

2010/2011

# Civil Service Commission - UNDP

## TNA Final Report

MCSC-UNDP TNA/CSTI Project SSA/34/2010

*This TNA report summarizes the processes and results of the 1<sup>st</sup> Phase of the TNA/CSTI assignment including data collection, data analysis, findings and recommendations.*

[The report is prepared in accordance with the requirements of Phase I, Milestone 4 of UNDP's SSA Schedule for this assignment.]



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No.	Format	Title of Annex Document	Comments
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7	Excel Spreadsheet	TNA Issues – Summary – Coded Analysis	Used in Interviews
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## Executive Summary

### 1. General Approach

Our approach to this TNA assignment was based on a holistic examination of the relevant factors affecting organizational performance and in so doing, to highlight the discrepancies and gaps requiring results-focused solutions, including a systematic training strategy.

It was assumed – and the TNA literature confirms – that not every performance issue or identified need for performance improvement indicates a requirement for training. As mentioned in the TNA Training Workshops conducted as part of this assignment, training is only one such option – and oftentimes it is neither the correct nor the sole solution to a specific workplace performance problem.

Within the constraints and delimitations of this first phase of the assignment, the focus was therefore on TNA at the organizational, rather than at the occupational or individual levels. These latter are considerably more time-intensive and can be accomplished subsequently by local internal consultants as part of the logical extension of this project at the more detailed occupational and individual levels. Indeed, the management tool developed as part of the TNA will facilitate the diagnosis of individual training needs and will form the basis of workshops for the TNA Team in April 2011.

### 2. Data Collection & Analysis

In summary, the data were collected using four complementary techniques: questionnaire, interviews with individual senior staff, focus group discussions with representatives of civil service ministries in Male and in the Atolls, as well as a ranking exercise in which departments prioritized essential short term and long term training requirements. To enrich and make the data collection process more accurate and reliable, the interview and focus group sessions were audio-taped for later analysis and cross-referencing with the data from the questionnaires and focus groups.

In terms of collation and analysis, the data were recorded in four different formats:

1. The Training-related *Contextual Issues & Recommendations* (Annex 3)
2. The Excel Spreadsheet - *TNA Issues - Summary-Coded Analysis* (Annex 7)
3. *Training Related Performance Issues* (Annex 5)
4. *Short Term Training Priorities* (Annex 6)

In addition to the main tasks listed in the ToR, at the request of the CSC Deputy Chairman, a management tool for diagnosing individual-level TNA was also developed for use in conjunction with the current performance appraisal form. This management tool consists of:

1. Two schedules entitled *Job Performance Criteria* (staff and supervisors);
2. A list of training course options;
3. A form summarizing performance feedback and individual training plans.

This tool will have the benefit of being both easy to use and sufficiently diagnostic to satisfy the requirement for an assessment of training needs at the individual staff level. In this respect it improves the validity of the performance appraisal form and provides both supervisor and staff member with specific categories of job skill and questions focused on training need as well as career development. This means that the new management tool increases the value and utility of the performance appraisal process, especially in that Section 8 now becomes a means of focusing in on individual needs and in so doing assists each and every staff member to take control of individual training and development needs.

### **3. Data Collection Protocols**

The data collection, analysis and synthesis phases of this TNA assignment employed a primarily qualitative research methodology. This methodology included an interview-based approach using a questionnaire instrument comprising key questions focused on macro and micro performance issues related to needs identification. There were seven separate questionnaires used, one each for the main personnel groups in the CS.

Existing data from performance appraisals, critical incidents and prior training and development activities were also analyzed for relevant baseline data, using the content analysis methodology. Due, however, to the current limited experience of using performance appraisal in the civil service this data was of limited use.

Each consultation session began with a nominal group exercise in which participants completed their respective questionnaire and this was followed by an open-discussion focus group facilitated by the consultant. The next step was a ranking exercise in which participants from each Ministry prioritized recently developed lists of short and long term training requests.

A representative sample of civil service officers from Male and the Atolls, as far as possible including all staffing levels, was selected for the consultation sessions. These were conducted with representatives of all ministries and in Mafushi, Hithadoo, Maradoo, Feydoo, Hulhudoo, Meedoo, Kulhudufushi and Ghn. Fuvamulaku.

### **4. Data Analysis**

The Data Summarization and Analysis phases were based on a content analysis methodology commonly used in the social sciences for the collation and analysis of qualitative data. A further step in the analysis methodology involved cross-referencing the prioritized lists of 'required training' from each Ministry with the data from the interview and focus group exercises.

These content analyses and comparative cross-referencing exercises revealed patterns, trends and expert opinions, which in turn contributed to the TNA draft findings. In this manner, we derived findings and recommendations as valid and reliable as possible within the time and resource constraints of this assignment.

## **5. Findings and Recommendations**

Findings are summarized in the Annexes and discussed in the relevant sections of this TNA report, beginning with the training-related contextual issues (Annexes 3 and 4). Data analysis (Annex 5) is accompanied by short-term training priorities (Annex 6) and related performance factors.

## **6. Training Plan**

Based on consultations with the CSC Commissioners, a training plan was devised for implementation with immediate effect. The highest priority courses listed in Annex 5 were recommended for development and the CSC has called for expressions of interest from local providers. The training plan includes short-term, in-house courses in leadership; administrative skills; secretarial skills; budget & finance; communication skills, customer service, and telephone skills.

In addition, based on Recommendation 2.1, an Entrance Examination is being developed as a first step in raising the professional profile of the MCS as a career service and in order to provide a pool of suitably-prepared candidates for subsequent appointment and preparation for the induction and orientation stages, for which courses have also been recommended. The training plan following this initial period of 12 months is currently being negotiated with the CSC and will be included in the CSTI strategic plan in phase 2 of this assignment.

## **7. Training Evaluation**

The evaluation scheme for these newly-introduced courses focuses not only on trainees' reactions to the instructional elements of the course, but also to even more important factors affecting changes in performance on the job. To this end, the recommended evaluation scheme requires a follow up survey in which course outcomes such as relevance to the job, improved performance and competence in specific skill sets are assessed.

The role of supervisors is crucial to the success of this approach as they help create the conditions under which transfer of training occurs. Since this is the stage at which most of the training effect can be lost or squandered, supervisors at different levels of the CS require preparation for the role of coach, as a pre-requisite to the success of the training plan. In maximizing transfer of training, the CSC will ensure not only a better trained workforce, but also a return on their investment in training and the complementary interventions chosen as part of the strategic action plan for professionalizing the civil service.

## **8. Conclusion**

This TNA assignment has resulted in the identification of broadly agreed priorities for performance improvement interventions, including training. It has provided an opportunity for consultations with all fourteen ministries, with seven island communities, with senior staff of the civil service and the president's office and with political appointees, individually and in small groups. Data validity and reliability have been enhanced through robust collection and analysis techniques and by ensuring close

to 100% return rate on the questionnaires administered as part of the data collection protocol.

Findings and recommendations for priority needs-based training and supporting strategies were discussed with the CSC Commissioners and senior staff, resulting in new course initiatives as well as a practical easy-to-use tool for identifying individual training needs on a continuing basis. To this extent, the expectations of the ToR have been satisfied and indeed exceeded in terms of the scope and comprehensiveness of services provided by the consultant.



### ***Glossary of Terms***

BEST Building an Efficient, Service-oriented and Transparent Administration

CSC Civil Service Commission

CSTI Civil Service Training Institute

MCS Maldives Civil Service

PA Performance Appraisal

ROI Return on Investment

SAP Strategic Action Plan

TNA Training Needs Assessment

TOR Terms of Reference

## Text of Report

### **1. A Note on Public Administration Reforms**

In the past several years the Maldives has undertaken a number of reforms in the field of public administration focused on making the public service more efficient, effective and responsive to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Prior to 2008, the Public Service Division of the President's Office was responsible for the management of public sector appointments, dismissals, training and general administration, including public sector reform and modernization.

During this period, achievements included attempts to introduce strategic planning and a customer-service orientation, as well as launching a new performance appraisal system to replace the failed experiment of the mid-1990s. In early 2011, however, there is scant evidence of the comprehensive adoption of these modern management concepts and the resultant impact on the training agenda – and particularly training needs assessment – is widespread and serious.

### **2. The Spirit & the Challenge of Democratic Governance**

As a result of the election of the Shaheed government in 2008 and the rights and responsibilities made possible in the new constitution in August 2008, there has been a trend towards an increase in citizen empowerment, with a consequently increased focus on civil rights and civil liberties.

These quite significant changes have led to a shift in public expectations of government performance, with a consequent rapid transformation in the environment in which public sector organizations in the Maldives will need to operate. The challenge, then, for public administrators is to respond equally quickly to increased citizen expectations for greater government accountability, transparency and service quality.

The very different situation in which government employees now find themselves – being previously appointed by the Public Service Division of the President's Office but now being under the auspices of an independently appointed Civil Service Commission (CSC) -- adds to the scale of this challenge. In its determination to robustly answer this challenge, it is clear the CSC is committed to inculcating in its civil servants an organizational culture characterized by world's best practice in modern government, especially in terms of program management and training focused on results and customer needs.

This new beginning requires an understanding of the role of a career civil service in relation to the implementation of government policy, as much as it does to the adoption of protocols for working harmoniously with political appointees and



with the public alike – as will be discussed in more detail later in this report. In the most general sense, as Mohandas Gandhi once remarked, “The spirit of democracy ... requires a change of heart”; the difficult part is translating this spirit into rational action which makes a difference and which brings about changes which matter to the people of the Maldives.

All of these reforms require improved managerial skills, as well as appropriate education and training opportunities in various aspects of modern government. In addition, the reforms need to be focused on strengthening the institutional capabilities of relevant civil service institutions such as the CSTI and civil service ministries, departments and individuals – particularly in the client-and-outcome focus of modern public sector management.

These reforms highlight the urgent need for an organisational culture which supports responsiveness, accountability and quality assurance as complementary focal points for the provision of public sector activities in the Maldives. An essential element of such a cultural shift is the support provided to MCS reform goals including needs-based training focused on the continuous improvement of efficient, transparent services to citizens.

### **3. More Specific Challenges**

The current government’s manifesto includes the implementation of a more decentralized governance system to ensure that public services currently available in Male’, are also accessible to people in the uniquely geographically-dispersed regions of the Maldives. In a country comprising seven provinces, 20 atolls, 190 inhabited islands – 29 islands with less than 500 people and 70 islands with less than 1000 people – the need to extend the reach of decentralized government is even more critical than in most countries.

In pursuit of this goal of decentralization, the February 5, 2011 local government elections resulted in the election of about 1200 councillors, adding yet another tier of government to an already well-represented electorate. This growth in the numbers of legislators, however, seemingly contradicts the other avowed government policy of reducing the size of the civil service in order to lower its already excessive impact on the national wage bill and bring it more into line with the size of comparable civil services, relative to population.

The government’s decision to ‘right-size’ the civil service (but not the independent organizations) in order to create a leaner, more efficient and effective administration leads to numerous challenges and potential inequities. Not the least of these is in finding ways of managing redundancies in relation to both civil servants and political appointees, while at the same time effectively corporatizing and privatizing some of the services currently offered by government.

Other specific challenges facing the administration include the lack of existing public sector systems and procedures, especially in regard to service delivery. In addition, there is a need for improved consultation and coordination both within the executive and between it and independent institutions such as the

Civil Service Commission, the Human Rights Commission, the Auditor General's Office and the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Within this context of turbulent and rapid change the BEST Project has been initiated by the CSC as a means of anticipating and indeed resolving the many outstanding issues constraining the civil service from achieving the strategic goals set for it by the government.

#### **4. The BEST Project**

With the creation of the Civil Service Commission in 2007, civil service employees became the responsibility of the Commission under the provisions of the Civil Service Act. The Commission has moved swiftly to capitalize on the strategic directions laid out by the government of President Mohamed Nasheed, especially those mandating democratization, decentralization, the professionalization of the civil service, and responsiveness to the public.

With funding assistance from UNDP, the Commission – through the BEST Project – has already focused on producing a strategic action plan for the CSC and a comprehensive job evaluation scheme for the civil service. The role of this current assignment is to produce a training needs assessment (TNA) and later in Phase 2, a strategic framework for a training institute which will be responsible for HRD programs across the civil service and potentially for the public sector as a whole.

This TNA assignment, as an element of the BEST Project, has produced a general assessment of the training needs and corresponding performance issues evident amongst civil servants, especially those related to a service-orientation focused on measurable results for citizens.

#### **5. The TNA Assignment**

This assignment has arisen from the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Maldives Civil Service in the area of modern public management<sup>1</sup>. This assignment involves the design and delivery of a TNA methodology, as well as the development of strategic directions plan for the CSTI. It also includes the specification of appropriate training for staff of the CSTI, specifically in training needs assessment

As mentioned above, our approach to this TNA assignment is based on a holistic examination of the various factors affecting organizational performance and in order to highlight the discrepancies and gaps requiring results-focused solutions. In doing so it was assumed – and the TNA literature confirms – that not every performance issue or identified need for performance improvement indicates a requirement for training. As mentioned in the TNA Training Workshops

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<sup>1</sup> TOR: *Training Needs Assessment and Developing a Strategic Action Plan for the Maldives Civil Service Training Institute (CSTI)*.

conducted as part of this assignment, training is only one such option – and oftentimes it is neither the correct nor the sole solution to a specific workplace performance problem.

The Terms of Reference (ToR) specify the development of “a holistic perspective on the capacities required of civil servants to exercise their jobs effectively”. This view was reinforced by UNDP in advice that the TNA report should provide general policy directions and not be unduly concerned with details. Having said that, it has been appropriate to propose specific recommendations where needed, as well as developing a tool for individual TNA linked to the performance appraisal form to better facilitate the diagnosis of individual training needs.

Within the constraints of the time available for this first phase of the project the focus has therefore been on TNA at the organizational, rather than at the occupational or individual levels. These latter are considerably more time-intensive and indeed can be accomplished by local internal consultants as part of the continuing TNA process.

### **6. The TNA Plan, Data Collection & Analysis**

In devising the TNA Plan within the parameters and limitations of the ToR, we have been conscious of training both TNA Team members and HR staff in the basics of TNA, in order for them to continue in their respective departments and ministries, the momentum generated by this assignment. The efforts of the TNA Team in mobilizing coworkers to participate in the data collection stage of the TNA is crucial to this process and to this end additional training in how to conduct individual level TNA is scheduled during Phase 2 of this project which is focused on the roles and responsibilities of the CSTI.

As described above, the following *Issues and Recommendations* are designed to illustrate how contextual issues reveal the gaps between ideal and actual organizational performance as well as their importance in highlighting training (and other) needs. These issues and recommendations are to be found in the Annexes in summary form and are discussed in the next main section of this report.

The data on which these contextual training-related issues are based, is the result of structured (questionnaire-based) interviews and focus group discussions with all fourteen ministries, with the CSC Commissioners, with civil servants in three provincial offices in the outlying atolls, as well as with political appointees. Further details on the data collection and analysis process in the section on data collection and analysis are contained in section 8 of this report which discusses the elements of the TNA plan.

In summary, the data were collected using four complementary techniques: questionnaire, interviews with individual senior staff, focus group discussions with representatives of civil service ministries in Male and in the Atolls, as well as a ranking exercise in which departments prioritized essential short term and long term training requirements. To enrich and make the data collection process more accurate and reliable, the interview and focus group sessions were audio-

taped for later analysis and cross-referencing with the data from the questionnaires and focus groups.

In terms of collation and analysis, the data were recorded in four different formats:

1. A Table, *Contextual Issues & Recommendations* - Annex 1
2. An Excel Spreadsheet, *TNA Issues - Summary-Coded Analysis* - Annex 2
3. *Training Related Performance Issues* - Annex 3
4. *Short Term Training Priorities* - in Annex 4

In addition, at the request of the CSC Deputy Chairman, a management tool for diagnosing individual-level TNA was also developed for use in conjunction with the current performance appraisal form. This management tool consists of:

1. Two schedules entitled *Job Performance Criteria* (staff and supervisors);
2. A list of training course options;
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This tool will have the benefit of being both easy to use and sufficiently diagnostic to satisfy the requirement for an assessment of training needs at the individual staff level. In this respect it improves the validity of the performance appraisal form and provides supervisor and staff member with specific categories of job skill and questions regarding training and career development. This means that the new management tool increases the value and utility of the performance appraisal process, especially in that Section 8 now becomes a means of focusing in on individual needs and assisting each and every staff member to take control of their training and development needs.

## 7. Conceptual Framework

7.1 There are several approaches to needs assessment and usually the context of the particular organization and the requirements of the project determine important factors such as the relevant scope and analytical framework, available resources, and study parameters. Such factors include:

- 7.1.1 Time available (limited, in the case of this TNA project: six weeks;
- 7.1.2 Officers who are unable to be involved for various reasons, including timeframe and lack of easy access to the TNA Team or the consultant;
- 7.1.3 Geography (as in the uniquely dispersed nature of the Maldives Civil Service);
- 7.1.4 Political considerations, vested interests and other sensitivities; and,
- 7.1.5 Budget limitations.

7.2 The key to a successful needs assessment project is designing a conceptual framework which includes a scheme for the collection of complete and accurate data from the target audience. There are a number of methods available for collecting data and each has its own benefits and limitations. The

TNA Plan includes a data collection and analytical scheme best suited to the parameters of this project, as explained in the following sections.

### 8. Data Collection Techniques and Tools

8.1 As mentioned in section 6, dependent on the above factors and other logistical issues, we have chosen a methodology involving a number of techniques and tools to obtain the required data. In deciding on the methodology and analytical framework for the current TNA assignment, elements of all of the following techniques or tools were employed, although 'observation' was limited to what could be accommodated during visits to the respective ministries and departments.

8.2 In addition, a restricted Delphi technique is used with the MCSC commissioners as the expert group at the beginning and near the end of the TNA process to single out the key performance issues and potential training solutions. The data collection options considered are listed below:

- 8.2.1 (Observation)
- 8.2.2 Interview
- 8.2.3 Nominal Group
- 8.2.4 (Delphi Technique)
- 8.2.5 Focus Group
- 8.2.6 Telephone & Oral survey/interview
- 8.2.7 Questionnaire
- 8.2.8 Examination of Existing Data

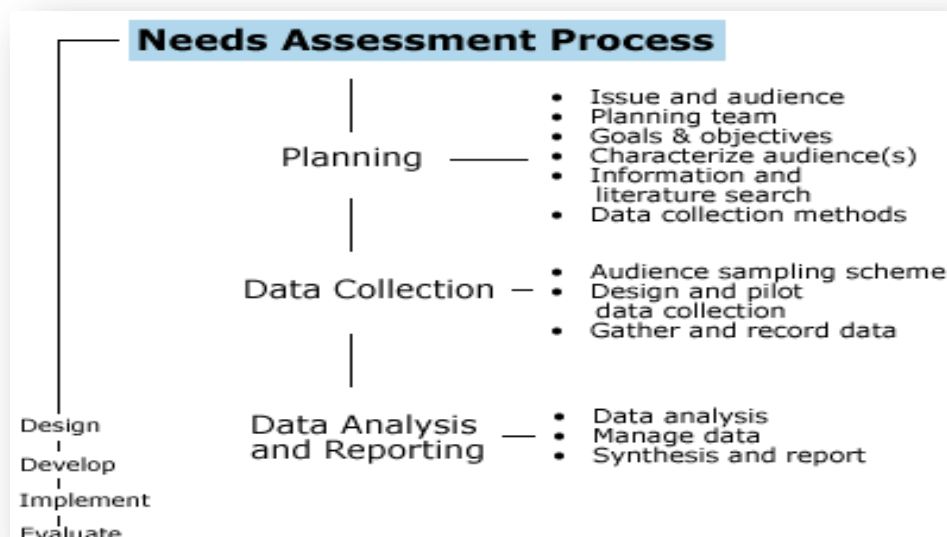
8.3 We have designed a TNA process and analytical framework appropriate to the MCS at this particular stage in its development, taking account of the factors mentioned above. Given the limited time frame for conceptualization and consultation, as well as data collection and analysis, the approach outlined briefly in the Executive Summary and detailed in Sections 5 and 6 of this report is considered the best fit in terms of a methodology designed to produce useful, valid and implementable findings and recommendations in relation to the TOR for this assignment.

8.4 In conceptualizing this TNA process and its analytical framework, as much as in designing the TNA Training Workshops, it is not assumed that training is the logical or only answer to a perceived gap in performance. In this regard, the guiding concept is "*training is not what is ultimately important... performance is*", which reinforces the point that an analysis of the causes of the performance discrepancy is crucial to deciding if a training solution is indicated, or another action related to improved instructions, feedback, standards, job design or resourcing, for example, is the remedy to the identified performance issue or problem.

8.5 The diagram below represents the main events in the TNA process. It details the sub processes of planning, data collection, data analysis and reporting – in addition to the subsequent action steps of designing, developing,

implementing and evaluating the solutions to performance problems identified in the TNA and also form the basis of instructional design and program evaluation.

8.6 To this end, the following diagram is helpful as a snapshot of the processes and sub-processes that constitute the TNA Plan:



## 9. Steps in the TNA Process

9.1 In terms of a step-wise approach, the following discrete events listed on the right hand column of the diagram, comprise the activities undertaken in the TNA process. While there is a linear logic to the steps in the diagram and in the list below, they will also be interactive and cross-referential in practice, especially in the case of the first five steps. Having said that, it is useful, especially for those new to needs assessment and related processes (such as some members of our TNA Team), to have a map of how to proceed, especially when questions arise about appropriate focus on the issues, sample size, the characteristics or context of the target audience -- and similar considerations.

9.2 With these caveats in mind, the twelve steps in the TNA process are as follows:

- 9.2.1 Confirm the Issues and the audience
- 9.2.2 Establish Goals & Objectives
- 9.2.3 Establish the Planning Team
- 9.2.4 Know your target audience
- 9.2.5 Do archival research to find baseline data
- 9.2.6 Select data collection methodology
- 9.2.7 Decide sampling scheme
- 9.2.8 Design and pilot test data collection instrument/s
- 9.2.9 Collect and collate data
- 9.2.10 Analyze data
- 9.2.11 Synthesize and draft findings & recommendations
- 9.2.12 Report & Implement/Design Training Programs



### 10. Consultations

10.1 During the first week of the TNA assignment, consultations were held with members of the MCSC including the Vice Chairman, Directors General and the Secretary General; the UNDP resident representative, the Head of the Governance Branch of UNDP and the UNDP Program Manager in the MCSC. Subsequent meetings were held with individual CSC commissioners, training managers from the ministries, members of the reform and governance department of the President's Office and with members of the public with both interest and expertise in education and training.

10.2 In addition to the above, an initial meeting was held on 21/12/2010 with TNA Team members drawn from the fourteen Ministries. These consultations provided helpful background, resulting in suggested changes to the TOR to include visits to three Atolls during the consultation and data collection phase of the assignment and an extension to the work plan to allow an additional week for completion of the TNA Report. A brief TNA training session was also conducted towards the end of the meeting.

10.3 Ongoing consultations occurred during the period 26/1/2010-12/1/2011 for the purpose of TNA data collection and training in TNA methodology. We selected a representative sample of civil service officers from Male and the Atolls, as far as possible including all staffing levels. Consultation sessions -- including a TNA Training element -- were conducted at Addu, Haa Dhaalu and Kaafu atolls, with telephone interviews, using the relevant questionnaires, with a selection of administrators from a sample of the atolls not visited by the consultant.

10.4 We employed primarily qualitative research methodology in the data collection and analysis phases of this TNA assignment. This included an interview-based approach centered on a questionnaire instrument comprising key questions focused on macro and micro performance issues related to needs identification. Seven different questionnaires were used in nominal and focus group meetings/consultations -- one each for the following MCS groups:

- 10.4.1 Commissioners
- 10.4.2 Permanent Secretaries
- 10.4.3 Directors/Secretaries General
- 10.4.4 Regional Directors & Atoll Coordinators
- 10.4.5 Coordinators, Assistant Directors & key Managers
- 10.4.6 Sample of Officers from each Department (and classification)
- 10.4.7 CSC officers/Potential future CSTI group.

(Copies of the interview questionnaires are included in Annex 15)

10.5 Each consultation session began with a nominal group exercise and this was followed by an open-discussion focus group facilitated by the consultant.

This was followed by a ranking exercise in which participants from each ministry prioritized recently-developed lists of short and long term training requests. These prioritized rankings were indicative of existing felt needs and hence useful in comparing and cross-referencing with the data collected from the consultations employing the nominal and focus group techniques.

10.6 The Data Analysis phase was based on content analysis methodology commonly used in the social sciences for the analysis of qualitative data. This methodology employs coding and summarization techniques to process the responses to the open-ended and directive questions presented in the nominal and focus group interviews.

10.7 The steps in the Content Analysis methodology included:

- 10.7.1 Define the issues/problems/discrepancies to be addressed by the content analysis;
- 10.7.2 Define the population/target audience from which the data is collected;
- 10.7.3 Define the sample to be included;
- 10.7.4 Define the units of analysis (coding units);
- 10.7.5 Code and categorize the data ( using descriptors/code words);
- 10.7.6 Conduct the data analysis;
- 10.7.7 Summarize;
- 10.7.8 Make inferences based on the emerging patterns, themes and factors.

10.8 In addition, data from the telephone interviews with senior officers unavailable for in-person consultation for a variety of reasons, were also be analyzed in the same manner.

10.9 Two further steps in the analysis methodology involved:

- 10.9.1 Cross-referencing the prioritized lists of 'required training' from each ministry/department with the data from the interview and focus group exercises.
- 10.9.2 Analyzing existing data from performance appraisals, client/customer feedback, critical incidents and prior training and development records for relevant data, using the content analysis methodology.

10.10 These content analyses and comparative cross-referencing exercises revealed patterns, trends and expert opinions which in turn formed the basis of TNA draft findings. In this manner, we derived findings and recommendations as valid and reliable as possible within the time and resource constraints of this assignment.



## 11. The TNA Team

11.1 The TNA Team was representative of all fourteen ministries and the CSC. Team members were selected by their respective ministries in cooperation with the TNA local consultant and represented mainly senior and middle-ranking officers from Permanent Secretary level to Officer level. As far as possible, HRM committee members from each ministry, or HR coordinators were included in the team which numbered around 50 from Male' and five from each of the Atolls included in the consultations, namely: Addu, Haa Dhaaalu and Kaafu, a total of 65 TNA Team members.

11.2 Team members worked with colleagues from their respective departments and ministries, as well as from the Atolls, to organize focus group meetings which will be facilitated by the consultant. At these meetings, attendees completed the questionnaire instrument relevant to their staff level, first in a nominal group environment and then in an interactive focus group where open discussion of the respective questions generated additional data for inclusion in their responses. The result of this was a rich database from which to draw inferences following the analysis stage.

## 12. TNA Training

12.1 As mentioned earlier, an initial training session was included in the first consultation meeting with the TNA Team on 21/12/2010, with a full workshop on TNA methodology on 26/12/2010. Additional workshops were scheduled as part of consultations in the Atolls. The materials for this workshop are attached as an appendix and include copies of two PowerPoint presentations, and two documents explaining the TNA process. A workshop booklet designed by the local consultant is also available, if required.

12.2 The rationale for these training sessions was at least three fold:

12.2.1 To introduce the TNA team to the theory and practice of TNA;

12.2.2 To provide team members with both the confidence and the tools to conduct TNA exercises in their own departments and ministries;

12.2.3 To prepare team members to assist with the data collection phase of the current assignment, by surveying staff within their respective ministries and organizing consultation meetings and focus groups for the consultants.

12.3 This Needs Assessment training focused on the following objectives:

12.3.1 Discuss needs assessment and how to conduct a TNA

12.3.2 Identify the steps in planning a needs assessment

12.3.3 Demonstrate how to understand a target audience

12.3.4 Select an appropriate methodology for data collection

12.3.5 Understand how to use questions appropriately

12.3.6 Identify considerations for analyzing and managing data

12.3.7 List the benefits of conducting a needs assessment.

12.4 During the TNA workshop, team members received instruction based on the above objectives. In addition, they had practical experience in completing the questionnaire relevant to their job level and classification. Finally, they previewed how the training priorities ranking exercise would be applied in their ministry or department during the consultations following the focus group exercise.

### **13. Discussion of Issues and Recommendations**

#### **13.1. Political Influences on the Civil Service**

13.1.1 Based on consultations with representative of the ministries, there is a need for a change in attitude – from one of not caring to being engaged productively and harmoniously with each other, to not always wanting to be part of a team which shares the workload and provides the mutual feedback necessary to motivation and performance improvement. This is relevant in the individual work unit, throughout the ministry, and at the political level as well, including interactions between political appointees and the civil service. In a more general sense this aspect of Maldivian political life has been noted by other observers, including the author of the strategic directions document commissioned by the CSC.<sup>2</sup>

13.1.2 Senior civil servants comment that the whole of the public sector/civil service needs to be de-politicized. For this to happen, politicians and civil servants both need to understand that civil servants are there to enact policies, regardless of whether they support particular policies or not. It is the role of civil servants neither to advance nor support political agendas, nor to do the bidding of politically-motivated superiors. On the contrary, independence, transparency and professional ethics require a response characterized by impartiality and responsibility for results in the ways in which they manage programs. To do otherwise is to risk losing the confidence of the public in the competence and accountability of the civil service and to be open to charges of inappropriate behaviour in the discharge of their role as servants of the public, regardless of their political persuasion.

13.1.3 In this situation, then, apart from ministers and their staff improving the quantity and quality of interaction with civil servants, particularly the more senior cadre, there is also the issue of the widespread politicization of the civil service and the lack of a realization that in a modern democracy such as the Maldives aspires to be, the independence of civil servants, their advice, and their ability to implement policy via well designed programs must be preserved. Indeed, one of the cornerstones of such a system is the separation of powers and what that implies for the relationship between legislators, their political advisors and the civil service, not to mention the other arms of government including the judiciary.

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<sup>2</sup> J. Kluyskens, *Civil Service Commission Final Report & Strategy*, February 3, 2010, page 13.

13.1.4 The necessary and desirable goal of working harmoniously together for the good of the country will take time for a number of reasons. Firstly, the concept of a civil service – and a Civil Services Commission – was introduced only a little more than two years ago and it is fair to say that all parties are still clarifying what this means and how the civil service should operate in relation to the legislative arm of government. For many years past, public servants were an extension of the president's office and could rightly be called the government. Since the 2008 elections, the new government has moved to create fourteen ministries responsible for implementing its policies and in doing so, achieving the results promised to the electorate.

13.1.5 In response to this situation, a culture of mutual respect and understanding, in addition to a strengthening of the connection between elected and appointed officials at the policy-making level and those tasked with implementing policies – the civil servants in the respective ministries – are seen as crucial to the resolution of current tension and conflict.

13.1.6 Importantly, in a population as small as the Maldives with its comparatively high proportion of political appointees and civil servants in Male and in the Atolls, the imperative of working cooperatively to solve the country's not inconsiderable problems has never been higher. This is especially the case as it moves from LDC (least developed country) status in 2011 to one where development aid is negotiated on a different basis than previously -- and funding and resources for vital new initiatives are likely to be the result of cooperation and a shared vision of what is needed to ensure the success of government policies and programs.

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**Recommendation 1.1:**

*Prepare a Training Handbook on the roles, responsibilities and relationships between legislators, political appointees and civil servants, based on models such as that of the British civil service.*

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**Recommendation 1.2:**

*Legislators, political appointees and senior civil servants undertake training focused on 'best practice in their respective roles in the context of modern government'.*

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**Recommendation 1.3:**

*Establish a forum for the discussion of the respective roles of politicians and civil servants, including mutual cooperation focused on the government's legislative agenda and the contribution of an independent, professional, career civil service.*

**Recommendation 1.4:**

*In the spirit of 1.1 and 1.2, the CSC should establish a mechanism for ongoing conflict analysis and resolution, such as a mediation centre with the capacity to conduct both facilitative and arbitrative mediation.*

**Recommendation 1.5:**

*UNDP organize a conference on the topic in 1.1, followed by 2-3 workshops with representatives of each group to develop understanding of each other's roles and perspectives and to agree on goals for cooperation on specific policies.*

### 13.2 Lack of a Comprehensive Approach to Training

#### 13.2.1 Entrance Exam and Preparatory Course

13.2.1.1 There is no requirement –except in the Foreign Affairs Ministry – for job applicants to sit for an entrance examination. This contributes to the widely-observed problem of untrained/underprepared staff unable to fulfill their job requirements and adding to the load on supervisors who struggle to complete their own workload while following up on subordinates. Currently there are few requirements for entrance to the civil service beyond O –Levels for clerical staff and A–Levels for others.

13.2.1.2 The creation of a pool of pre-qualified candidates following A–Levels (or O–Levels), is not an issue for Health or Education, as the respective membership bodies screen the majority of entry level staff according to their specializations – the Board of Health Sciences, the Medical Council, the Nursing Council and the Teacher Registration bodies. Pharmacy has no such screening or pre-qualifying body and this is claimed to be creating problems for the staff responsible for regulating pharmacists and pharmacies.

13.2.1.3 For the majority of the ministries, however, the merits of having a pool of candidates with a minimum level of knowledge and skills as well as demonstrated competencies relevant to the civil service is very appealing. The following recommendation received universal support from representatives of the ministries, the province offices and political appointees consulted during the data collection phase of this assignment.

**Recommendation 2.1:**

*Select candidates interested in a career in the civil service for enrolment in a preparatory course followed by an entrance examination through which they would qualify for base grade appointment to the civil service.*

### 13.2.2 Induction & Orientation Training

13.2.2.1 Currently, new entry-grade recruits to the civil service are not required to pass an examination to assess their technical, language or HR skill levels. This situation of having no guaranteed knowledge and skill standards is exacerbated by the lack of systematic induction and orientation training based on the occupational and job requirements of the respective units or departments.

13.2.2.2 Capitalizing on a pool of pre-qualified candidates by providing systematic induction training relevant to the early stages of a career in the civil service was an attractive prospect for all of those surveyed in the ministries during the TNA assignment. (During our TNA consultations, it was noted that Meteorology – in the Ministry of Housing and Environment – is the only civil service department with an induction course for new staff.)

13.2.2.3 Not only does an induction course point junior officers in the direction of a career suited to their talents and aspirations, but it also offers ministries' staff the knowledge and motivation to succeed in ways which would ideally aid in retention and lead to higher levels of job efficiency and effectiveness.

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**Recommendation 2.2:**

*Develop and implement an Induction Training Program for all new appointees, following the entrance examination, as an introduction to the civil service and their role as a career civil servant.*

13.2.2.4 Added to this, an orientation course focused on the specifics of an officer's new assignment and work program, would maximize the benefits of the preceding training opportunities during the entrance and induction phases. Together the three phases of entrance, induction and orientation provide an integrated and systematic training experience which lays the foundation for a civil service career and promotes a culture in which results achievement and client-focus are priorities for individual ministries and the civil service generally.

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**Recommendation 2.3:**

*Develop and introduce an Orientation Course as mandatory training for officers commencing a new job, or joining a program team; this should be on-the-job, practical and results-focused training.*

### 13.3 Identified Priority Need for Management Training

13.3.1 A recurring theme in the consultations with ministry staff is the low priority given to management training, especially in those with a technical bias, such as transportation, fisheries and defence. In the Defence Ministry, for example, it is claimed that the only training opportunities are in the area of military training for enlisted staff, with civilian staff being seen as not requiring training for the administrative tasks they perform. The training budget, therefore, primarily goes towards technical training for the military, with very limited access for civilian staff wishing to undertake training in non-technical skills related to job productivity. In the 2006-7 budget estimates, for example, when the nominated training priorities request favored non-technical skills training for civilians, there was opposition from the military staff about this approach to prioritization. Following this, in the 2009-2010 budget cycle there were no training fund allocations for civilian staff of the ministry.

**Recommendation 2.4:**

*Preference be given to management and HR training rather than technical training especially for administrative staff who have been unable to access such training, despite its relevance to their job performance.*

13.3.2 Commissioners report that they are keen to see training provided at all levels of the service, not just for those at the officer level. This was also supported by permanent secretaries' requests for training in leadership, administrative management, protocol, media presentation techniques and the like. Similar feedback was obtained from Atoll Coordinators, Directors-General and other senior staff.

**Recommendation 2.5:**

*Training and development be provided for all levels in the civil service from Commissioners and Permanent Secretaries, to senior administrators and officer levels – with an emphasis on core civil service skills including leadership, program management and client service.*

13.3.3 There was also a consistent message delivered by officer level staff, that apart from basic skills training in computing, letter writing (Dhivehi and English) and presentations related to their particular work programs, they desired HR knowledge and skills related to performing their jobs more effectively, such as planning, budgeting, customer service and interacting with the public.

### **Recommendation 2.6:**

*Priority basic skills training should include: Teamwork, Computing, Letter writing and Presentations related to specific tasks – in Dhivehi (and English in some instances) – HR skills, Work Planning, Budgeting, and Interacting with the Public.*

### **13.4 In-house/short-term/practical training**

13.4.1 With the recent decision to no longer sponsor and financially support overseas study programs for civil servants, the long term education and training agenda is limited to those wishing to pay for their own studies, or able to benefit from a scholarship. In either case, the new leave provisions allow for only one year's leave, after which the officer is required to resign and re-enter the service at a later date should that occur.

13.4.2 According to feedback from the ministries, in the past the Training Bond has not prevented staff from avoiding the requirement to work for their department or ministry after return completing their studies. Examples were mentioned of the bond being cancelled or ignored by returnees from overseas education programs, including the case of senior manager canceling a bond for a returning Masters degree graduate whom he wanted to leave the department. During interviews with representatives of the ministries, there were also reported cases of officers accessing fully-paid training opportunities overseas and Finance Ministry not approving the airfare element, which is the only non-funded part of the training, which meant they were unable to avail themselves of these training opportunities.

13.4.3 Since fully-paid overseas studies are no longer a reality for civil servants, as mentioned in 13.4.1 above, in the current TNA assignment the focus is on short-term training, prioritized on the basis of job-relevance and the improvement of efficiency, effectiveness and the government's agenda for modern governance, as expressed in the goals of the BEST project. During consultations with staff in the ministries there was a strong support for in-house, short-term training which is practical, relevant to jobs and programs, and facilitated by external consultants if required.

13.4.4 As part of the data collection phase of the TNA assignment, departments and ministries submitted short-term training requests which were then prioritized in terms of a four point scale focused on 'must have' training, in relation to that which is less crucial to producing necessary outcomes. Based on this exercise, priorities were cross-referenced with data from questionnaires and focus group discussions as a means of triangulating the data and arriving at a definitive assessment of required training courses.



**Recommendation 2.7:**

*The prioritized training agenda focus on in-house, short-term training which is practical, relevant to specific jobs and programs and related to the strategic plans of each ministry and the civil service as a whole.*

### 13.5 Absence of a Career Structure

13.5.1 Another factor affecting performance and a systematic approach to training and development is the absence of an operational career structure with defined paths for promotion on an occupational and individual basis. Such an organization-wide structure will go a long way to focusing on the short and long-term training and education needs of units and individuals – something that is currently not possible with any degree of accuracy.

13.5.2 From consultations with representative groups of civil servants in all fourteen ministries and in two provinces it is clear that there are a number of significant factors affecting both (a) the perception of the civil servant's role and also (b) the performance of their required duties. These performance-related factors are relevant to the assessment of training needs, since it the identified gaps or discrepancies in performance which signal where possible training solutions are required.

**Recommendation 3.1:**

*Make the creation of a career structure and associated processes and procedures an urgent priority for the civil service.*

### 13.6 Performance Appraisal as a TNA Tool

13.6.1 All but three of the ministries expressed concern that the Performance Appraisal (PA) system was not working as it should, noting that it is only in the early stages of implementation. Despite awareness training and workshops, there is some evidence of a reluctance to introduce PA as designed. There is a perceived avoidance or neglect of responsibility by senior administrators who have carriage of the PA system in their respective ministries. This issue is all the more significant in view of the role of PA in diagnosing performance levels and training agendas, apart from the results focus it has in terms of individual and organizational performance. In HRD and TNA terms, this performance gap seems to be the result of a lack of *will* rather than a lack of *information* or skills.

13.6.2 This is a serious issue and one which requires decisive action to ensure there is meaningful commitment to PA across the civil service. In the Health Ministry, for example, PA has been implemented but supervisors are conscious of the factors affecting performance, such as shortages of equipment and the less than ideal work environment. This



latter will be remedied following relocation to a new facility, so it would be instructive to check in again with the ministry in a year or so to assess how PA is progressing. The other ministries report that the PA system is not working to its full potential and in a few it is described as 'broken'.

13.6.3 PA is seen as difficult in a relatively small population where family and friendship ties are strong and confidentiality is problematic. Add to this a reluctance to judge and an aversion for being assessed and the situation of both appraiser and appraisee is fraught with apprehension which is only lessened by avoidance or misrepresentation. This latter takes the form of filling in the PA documentation so as to avoid potential conflict situations between supervisor and subordinate -- whether the appraisal reflects the level of performance or not. On the other hand, there was evidence from permanent secretaries that they were willing to take a stance in which they require supervisors to separate performance from personal and other factors that complicate the accuracy and validity of the PA process.

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***Recommendation 4.1:***

*Conduct an audit of how the Performance Appraisal system is operating throughout the civil service.*

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***Recommendation 4.2:***

*Disengage Performance Appraisal from financial reward or increment, while stressing its main role as assessing individual performance and particularly its contribution to results in line with agreed program and department goals.*

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***Recommendation 4.3:***

*Supplement Section 8 of the PA forms, in particular, to include guidance on how individual needs can be diagnosed in terms of the type of training and its contribution to individual and organization/program goals and results.*

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***Recommendation 4.4:***

*Monitor the Performance Appraisal process to ensure that appraisals are accurate and represent actual performance, as well as being useful for continuous individual training needs assessment through the use of the tool added to Section 8 of the PA forms.*

**Recommendation 4.5:**

*Urgently provide additional Performance Appraisal training to supervisors and officers, as well as coaching in how to use the process to understand the causes of performance problems and diagnose solutions, including training.*

### 13.7. Recruitment & Selection Practices

**13.7.1 Criteria** – The currently standardized staff recruitment and selection criteria, -- with their strong emphasis of academic qualifications -- are considered inflexible and by all but one of the ministries.

**Recommendation 5.1:**

*Re-examine the criteria for Recruitment & Selection procedures to allow some discretion for the special requirements of units and departments.*

13.7.1.1 It is therefore perceived that the process does not take sufficient account of the special needs of departments, especially because of the emphasis on qualifications *vis-a-vis* job-relevant experience. Examples were provided of units and departments having to select candidates who scored the highest number of points due to their academic qualifications, but were unable to perform the required duties, required a significant amount of training, or were considered unsuitable for a specific task, job or position.

#### 13.7.2 Timelines/Timeliness – Recruitment & Selection

13.7.2.1 Apart from the perceived inflexibility of the criteria for recruitment, there is a concern about the time taken to recruit new employees because of the number of steps in the process and the paperwork involved. During consultations at the provincial and atoll offices there were requests that they be able to deal directly with the CSC on recruitment matters in order to speed up the process; however, this raises more questions than it solves because of the established lines of communication and authority between these offices and their respective ministries.

**Recommendation 5.2:**

*Review and streamline relevant administrative processes to increase the efficiency – including the timeliness – of Recruitment & Selection in conjunction with senior ministry officials.*

### 13.8 Staff Retention and Turnover

13.8.1 Retaining qualified and experienced staff is one of the most significant HR challenges faced by the ministries. It is a fact of

organizational life that staff will seek the best opportunities available, especially in relation to pay, conditions and career prospects. This is a crucial training issue, as replacement costs and other concomitant factors involved in replacing trained staff make this another issue requiring urgent attention. While the civil service will likely be in retraction mode for the foreseeable future, it is important to retain trained and high performing staff rather than have a non-strategic culling of positions resulting in the loss of staff who have been trained and who have good potential. Hence return on investment is a key strategic factor in right-sizing, with the goal in mind of retaining their services and their goodwill, while also maintaining loyalty and motivation.

13.8.2 In meetings and interviews during the TNA data collection phase, there was not a great deal of evidence of any of these factors, except in the province and atoll office where the community and organizational size and dynamics are noticeably different from those in Male'. During consultations with ministries there seemed to be a reported general lack of motivation amongst the workforce, although as noted above, this was not detected in the province and atoll offices, where many of the performance-related factors such as recruitment, turnover, political interference and general job satisfaction were comparatively unproblematical.

13.8.3 The causes of reported low levels of motivation in the ministries in Male' are related to factors such as low pay and conditions compared with independent bodies; in some cases to a supervisor's management style; to insufficient or unclear directions on how to understand or complete a task, as well as inadequate feedback on performance or on strategic directions for the unit or department; or to political interference, or undue influence in the performance of civil servants duties. At the same time, however, there is also a perception by some senior officers, that civil servants have "too many rights and not enough responsibilities; too many freedoms and too few obligations including generous leave provisions – annual, sick-leave and family responsibility leave – of up to 70 days a year)".

13.8.4 One of the structural difficulties experienced by the civil service is that, despite the increases in salaries in recent times and the corresponding enhancement of job titles, the salaries are generally uncompetitive with those in the private sector and in the independent commissions. Because of this, staff move on to these better-paid jobs in the private sector or elsewhere. This also applies to staff returning from overseas studies, despite the government's investment in these staff and the bond requiring guaranteed service upon their return. In one characterization of this situation the civil service was described as "a training school for the private sector".

13.8.5 Examples of recent actual cases of this type of turnover include that of a social worker earning e.g., 8,000 Rufiah-per-month in the Health Ministry and then moving to the Human Rights Commission where she

was able to receive \$13,000 per-month. Another example is that of a technical officer from the same ministry transferring to a job five levels higher at the Human Rights Commission. A related issue is that of a Director General of Health earning only half of what he could earn in the private sector.

13.8.6 The inequities in pay and conditions between the civil service and independent commissions have created problems in retention and motivation at the very time the government is striving to establish a career service which has the respect of legislators and the public at large.

***Recommendation 6.1:***

*Urgently re-examine the service-wide implications of the situation in which civil servants are regarded (and regard themselves) as less than their counterparts in the independent bodies and are remunerated on a less generous basis than staff in the commissions, particularly due to factors such as turnover and endemic low morale.*

### **13.9. Training for Management of the untrained and unmotivated**

#### **13.9.1 Delegation -- Untrained staff**

13.9.1.1 Problems in managing under-prepared staff, some with O-levels or less, who have had little training (except on-the-job) in IT, computing and the skills needed to perform their jobs adequately. They are apparently satisfied with having no training opportunities and are seemingly content to “complete the required work and go home”. This complicates supervision and reduces productivity for other staff and their managers/supervisors who are asked to take up the more complicated assignments and to also ensure services are provided at the required level, despite the lack of effort by their under-performing colleagues. Staffing is such that there is no relief staff to replace those on sick leave, e.g. and there remain only a few, or less in some cases, to carry out the work of the unit.

13.9.1.2 In 2007 there was a service-wide change in the job titles managed by the public service division whereby e.g. a clerk was re-designated an administrative officer, but with no substantial increase in duties and responsibilities. There is evidence also of double or triple promotions as a result of this process and this was followed by an across-the-board salary increase of an average 50% in February 2009, along with a revision to job structures and organizational charts. The net result of this has been over-classified staff untrained for the level of job they occupy.

#### **13.9.2 Workload distribution**

13.9.2.1 One of the complications arising from an under-prepared -- or an untrained -- workforce is the need for the supervisor to continually check on whether delegated work has been completed to the required standard.

In the majority of the ministries senior staff reported that this was indeed the situation they faced and that it complicated their role, leading to the re-allocation of tasks to more able workers, which in turn added to their load to the extent that both they and the more able workers were unable to complete work on time or at the desired level of efficiency and effectiveness.

13.9.2.2 This uneven distribution of work because of the inability (or otherwise) of certain staff, rewards them for their lack of skill or motivation, while in effect punishing the motivated and skilled staff who receive the additional burden. This is a situation where a properly operating performance appraisal system would systematically diagnose the nature and extent of this particular performance problem and also indicate the training or other solutions required. In the course of a year or two, the response of the under-performing staff will lead to either a commitment to the remedial measures being undertaken, or to personnel actions such as transfer or separation, as is discussed in section 4 above in relation to performance appraisal and its fundamental contribution to the identification of training needs, based on the diagnosis of gaps or discrepancies in job performance.

### **13.10 Notification and Funding of Training Opportunities**

13.10.1 In relation to the availability of work-related learning there is dissatisfaction with the method of publicizing training opportunities in ministries and departments, with some staff claiming that such training is not always widely advertised or that a select few are selected for these opportunities.

### **13.11 A minimum guarantee of training opportunities**

13.11.1 In western democracies it is oftentimes the unions which campaign for a guaranteed minimum number of days of staff training per annum in both the private and public sectors. I am aware that the MCS has a civil service association that has yet to establish its presence as a union-type organization; however, there is a degree of skepticism as to its role and potential contribution to the amelioration of civil service conditions and related benefits, including the broader HRD agenda.

13.11.2 In the absence of a strong staff union, therefore, it likely becomes the responsibility of the CSC in cooperation with the ministries, to set minimum standards for the training quantum individuals and units could expect to receive on an annual basis. This would have the effect of specifying minimum standards *vis-a-vis* training time, quality and job focus in order to achieve targeted training which can then be assessed for its effectiveness in terms of transfer to the workplace and return on investment.

13.11.3 Apart from the lack of funding available for training, in our consultations we noted a general lack of coordination in terms of HRD strategy, priority setting, instructional design and delivery, funding and

quality assurance – including the important matters of transfer of training and return on investment (ROI). A centrally-coordinated training function managed by the CSC would address many of these concerns, as well facilitating the use of available (or excess) funds from one line item in the budget, to the training line item in order to access short course training in particular. This would also mitigate the influence of the financial controller – a political appointee – on decisions across the board, including training for civil service staff.

**Recommendation 7.1 :**

*CSC design and implement a Training Guarantee which stipulates the minimum training quantum for individual civil servants. Legislation similar to the Australian Training Guarantee Act (1990/revised 1996) – or other similar legislation – could form the basis of a strategic solution to this aspect of training provision.*

### 13.12 Feedback from the Public, Customers, Clients

13.12.1 A service-oriented, customer-focused, responsive public sector is based upon a willingness to seek and receive customer feedback. A customer-focused orientation of programs and services is therefore crucial to the type of good governance sought by the MCS, as is the process of assessing whether such programs and services are achieving their goals. There is scant evidence of assessment feedback being collected and analyzed except, for example, in the Tourism and Human Resources Ministries; however, the Immigration Department, for example, collected on-line customer/client feedback from 2003 until 2008 when it ceased doing so.

13.12.2 The rationale for implementing a customer feedback systems is based on the premise that if civil servants are employed to assist the government achieve goals previously agreed with the electorate, then their role is to also do this with responsiveness to the people and with accountability for service quality. Without a means of assessing the results of their work in this regard, it is near impossible to know with any certainty that the services provided satisfy quality criteria, or that improvement is required. A results-driven civil service is one in which the service of taxpayers is foremost; in which – to paraphrase former US president Bill Clinton – civil servants maximize the strategies which produce results, eliminate those which do not work, but most importantly measure the effectiveness of programs and inform the public about progress, including service improvements.

**Recommendation 8.1:**

*The CSC develop and implement, in conjunction with ministries, a customer feedback protocol/program to assist in promoting awareness of service quality and accountability.*

**Recommendation 8.2:**

*The CSC develop and deliver a course to train supervisors and staff in the use of this feedback program.*

**13.13 Absence of systematic of mandated evaluations of program impact.**

13.13.1 Until a mandated program evaluation scheme is implemented whereby all government programs are evaluated on, say, a three year cycle, the required degree of seriousness will likely not be achieved in terms of assessing program performance – and, by implication, the performance of program managers and teams. Such program evaluation would be aligned with all programs, including training and development, in order to measure the impact, especially of job-related, results-focused courses based on needs identified by the CSC in conjunction with ministries.

**Recommendation 9.1:**

*The CSC develop and operate a systematic evaluation scheme to measure the impact of civil service programs\*, including courses delivered by the CSTI and the ministries.*

*\*(This implies the implementation of program management across the civil service).*

**Recommendation 9.2:**

*The CSC establish a Program Evaluation Unit to systematically conduct impact evaluations of ministry programs, including training courses, on a suggested five year cycle.*

**13.14 Role of the CSC in Training & Development****13.14.1 Coordination of Training across the Civil Service**

13.14.1.1 The CSC's comprehensive mandate includes responsibility for identifying performance issues and providing solutions – including training and development – aligned with improved job performance and career aspirations of staff. In carrying out this mandate, the CSC's orientation is towards encouraging client-focused service which is measurable in terms of both program and individual performance. This approach has a strong focus on the 'BEST' values of efficiency, service quality and transparency, alongside those of the sense of responsibility and accountability which characterizes a professional civil service.

13.14.1.2 Faced with a lack of both funding and coordination for training aimed at producing a more professional civil service, however, the CSC has no option but to take urgent action to ensure the coordination of all



aspects of organizational learning and development, beginning with budgetary responsibility for the total civil service training function. In addition, disparate training agendas in different ministries have led to inefficiencies in resource utilization and lack of transfer of training, while program management and evaluation are in need of a clearer focus and connection to the strategic directions of each ministry and the civil service as a whole.

13.14.1.3 There was whole-hearted support during the consultation phase of this project, for the proposal for the CSC to leverage its resources and employ its mandate to provide a coordinated civil service training system. This coordination would ideally be as outlined in the following recommendations.

**Recommendation 10.1:**

*The CSC is responsible for overall training management for the civil service.*

**Recommendation 10.2:**

*The CSC coordinates the training budget for all ministries.*

**Recommendation 10.3:**

*The CSC continuously assesses and prioritizes of all training needs.*

**Recommendation 10.4:**

*The CSC approves all training courses.*

**Recommendation 10.5:**

*The CSC prepares a cadre of trainers in the ministries and the province offices to deliver courses locally and supports them through regular contact following initial Train-the-Trainer courses.*

**Recommendation 10.6:**

*The CSC sources and approves facilitators and trainers.*

**Recommendation 10.7:**

*The CSC conducts program evaluations for all courses (as in Recommendation 9.1).*

**Recommendation 10.8:**

*The CSC assures the quality and continuous improvement of Training.*

## 14. Training Plan

14.1 A training plan was devised for implementation with immediate effect, following consultations with the CSC Commissioners. The highest priority courses listed in Annex 5 have been recommended for development and the CSC, through the leadership of Commissioner Adam, has called for expressions of interest from local providers. The training plan for the period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2011, includes short-term, in-house courses in leadership;



administrative skills; secretarial skills; budgeting & finance; communication skills, customer service, and telephone skills. These courses are listed in section below -- along with suggestions as to main audience, mode of delivery and evaluation focus.

## Priority 1 Courses for Implementation 1<sup>st</sup> -- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters, 2011

Course Title	Main Audience	Mode	Evaluation Focus*
Leadership	Directors & Above initially; then staff at different levels	2 Day Workshops Weekly Tasks x 12 1 Day Refresher	Test: Concepts & Approaches Self-Assessment Log Presentations
Administrative skills	Supervisors	2 Day Workshops Weekly Tasks x 12 1 Day Refresher	Practical Skills Tests On-the-job Follow-up
Budget & Finance	Program Officers	Workshops x 1Day Job-relevant tasks x 12 Reviews x 1 Day	Practical Task-related Tests Pre & post-tests on actual budget/finance tasks
Communication skills	All staff Groups	Workshops	Knowledge & Skills Tests and survey
Customer service	Front Line Staff	Simulation & Coaching	Pre-Post Test Role Play
Secretarial skills	Support Staff	On-the-job Coaching and Supervision	Skills Testing & Follow-up with supervisors
Telephone skills	Front Line Staff	Simulation & Coaching	Practical workshops and assessment based on real-life cases and feedback
Entrance Exam Prep.	CS Applicants	Lectures/Workshops	Basic skill tests based on literacy, numeracy and general knowledge.

14.2 In accordance with Recommendation 2.1 in this TNA Report, an entrance examination is being developed for all civil service applicants, as reflected in the final course listed in the above table. The specifications of this course, along with the priority courses for the period 2011-2013 are listed in following tables. This Entrance Examination is being developed as a first step in raising the professional profile of the MCS as a career service. In addition, it will provide a pool of suitably-prepared candidates for subsequent appointment and preparation for the induction and orientation stages, for which courses have also been recommended. The training plan for the courses in the period 2011-2013, is currently being negotiated with the CSC and full details will be included in the CSTI strategic plan in phase 2 of this assignment.

## 15. Training Evaluation

15.1 The evaluation scheme for these newly-introduced courses focuses not only on trainees' reactions to the instructional elements of the respective courses – but even more importantly – to the factors affecting changes in performance on the job. The training evaluation scheme requires a follow up survey in which course outcomes such as relevance to the job, improved performance and

competence in specific skill sets are assessed. Only then is the key factor of 'transfer of training' assured and the investment in training justified in terms of ROI.

15.2 The role of supervisors is crucial to the return on the training investment, as they help create the conditions under which transfer of training occurs. Since this is the stage at which much of the training effect can be lost or squandered, supervisors at different levels of the CS require preparation for the role of coach, as a pre-requisite to the success of the training plan. In maximizing transfer of training, the CSC will ensure not only a better trained workforce, but also a return on their investment in training and the complementary interventions chosen as part of the strategic action plan for professionalizing the civil service.

## Priority Courses for Implementation 2011-2014

### a. Administrative Skills

Course Title	Main Audience	Comments
Financial Analysis	Program Officers	Practical Workshops x 1Day Job-relevant tasks x 12 + Assessments Reviews x 1 Day (Pre/Post Tests)
Budgeting	Budget staff	Practical Workshops x 1Day Job-relevant tasks x 12 + Assessments Reviews x 1 Day (Pre/Post Tests)
Auditing	All relevant staff	Practical Workshops x 1Day Job-relevant tasks x 12 + Assessments Reviews x 1 Day (Pre/Post Tests)
ICT skills (software & hardware)	All staff	Training tailored to immediate needs
Logistics & Inventory Management	Support Staff	On-the-job Coaching and Supervision
Records Management	Support Staff	On-the-job Coaching and Supervision
Secretarial Skills	Support Staff	On-the-job Coaching and Supervision

## b. General Management Skills

Course Title	Main Audience	Comments
Customer Service	Front Line staff	Practical workshops based on real-life cases and feedback
Human Relations Skills	All staff	1 <sup>st</sup> 4 topics are part of a suite of courses
Communication Skills	All staff	Tied in with the 2 topics above + team building
Team Building	All staff	Tied in with the 3 topics above
Decision-making & Planning	Supervisory staff	Supervisors coach dept. staff
Managing for Results	All staff	Key to effective program management
Motivation & Work Ethic	All staff	Both topics vital to performance improvement
Supervisory Skills	1 <sup>st</sup> Line Supervisors	Should have a 'results' focus
Time Management	All staff	Should have a 'results' focus

## c. Generic Courses

Course Title	Main Audience	Comments
Entrance Examination	CS Applicants	Prior Preparatory Course
Induction program	For new recruits	Post-Entrance Examination
CS Role & Responsibilities	All CS Officers	Male & Provinces
Relevant CS Laws & Regulations	All CS Officers	Focus on 'Machinery of Government.'
Language Skills	Those requesting	(Dhivehi & English)
Awareness Programs	All CS Officers	Male & Provinces
Leadership Training	Senior Officers initially	Senior Officers coach dept. staff
Orientation Program	Officers with new tasks or programs	Introduction to new task/program area

## d. Advanced Skills

Course Title	Main Audience	Comments
Performance Appraisal	All staff	Staff & supervisors in same workshops
Conflict Resolution & Mediation Skills	Supervisors at different levels	External trainers initially, then supervisors train own staff
Project Management	Directors & above	Focus on program management
Monitoring & Evaluation	Directors & above	External trainers initially, then supervisors train own staff
Coaching	Supervisors	Coaching becomes part of supervisor's role
Mentoring	Directors-General & above	Mentoring becomes part of supervisor's role when appropriate
Train-the-Trainer	Trainers in ministries	Trainers supervised by CSTI
Stress Management Skills	Supervisors	Supervisors train own staff
Training Needs Assessment	Supervisors; HR Staff	Supervisors train own staff; HR staff conduct seminars on TNA

## 16. Conclusion

This TNA assignment has resulted in the identification of broadly agreed priorities for performance improvement interventions, including training, for the Maldives Civil Service. Consultations were held with all fourteen ministries; with seven of the island communities; with senior staff of the civil service and the president's office; and with political appointees, individually and in small groups. Data validity and reliability have been enhanced through robust collection and analysis techniques and by ensuring close to 100% return rate on the questionnaires administered as part of the data collection protocol.

Prior to the data collection phase, a TNA workshop was developed and delivered to in excess of fifty civil servants comprising the TNA Team. Their role, in conjunction with the consultant, was to organize the focus groups meetings and to continue the TNA process in their respective ministries. To ensure on-going

TNA, these team members will receive additional training focused on individual TNA, during phase 2 of this assignment

Findings and recommendations for priority needs-based training and supporting strategies were discussed with the CSC Commissioners and senior staff, resulting in their confirming the new course initiatives listed in the tables above. In addition to the identification of priority training needs, as required in the ToR, at the request of the CSC commissioners, a practical easy-to-use tool for identifying individual training needs on a continuing basis was devised and linked with the existing PA processes and documentation.

In terms of the scope and comprehensiveness of services provided by the consultant, therefore, the specifications of the ToR have therefore been satisfied and perhaps exceeded. In doing so, this first phase of the assignment provides a solid basis for the second stage during which the SAP for the CSTI will be developed.