

## 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Emergency Readiness/ Response

Country: MALDIVES

Date: 8 / 12 / 2020

### Cases reporting

- **Over 260,000 samples tested to date.** Daily testing rates have been maintained during the last week at up to 2000 samples. Sample positivity rate has been maintained at about 1-2%.
- **202 new cases were reported in the last 7 days. 13,213 confirmed cases and 47 deaths have been reported thus far. 12,438 (94.13%) of them have recovered.**
- **722 cases are currently active in the country. 184 people** are in **isolation** facilities across Maldives with more than **538** persons under home isolation
- **A total of 70 persons are hospitalized, all admitted in facilities in the greater Male' region, with moderate disease with no cases in ICU or ventilator support.**
- 99.85% of cases belong to known and existing clusters – more Maldivians (62.97%) among the active cases even in and outside of Greater Male' region.

### Developments/ activities carried out by Member State

- The National Public Health Emergency that was declared on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020 has been extended till 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2021.
- From 4<sup>th</sup> December onwards the following policy decisions have been made
  - For travelers (except tourists), quarantine period has been reduced from 14 days to 10 days and quarantine release will be only after producing a negative PCR test. This new rule does not apply to those who have travelled before 4<sup>th</sup> December
  - As a precautionary measure, wearing masks, physical distancing of at least 3 meters is mandatory in all inhabited islands and airport islands with the new reduced quarantine period
  - COVID-19 positive patients and direct contacts of positive patients will have to quarantine for 14 days
  - Officials visiting other islands for official and delivery of other essential services as per approval from HPA has to produce PCR negative test result of <72 hours
- A seroprevalence survey carried out by the Maldives National University (MNU) showed that 13.4 percent of the total population of capital Male' have been infected with COVID-19. The research concluded that 10 percent of the individuals are unaware that they ever contracted the virus.
- The government has announced that Male' Region guesthouses/hotels will be open from 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020 for tourists, which was limited to only transit passengers since border reopening.
- HECC will come up with proper guidance and clear mechanisms on isolation and quarantining considering a possible surge that could happen due to influx of tourists during peak season. Discussions are underway to reopen previously established Farukolhufushi Isolation facility
- The 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the National Steering Committee for COVID19 vaccine introduction was held on 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2020. Subgroups meetings as part of the Vaccine Introduction Readiness and meetings are being held daily
- Tourist Arrivals have increased by 66% in November 2020 with 35,759 tourists in the month, making a total of 83,000 tourist arrivals since the border reopened. The top 10 arrivals countries are; Russia, India, United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Brazil, Switzerland, Czech Republic

- As of 26 November 2020, total spending towards COVID-19 health and social efforts stood at **MVR 1,329.4 million**; a 0.7% increase from the week before. In this review period 44.6% of total health and social spending was committed-spending.
- In terms of week-on-week spending, MoH registered the highest spending compared to its peers at **MVR 8.3 million**. The majority of their spending was on their Operational Services and on Supplies and Requisites for Service Provision. Over the review period, other agencies only reported small incremental changes in their spending
- The Maldives' government will continue to issue income support allowance to those whose livelihoods were affected due to COVID-19, until the end of the year. The government has been issuing an income support allowance of MVR 5,000 per month under its Economic Relief Package for those whose employment was affected due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, over MVR 143.8 million has been issued as income support to 11,814 individuals until now.
- The Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation Aishath Nahula, on Monday, declared that efforts ahead would be focused on negating the damage caused to the aviation industry due to the ongoing global COVID19 pandemic
- <https://www.finance.gov.mv/public/attachments/mD6JOyvqzPGX9u78jP94mqPSzBfQ2RUmeQgGhxf6.pdf>

#### WCO activities

- Continuing support, technical assistance and high-level advocacy for COVID-19 response with HECC.
- Continuing facilitating support for COVID-19 vaccine introduction
- WHO facilitated the submission of National Vaccine Request to COVAX facility on 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2020
- Continuing support in strengthening Essential Health Services

#### WHO support provided to Member State

- WCO facilitated meeting with the National COVID-19 vaccine Steering Committee and COVAX facility on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020. This was to facilitate any queries/questions the country might have with the assigned country focal point from the COVAX facility for the Maldives
- Facilitated country participation on High-Level Leadership Meeting on World AIDS Day, 1 December 2020
- Supporting preparedness for COVID-19 vaccine deployment and expanding cold chain system in preparation for COVID19 vaccine introduction