities on children.

Outcome indicator 7.c: % of islands following child-friendly urban planning and programme coordination.

Output 7.1: Increased capacity of public officials to promote gender-equitable and non-violent social norms within the community.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
7.1.1 Review the current Code of Conduct of political parties and their members to ensure a culture of compassionate politics is created in the country.	Political parties' Code of Conduct reviewed	Existing Code of Conduct of political parties	Findings of the review disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders		●	●	●	●	EC	People's Majilis, AGO, NGOs, PO, IBAMA, Island Councils, Lafaa dhe council.
7.1.2 Monitor implementation of Code of Conduct by all political parties and their members.	# of political parties with Code of Conduct implemented	None	All registered political parties have implemented the Code of Conduct for all its members and activities		●	●	●	●	EC	Political parties, Gaumee lafaadhey committee, councils, IBAMA
7.1.3 Conduct awareness sessions for newly-appointed public officials including MPs as part of their orientation, on their role in creating gender-equitable, and non-violent social norms within the community.	% of newly appointed public officials completing the orientation programmes, disaggregated by broad institutions (judiciary, parliament, civil service, and other independent institutions)	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	50% of newly appointed/elected public officials have completed the orientation programme		●	●	●	●	PO	MSFD, IBAMA, political parties, EC, MPS, LGA. MoCLPW

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children
2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
7.1.4 Conduct a review of child protection and safeguarding laws and policies to understand how exploitation is prevented and addressed, and how the implementation of such actions is monitored (to be linked to Child Protection System & Services: activity 11.1.1).	Review of child protection and safeguarding laws and policies conducted	Existing child protection and safeguarding laws and policies	Findings of the review disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders				●	●	AGO	MSFD

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 7.2: Increased island-level capacity to address VAC and ensure activities conducted within the community are done so in a manner positive and child-safe.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
7.2.1 Introduce a mechanism to monitor the island and city council’s mandate of social protection in relation to the vulnerable population within LGA.	Accountability mechanism established	None	All councils adhere to the protocols established under the accountability mechanism	●	●				LGA	MCLP, Island Council, City Council
7.2.2 Ensure that the councils monitor and report the status of the vulnerable population every 4 months as stated in the Decentralization Act.	# of monitory reports covering status of the vulnerable populations of the islands submitted by councils every 4 months	Decentralization Act	All councils submit monitoring reports covering status of vulnerable populations	●	●	●	●	●	LGA	IBAMA, WDC
7.2.3 Develop standards for urban planning and human geography as part of the national crime prevention strategy to supress gang violence, ensuring neighbourhood monitoring places are within the residential areas.	Minimum standards for urban planning in line with national crime prevention strategy developed	None	Minimum standards for urban planning in line with national crime prevention strategy developed	●	●				MoCLPW	HDC, Councils, MoHLUD, MoTCA, FCPD, DJJ, MoHST, MPS, MoHST
7.2.4 Monitor implementation of urban planning standards within communities in a child-safe and gender-equitable manner, including accessibility to those CWDs.	# of island councils following the urban planning standards during island land use plan development	None	All of the island councils follow the urban planning standards for newly formulated land use planning		●	●	●	●	MoHLUD	MoCLPW, MPS, Councils.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
7.2.5 Increase capacity of the island and atoll councils to monitor and ensure that programmes and activities are conducted in a child-safe and gender equitable manner, with access for CWDs.	# of councils oriented on the necessary regulations for monitoring activities conducted in the islands	None	All the councils are oriented on the necessary regulations for monitoring activities conducted in the islands		●	●	●	●	LGA	IBAMA, UNICEF, MoHLUD, FPA, NGO, CFPS, DJJ, MoIA, MoCLPW
7.2.6 Introduce induction training materials accessible via eGov portal for all council members and staff regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to early identification of VAC, and responding to VAC.	% of council members and staff taking part in the induction training	None	50% of council members and staff that has taken part in the induction training			●	●	●	LGA	MoCLPW, UNICEF, IBAMA,
7.2.7 Prepare and implement pilot programme to develop paraprofessionals within the council that can work with other island level institutions to strengthen the response to VAC, especially for early identification of children on the move due to internal migration, trafficking and exploitation.	# of councils with a paraprofessional working with other island level institutions	None	10 councils with a paraprofessional working with other island level institutions	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	UNICEF, MoIA, CSO, NDA, MPS

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 8 By 2028, children are protected through established child safeguarding policies and practices in businesses including travel and tourism sector.

Outcome indicator 8.a: % of businesses implementing child safeguarding policies and protocols.

Output 8.1: Established Child-Safe Tourism through increase child safeguarding policies, protocols and capacities in the sector.								
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline				
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
8.1.1 Establish child protection and safeguarding policy in the travel and tourism sector.	% of service providers in the travel and tourism sector with established child protection and safeguarding policy	None	70% of service providers in travel and tourism sector have established child protection and safeguarding policy		●	●	●	●
8.1.2 Assign and conduct trainings for a child protection lead in travel and tourism sector service providers.	# of service providers in travel and tourism sector with trained child protection lead	None	All service providers in travel and tourism sector have a trained child protection lead		●	●	●	●
8.1.3 Monitor implementation of child protection and safeguarding policies in travel and tourism sector service providers.	% of tourism sector service providers monitored	None	20% of service providers in travel and tourism sector are monitored		●	●	●	●
8.1.4 Introduce monitoring mechanism for early detection and response to children on the move using RTL and any other domestic transportation.	Monitoring mechanism introduced	MoCI (2023), Socio-economic Impact Study of RTL Ferry	Monitoring mechanism endorsed		●			
8.1.5 Review and strengthen current gaps in transportation laws for internal migration and border crossing (to be linked to Child Protection System & Services: activity 11.1.1)	# of laws relating to, internal migration and border crossing reviewed and amended	None	Transportation laws for internal migration and border crossing amended and put forth for enactment				●	●

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
8.1.6 Introduce immigration policies and procedures for travelling minors (to be linked to Child Protection System & Services: activity 11.1.1.1).	Immigration policies for travelling minors developed	None	Immigration policies for travelling minors enforced				●	●	Maldives Immigration	
8.1.7 Conduct an exploratory study to understand the impact of local tourism and travel services such as RTL, safaris on children and VAC.	Exploratory study conducted	MoCI (2023), Socio-economic Impact Study of RTL Ferry	Findings of the study disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders and follow up actions identified	●	●	●			MSFD	MoTCA, MoT, MNU and other HEPs

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 8.2: Established child safeguarding policies, protocols and capacities in businesses that come into contact with children.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2020	2022	2024	2026	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
8.2.1 Align and implement international child safeguarding standards and national child protection laws for all businesses, associations, academics, sports and other clubs to prevent and respond to VAC.	% of businesses and clubs implementing ILO standards	Child safeguarding policies established in MOC and FAM	20% businesses and clubs that has implemented ILO standards for child protection			●	●	●	MSFD	MoEDT, AGO, MoSFR
8.2.2 Conduct continuous annual trainings for externally hired trainers involved with children, such as sports instructors and coaches on early identification and addressing of VAC.	% of trained external educators and trainers per year	None	50% of externally hired educators or trainers have taken part in a child protection training	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	MoSFR, MoHELSD

3.4 Strategic Area IV – Online: Safer Online Spaces

Overall Objective: *Children to know how to act and feel safe online, with a decline in the number of VAC cases in digital spaces.*



By 2026, children are protected from online violence by an institutional and legislative framework.



By 2027, children are protected from online violence through increased capacity and awareness.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 9: By 2026, children are protected from online violence by an institutional and legislative framework.

Outcome indicator 9.a: % of reviewed and implemented legislative regulations to address cybercrimes.

Outcome indicator 9.b: % decrease in online violence experienced by children.

Output 9.1: Established and strengthened regulatory mechanism to address cybercrimes against children.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
9.1.1 Review and strengthen the existing laws and regulations that address cybercrimes including; (a) Penal code of the Maldives (b) Act on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (c) Criminal Procedure Code (d) Special Provisions Act to Deal with Child Sex Abuse Offenders	Reporting on review of laws	Fathimath Waheeda (2015), Legislating for Cybercrime in the Maldives: Challenges and Prospects ⁵	Report of the review disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders	●					CAM	MPS, ISPs
9.1.2 Develop legal framework required to prevent all forms of cybercrimes such as, bullying, grooming, victimisation, abuse and sexual exploitation, ensuring it follows international standards.	Newly developed legal framework for preventing and addressing cybercrimes	Penal Code of the Maldives (Act no: 1/81) – Chapter 240	Developed legal framework submitted to Parliament for approval and enactment	●	●	●			MSFD	CAM, MPS, ISPs, MoE
9.1.3 Fasttrack the establishment of central cybercrime monitoring fusion centre for preventing and responding to VAC.	Established central cybercrime monitoring fusion centre	None	Central cybercrime monitoring fusion centre established	●	●				MPS	CAM, ISPs

⁵ Waheeda, F. (2015). Legislating for cybercrimes in the Maldives: challenges and prospects. *IIUM Law Journal*, 23. <https://doi.org/10.31436/iiumlj.v23i3.183>

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
9.1.4 Establish internal child protection and safeguarding policies in internet service providers.	# of ISPs with internal child protection and safeguarding policies developed	None	All ISPs have an internal child protection and safeguarding policy developed	●	●				CAM	MSFD, MoE, ISPs, MPS
9.1.5 Monitor implementation of child protection and safeguarding policy across all institutions, including ICT service providers to ensure all messages, and images released and public events hosted promotes and follows child protection standards.	# of ISPs with internal child protection and safeguarding policies implemented	None	All ISPs have an internal child protection and safeguarding policy implemented	●	●	●	●	●	MSFD	CAM, MMC, MBC
9.1.6 Introduce child safety features in currently existing internet service packages by working with internet service providers.	# of internet service providers offering child safety features in their existing packages	Dhiraagu Parental Control Service	All internet service providers offer child safety features in their existing packages	●	●	●	●	●	CAM	ISPs
9.1.7 Strengthen the proactive marketing of child safety features in internet service packages.	% of households with children under the age of 18 utilizing child safety internet service features	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	50% of households with children utilizing child safety internet features		●	●	●	●	CAM	ISPs, MSFD

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 10: By 2027, children are protected from online violence through increased capacity and awareness.

Outcome indicator 10.a: % of social service providers trained on online violence.

Outcome indicator 10.b: % of children trained on safe internet usage.

Output 10.1: Increased capacity and awareness of professionals working with children and parents on latest trends in VAC online.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
10.1.1 Develop awareness and training standards and guidelines to inform and train teachers, and professionals working with children on safe internet use.	Awareness and training standards developed to train teachers and professionals on safe use of internet	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	Awareness and training standards to train teachers and professionals on safe use of internet developed and shared with relevant institutions			●			MoE	MPS, MSFD
10.1.2 Conduct continuous annual trainings for professionals working with children to ensure they have up-to-date information about the social environments of children (the digital space), as well as about the risks of sexual harassment, bullying, solicitation, sexual exploitation and behaviours that could lead to sexual violence.	% of trained professionals on latest trends of VAC and specifically VAC in digital spaces per year	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	40% of the professionals working with children have undergone training on latest trends of VAC and VAC in digital spaces in the last two years			●	●		MSFD	MoE, MoSFR, MoYEIA, MPS

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 10.2: Increased capacity of children on being safe online.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
10.2.1 Conduct training programmes for children to build their online safety skills, and how to act safely on virtual spaces through the life skills programmes.	% of children trained on online safety	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	80% of children have completed training program on online safety		●	●	●	●	MPS	MoE, MSFD

Output 10.3: Increased capacity and awareness of parents

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
10.3.1 Conduct training programmes collaboratively with other agencies for parents to build their awareness regarding online safety, risks, and how to keep children safe online (to be linked to parenting programme [output 2.1]).	% of parents trained on online safety	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	60% of parents have completed training program on online safety					●	MoE	MPS, MSFD, Media agencies

3.5 Strategic Area V – Child Protection System and Services: Better Response is prevention and protection

Overall Objective: *Multi-stakeholder child protection structures and systems are functioning at national, regional, and island levels effectively and efficiently.*



By 2028, every child will be protected through a strengthened and expanded integrated child protection system.



By 2028, a resilient child protection system that prevents VAC during disasters and shocks will be established through increased investment and resource development in the social sector.



By 2025, children, adolescents, and families will have increased access to child protection services through the involvement and strengthening role of civil society in the social sector.

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

Outcome 11: By 2028, every child will be protected through a strengthened and expanded integrated child protection system.

Outcome indicator 11.a: # of legislative frameworks reviewed, updated and enacted.

Outcome indicator 11.b: % improved in addressing VAC in various related sectors such as the justice system and health care.

Output 11.1: Strengthened legislative framework that addresses the various forms of VAC in the country in an effective and efficient manner.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.1.1 Collate and implement the recommendations from the completed legislative reviews conducted by agencies that cover child protection (as below) to ensure that all terminologies and concepts such as “children in need”, “child protection”, “threshold criteria”, and “child rights violation” aligns in all: 1) Child Rights Protection Act 2) Domestic Violence Prevention Act 3) Social Protection Act 4) Education Act 5) Anti-terrorism Act 6) Healthcare Professional Act 7) Special Provisions Act to Deal with Child Sex Abuse Offenders 8) Penal Code 9) Juvenile Justice Act 10) Drug Act 11) Disabilities Act 12) Decentralization Act	# of reviewed legislations	McCabe (2023) ⁶	Report of the review publicly available		●				AGO	MSFD, MoE, MoHST, MoH, PGO, DJJ, NDA, LGA, MoTCA

⁶ McCabe, C. (2023). Human Rights & Gender Review of Gender-Based Violence Related Laws in the Maldives. In <https://maldives.un.org/>. UNFPA. <https://maldives.un.org/en/259605-human-rights-gender-review-gender-based-violence-related-laws-maldives>

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

13) Transport act 14) Anti-torture Act 15) HRCM act 16) Employment Act 17) Sport Act 18) Association Act 19) Civil Service Act									
11.1.2 Fast track amendments to the legislative framework to address gaps and misalignments in order to address challenges faced in the implementation of the regulations.	# of amended legislations to ensure all concepts are aligned	None	All legislations with misalignments are amended and presented to parliament	●				AGO	
11.1.3 Harmonization of legislative frameworks with Islamic principles.	# of amended legislations to ensure harmonization with Islamic principles	None	All relevant legislations harmonised with Islamic principles	●				AGO	
11.1.4 Introduce and implement Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and lists to the Employment Act, to ensure DBS certificates for safer recruitment, preventing those who pose a threat to the safety of children from working in jobs that come into contact with children.	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and lists added to the Employment Act and implemented	Employment Act	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and lists added to the Employment Act and implemented	●				AGO	MPS, MoE
11.1.5 Amend the Regulation on Alternative Care Service Standards 2020/R-69 to introduce clear mechanisms for reporting of any form of VAC (to be linked to Government's Strategic Action Plan for detailed actions relating to alternative care).	Regulation on Alternative Care Service Standards amended	Regulation on Alternative Care Service Standards 2020/R-69	Regulation on Alternative Care Service Standards amended				●	AGO	MSFD

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.1.6 Amend and Introduce Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for Child and Family Protection Services (CFPS) and the state care institutions under the Child Rights Protection Act 2019.	Amend and introduce child safeguarding and child protection policy	Child Rights Protection Act 2019 and Regulation on Alternative Care Service Standards 2020/R-69	Implementation of amended child safeguarding and child protection policy for CFPS and all state care institutions					●	AGO	
11.1.7 Introduce independent inspections every 2 years of state care institutions for children under the regulation.	# of State care institutions inspected	10 state care institutions inspected	Independent inspections conducted in all state care institutions		●	●	●	●	OCO	
11.1.8 Fast-track the enactment of the Social Work legislation wherein clinical supervision and CPD is mandated to retain their license.	Social work legislation presented to the parliament and enacted	None	Social work legislation enacted		●				AGO	
11.1.9 Draft Information Sharing Regulation and protocols for information sharing in the prevention and protection of VAC.	Information Sharing Regulation and protocols drafted	None	Regulation and protocols endorsed by relevant stakeholders			●			MSFD	AGO, MPS, DJJ, FPA, MoE, MoH

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 11.2: Increased accountability, data sharing, coordination and collaboration among child protection service providers to ensure a holistic wraparound service is provided.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.2.1 Pilot for the establishment of a Multi-Disciplinary Centre to work together in a child friendly office, under one roof, where law enforcement, DJJ, Child and Family Protection Service, Prosecutors, medical and mental health workers cooperate and assess together.	Pilot Multi-Disciplinary Centres is established	None	Pilot Multi-Disciplinary Centres is established and functioning successfully				●		MPS	MSFD, DJJ, AGO, MoH
11.2.2 Adoption of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of Multisectoral Conferences for case management by all involved institutions with a mandatory 6-month review and 12-month review for necessary amendments to improve response adjustments.	Adoption of Multisectoral Conference SOP	Draft SOP on Multisectoral Conferences for case management	SOP on multi-sectoral conferencing adopted and reviewed biannually		●				MSFD	MPS, DJJ, AGO, FPA, MoE, MoH
11.2.3 Develop a working together training manual and deliver joint training for child protection professionals every 2 years.	Working together training manual developed # of joint trainings held	None	Working together training manual developed, and 3 joint trainings held			●	●	●	MSFD	
11.2.4 Expand the functions of comprehensive child protection database to make it as a comprehensive system for data collection, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and referral on the nature and extent of VAC cases.	% Increase in the functions of child protection database	MCPD Database	All necessary functions are incorporated into the child protection database			●			MSFD	

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.2.5 Facilitate the utilization and accessibility of child protection database across all sectors (health, education, justice, police, social services, etc.) at necessary varying levels for efficient data sharing and reduction of workload.	# of institutions with access and using child protection database	MCPD accessible to selected institutions	All relevant institutions across all sectors have access to and utilize necessary child protection database functions				●		MSFD	DJJ
11.2.6 Develop a case management auditing framework for FCSCs and state care institutions.	Case management auditing framework developed	None	Case management auditing framework established and endorsed by relevant stakeholders		●				AGO	SFD
11.2.7 Conduct an assessment on the financial cost of inaction including GDP in relation to VAC.	Financial cost assessment completed	None	Findings of the study disseminated to the relevant sector stakeholders		●				MSFD	MoF

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 11.3: Strengthened capacity of health sector to respond to VAC with a trauma-informed approach										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.3.1 Review, strengthen and establish child protection and safeguarding policy in all public and private healthcare facilities.	# of healthcare facilities implementing child protection and safeguarding policy	None	All healthcare facilities (public and private) implementing child protection and safeguarding policy		●	●	●		MSFD	MoH, HSPs
11.3.2 Monitor implementation of child protection policies in all public and private healthcare facilities.	% of healthcare facilities monitored	None	30% of healthcare facilities monitored				●	●	MoH	HSPs
11.3.3 Assign and conduct trainings for a child protection lead in all healthcare facilities ensuring they are up to date on relevant laws and any legislative changes.	% of healthcare facilities with trained child protection lead	Only in FPU at IGMH	60% of healthcare facilities have a trained child protection lead			●	●	●	MSFD	HSPs, MoH
11.3.4 Conduct ongoing pre-service and in-service training for all healthcare professionals on VAC and child protection.	% of healthcare professionals receiving training on VAC and child protection	None	60% of healthcare professionals have undergone training on VAC and child protection			●	●	●	MSFD	HSPs, MoH
11.3.5 Formulate teams of professionals for addiction therapeutic services in the prevention of VAC composing of addiction specialist psychiatrists, nurses, social workers and community workers.	# of professional teams formulated for addiction therapeutic services in the prevention of VAC	Currently only established in NDA centres	Teams of professionals for addiction therapeutic services in the prevention of VAC established in Addu, Gdh.Thinadhu, Ga.Viligili, and Gn.Fuvahmulah			●	●	●	NDA	MoHST, NCMH, MoH

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children
 2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
11.3.6 Establish and strengthen a child and adolescent focused mental health service to work with NGOs and private mental health care providers (Article 38 of the CRC).	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) established	None	CAMHS established				●	●	MoH	NCMH

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 12: By 2028, a resilient child protection system that prevents VAC during disasters and shocks will be established through increased investment and resource development in the Child Protection System.

Outcome indicator 12.a: # of trained child protection professionals in addressing all forms of VAC at various levels of intervention.

Output 12.1: Increased capacity of justice system (police, DJJ, PGO and the courts) to implement child-friendly procedures in cases involving children.											
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies		
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency	
12.1.1 Establish a court assessment service, staffed with statutory trained social workers for custody and high-conflict divorce cases.	Court assessment service established regionally	None	Statutory trained social workers staffed under court assessment service in 5 regions						●	MSFD	DJA, Family Court, Magistrate Courts
12.1.2 Establish regulation to enable the court to intervene in custody cases in order to clear child protection work of CFPS, unless there is a significant risk of harm or violence.	Regulation formulated	None	Regulation enacted		●					MSFD	DJA
12.1.3 Develop advanced child protection training modules for designated law enforcement officers including police, prosecutors, magistrates and judges, with responsibility for child protection.	Advanced child protection training modules developed	Fragmented training efforts currently undertaken	Advanced child protection training modules developed and endorsed by relevant stakeholders			●				MSFD	Judicial Academy, FPA, MNU
12.1.4 Deliver mandatory advanced child safeguarding and child protection training modules as part of pre-service and in-service training for law enforcement officers involved in child protection.	% of law enforcement officers trained through advanced child protection training modules	Fragmented training efforts currently undertaken	50% of law enforcement officers in each institution, in each island is trained through advanced child protection training modules				●	●		MSFD	Judicial Academy, MPS

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
12.2.5 Establish contextually appropriate mandatory managerial and clinical supervisory mechanism for all professionals working in the child protection system for quality assurance of social work practice, police investigations, and court processes to prevent burnout and vicarious trauma among child protection professionals.	Mandatory managerial and clinical supervision established	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	Mandatory managerial and clinical supervision established and endorsed			●			MSFD	PGO, MPS, OCO
12.2.6 Implement contextually appropriate mandatory managerial and clinical supervisory mechanism for all professionals working in the child protection system	% of professionals working in the child protection system that has undergone mandatory managerial and clinical supervision	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	50% of professionals working in the child protection system that has undergone mandatory managerial and clinical supervision			●	●	●	MSFD, MoHST	MoH, NDA, DJJ, MPS, HSPs

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 12.2: Increased capacity development of social sector workforce to engage in primary, secondary and tertiary interventions in a non-violent and damage prevention manner.

Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
12.2.1 Conduct pre-service and in-service trainings to increase and strengthen statutory social workers on child safeguarding and child protection.	# of trained statutory social workers	None	All statutory social workers undergone training	●	●	●	●	●	CFPS	MSFD, MNU, FCSCs
12.2.2 Introduce fast-track social work training program to build social workforce.	Fast-track social work training established	None	Fast-track social work training established		●				MoHELSD	MNU
12.2.3 Introduce Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to strengthen the recruitment and licensing mechanism for social workers.	# of institutions wherein CPD is introduced	None	All social sector institutions have CPD introduced		●	●			MSFD	MNU
12.2.4 Introduce and implement innovative programs to attract school leavers to choose social science careers.	# of annual programs and campaign implemented to attract school leavers into social science careers	Fragmented efforts currently undertaken	1 annual programs and campaign implemented to attract school leavers into social science careers		●	●	●	●	MoHELSD	MNU and other HEPs, MoYEIA

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Output 12.3: Increased investment in the child protection system to ensure effective functioning and preparedness for any financial shock, natural disaster and pandemic.										
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline					Implementing Agencies	
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Lead Agency	Supporting Agency
12.3.1 Introduce mandatory provisions of funds to fully implement the legislations relating to VAC.	Mandatory funding presented to the parliament for approval	None	Mandatory funding approved by the parliament and implemented	●	●	●	●	●	MoF	MSFD, DJJ, MoH, MoE
12.3.2 Establish emergency preparedness and response plans with subsequent SOPs at national, atoll and island level for VAC to mitigate any impact of financial shock, natural disasters and pandemics.	Emergency preparedness and response plan with subsequent SOPs for VAC established	None	Emergency preparedness and response plan for VAC is endorsed by all stakeholders	●	●				MNDF	NDMA, MRC, MPS
12.3.3 Conduct trainings for policymakers and child protection system professionals on established emergency preparedness and response plans, focusing on child protection provisions.	# of policymakers and child protection professionals undergone training on established VAC emergency preparedness and response	None	All policymakers and child protection professionals are trained on established VAC emergency preparedness and response		●	●	●	●	MNDF	NDMA, MRC

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children

2024-2028

Outcome 13: By 2025, children, adolescents, and families will have increased access to child protection services through the involvement and strengthening role of civil society in the social sector.

Outcome indicator 13.a: # of civil society organizations involved in providing services for children and families involved in VAC cases.

Output 13.1: Strengthened civil society sector for increased service provision for children and families.								
Key Activities	Indicators	Indicator Framework		Timeline				
		Baseline 2024	Target 2028	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
13.1.1 Support and collaborate with CSOs to formulate a clear resource mobilization strategy for support services such as respite care for CWDs.	Resource mobilization strategy established with CSOs	None	Resource mobilization strategy endorsed and established by CSOs working in the sector	●				
13.1.2 Review current grant process for CSOs, ensuring accessibility of grants for social service organization and those responding to VAC.	Grant process reviewed	None	Review findings and recommendations disseminated to relevant stakeholders	●				
13.1.3 Establish child safeguarding and child protection policies in all CSOs with a child safeguarding lead appointed in each CSO.	# of CSOs with established child protection and safeguarding policy and child protection lead	Established in 2 CSOs (ARC and SHE)	All CSOs have an established child protection and safeguarding policy and lead		●	●		
13.1.4 Monitor the implementation of child safeguarding and child protection policies in all CSOs.	# of CSOs incorporating child protection measures in their programmes and activities	None	All CSOs incorporate child protection measures in their programmes and activities per year		●	●	●	●
							MSFD	OCO, MoHELSD, NGO, council, MoYEIA, UNICEF

4 Glossary

At risk (children/families)	A child at risk is defined in Section 130 (4) of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 as a child who: “1. is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm; 2. Has need for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).” It is also important to note that “at risk” means that actual abuse or neglect may not be present but early interventions maybe needed to prevent actual harm, abuse or neglect.
Barred List	The DBS holds a list of people who are barred from engaging in regulated activity for the purpose of protecting and preventing harm to children and those who are vulnerable. The BDS services decides whether a person should be added to or removed from the barred list.
Businesses	Businesses that come in contact with children. These would also include private businesses that host children's events such as family days, children's day etc.
Child Exploitation	Child exploitation occurs when and individual or a group takes advantage of the imbalance of power to control, manipulate, deceive, coerce a child or young person under the age of 18 to undertake an activity which constitutes a criminal offence. Criminal exploitation is a modern form of slavery that forces child victims to be controlled by highly organised criminals in activities such as drug peddling and dealing, thieving, prostitution, pornography, drug cultivation and production, and religiously motivated violence. Exploitation can take place online, offline or can involve both.
Children in Conflict with the Law	Anyone under 18 who comes into contact with the justice system as a result of being suspected or accused of committing an offence
Children on the move	These are children who might have migrated from one atoll to another, island to another island making them temporary mobile, or they might be unaccompanied, smuggled, trafficked, or have become separated from their parents for various reasons.
Children with Disabilities	Any child with a long-term physical, mental or depressive condition will be among those with disabilities who are unable to participate fully in the rest of the community.

Child-safe community	Child-safe community means that children are protected from exploitation, violence and abuse in the city, atoll or island they live, so they have been healthy and grow up to reach their full potential. It is also where they can have access to quality, inclusive and participatory education and other skill development opportunities.
Club	Organizations, usually with restricted membership, formed or registered in accordance with the provisions of the Association Act for the purpose of engaging in and conducting activities in a particular specialized field such as social work, entertainment, etc.,
Coach	An individual responsible for teaching people to improve at a sport, skill or school subject.
Crisis intervention	Crisis intervention is a short-term management technique designed to reduce potential permanent damage to an individual affected by a crisis. A crisis is defined as an overwhelming event, which can include divorce, violence, the passing of a loved one, or the discovery of a serious illness.
Disclosure and Barring Service	The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) assists agencies in making safer recruiting decisions and preventing individuals that may cause harm to those who they are working with including children and those that are vulnerable, in order to safeguard them.
Health home visits	“The process by which a professional or paraprofessional provides help to a family in their own home. This help focuses on social, emotional, cognitive, educational, and/or health needs & often takes place over an extended period of time”
Home services	Refers to the assistance offered by a variety of agencies and/or individuals to those in need in order to secure their well-being and avoid crisis or family disintegration. These include support for those with a mental health problem, learning or physical disability support with daily living duties such as housework, running errands, budgeting assistance, occupational therapy, etc.
In crisis (children/families)	Families "in crisis" can be characterized as a situation in which connections are stretched to the point where they may eventually break apart the family unit. When one or more of these factors are present, they are regarded to be in crisis. 1) being in a stressful position; 2) having

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children 2024-2028

	trouble coping; 3) consistently failing to accomplish fundamental tasks; and 4) without obvious sources of help.
Permanency planning	Permanency planning is the process of assessing and preparing a child for long term care when in out-of-home placements such as kinship, foster care or institutions. A care plan must centre on what is in the child's best interests, and therefore requires an ongoing assessment of the child and her needs. A guardian may be appointed as a further protection of a child's rights. - Better Care Network
Primary Intervention	Primary Interventions are approaches that aim to prevent a problem before it occurs.
Public Officials	A public official is anyone in a position of official authority that is conferred by a state, i.e. someone who holds a legislative, administrative, or judicial position of any kind, whether appointed or elected.
Secondary Intervention	Secondary Interventions are approaches that focus on the more immediate responses to a problem that has already occurred
Statutory social workers	Registered social workers work for statutory bodies such as local authorities, NHS Trusts or officially-recognised organisations.
Tertiary Intervention	Tertiary Interventions are approaches that focus on long-term care to a problem, such as rehabilitation and reintegration etc.
Trauma informed Approach	A programme, organization, or system that is trauma-informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization. The key principles in trauma informed practice are: safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, empowerment culture, religion and gender.
Violence against Children	Violence against children includes both the commission and or omission of abusive actions that are physical, emotional, neglect, or sexual in nature. Violence against newborns and early children is done by parents, trusted people, and authoritative figures in their life, whereas violence against older children may be perpetrated by classmates, romantic partners, or strangers. These can occur in the child's family, school,

neighbourhood, or online. Acts of violence include child maltreatment and abuse, bullying, physical fighting among peers, sexual violence, dating violence, assaults with peers, gang violence; and being groomed into criminal activities, sexual exploitation, and extremism.

5 Bibliography

- Banks, L. M., Hameed, S., Usman, S. K., Davey, C., & Kuper, H. (2023). The Impact of the Disability Allowance on Financial Well-Being in the Maldives: Quasi-experimental study. *The European Journal of Development Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41287-023-00607-8>
- Baderin, M, (2003), International Human Rights and Islamic Law, Oxford University Press
- Children Act 1989*. (1989). <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/>.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>
- Convention on the Rights of the Child*. (1989, November 20). <https://www.ohchr.org/>.
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- Drucza, K., & Tran, A. (2021). Evaluation of the Single Parent and Foster Care Social Protection Schemes in the Maldives. In <https://www.unicef.org/>. UNICEF Regional Office for the Maldives. <https://www.unicef.org/maldives/reports/evaluation-single-parent-and-foster-care-social-protection-schemes-maldives>
- Government of Maldives. (2019). *Child Rights Protection Act (Act No.: 19/2019)*. <https://wwwex.ilo.org/dyn/natlex2/natlex2/files/download/110452/MDV110452%20Dhv.pdf>
- Guerrero, G., & Rojas, V. (2016). Understanding Children's Experiences of Violence in Peru: Evidence from Young Lives. *RePEc: Research Papers in Economics*. <https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:ucf:inwopa:inwopa865>
- Krug, E. G., Dahlberg, L. L., Mercy, J. A., Zwi, A. B., & Lozano, R. (Eds.). (2002). World Report on Violence and Health. In <https://www.who.int/> (ISBN: 92 4 154561 5). World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/9241545615>
- Kusmaul, N., Wolf, M., Sahoo, S., Green, S. A., & Nochajski, T. H. (2018). Client experiences of Trauma-Informed care in social service agencies. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 45(4), 589–599. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2018.1481178>

- Maldives Police Service. (2024). CRIME STATISTICS Q4, 2023: Oct 1 - Dec 31. In <https://www.police.gov.mv/>. Maldives Police Service, Bureau of Crime Statistics. https://www.police.gov.mv/uploads/Crime_Stats_Q4_2023_04dd158579.pdf
- McCabe, C. (2023). Human Rights & Gender Review of Gender-Based Violence Related Laws in the Maldives. In <https://maldives.un.org/>. UNFPA. <https://maldives.un.org/en/259605-human-rights-gender-review-gender-based-violence-related-laws-maldives>
- Ministry of Education & UNICEF Maldives. (2015). Assessment of the situation of students who migrate to Male' for education and strategies to address vulnerabilities : abridged report. <http://saruna.mnu.edu.mv/jspui/bitstream/123456789/5518/1/Abridged%20Report%203a%20Children%20who%20migrate%20to%20Male%e2%80%99%20for%20Education>
- Ministry of Social and Family Development. (2024, January 28). *Cases Recorded and Attended by Ministry - December 2023*. <https://gender.gov.mv/>. <https://shorturl.at/CDT89>
- Theory of Change Community. (2023, July 19). *What is Theory of Change? - Theory of Change Community*. <https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/>
- UNDRR. (n.d.). *Disaster risk*. <https://www.preventionweb.net/>. <https://www.preventionweb.net/understanding-disaster-risk/component-risk/disaster-risk>
- UNICEF. (2017, October). *Preventing and Responding to Violence against Children and Adolescents: Theory of Change*. <https://www.unicef.org/documents/preventing-and-responding-violence-against-children-and-adolescents-theory-change>
- Violence against children*. (n.d.). UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/protection/violence-against-children#:~:text=Violence%20against%20children%20takes%20many,is%20socially%20accepted%20and%20common>
- Waheeda, F. (2015). Legislating for cybercrimes in the Maldives: challenges and prospects. *IJUM Law Journal*, 23. <https://doi.org/10.31436/ijumlj.v23i3.183>

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children **2024-2028**

World Health Organization. (2022, November 29). *Violence against children*.
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-children>

World Health Organization: WHO. (2019, October 10). *Violence against children*.
https://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-children#tab=tab_1

National Action Plan on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children
2024 - 2028



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AND
FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**
REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES



unicef 
for every child