

Project Brief

Maldives

Postsecondary Education Development



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Against a background of severely constrained supply of educated labor in the Maldives in the 1990s, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) designed the Employment Skills Training Project to improve the quality of, and expand access to, postsecondary education to support economic and social development in the Maldives. The project is in line with the strategic directions of ADB's South Asia Department, which focuses on sustainable infrastructure, climate change mitigation and adaptation, human development, regional cooperation and integration, public-private partnership, and good governance.

The overall goal of the project was to reduce the supply-demand gap of the educated labor force in key economic sectors. The first objective of the project was to strengthen the institutional quality and capacity of the seven existing postsecondary institutions by expanding curriculum choices and raising the quality of courses leading to internationally recognized advance diplomas. The second objective was to develop the capacity of the Maldives College of Higher Education (MCHE) to consolidate and coordinate postsecondary administration and academic programs for these institutions to meet international accreditation standards.

Project Results

The project successfully restructured postsecondary education to increase educational opportunities for the domestic labor force. The MCHE, which embraces the current eight institutions of postsecondary education; a national quality assurance agency; and a national quality assurance framework were established.

Together, they form a sound basis for the development of tertiary education in the country. The project also successfully strengthened institutional capacity to streamline postsecondary education and to effectively coordinate the quantity and quality of education and training programs.

Institutional programs upgraded. Each of the seven existing postsecondary institutions was provided with international training to help raise standards and introduce new curriculum programs. Across the MCHE institutions, a wide range of academic and training programs, including short-term courses, certificate courses (3–18 months), diploma and advanced diploma courses (6–18 months), and 3-year undergraduate courses, were developed. MCHE's graduate annual output capacity increased significantly in all programs and courses. By project completion, the annual graduate output was about 1,200—a 50% increase.

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The capacity of the Maldives College of Higher Education was strengthened to produce 2,708 diploma graduates, 5,370 certificate graduates, and 438 degree qualification holders

Project Results

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The project's target for advanced diplomas was 2,000 graduates (with 45% female). At completion, the achievement was 3,167 graduates (with 60% female). For the certificate courses, the target was 3,000 graduates (with 45% female), and the achievement was 4,937 graduates (with 50% female).

Capacity of MCHE strengthened.

The capacity of MCHE was built to consolidate postsecondary administration and academic programs of all institutions: admissions, accreditation, budgeting, planning, monitoring, student services, and external linkages to international universities to meet international accreditation standards. Consultancy services, local and international fellowships, civil works, furniture, equipment, books, and other materials were provided through the project.

About 780 nurses and 803 other health personnel were trained under the Faculty of Health Sciences, exceeding the project target of 300 nurses. The trained personnel are readily employed as nurses, paramedical technicians, and community health workers



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The project significantly helped upgrade, rationalize, and modernize postsecondary education in the Maldives



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During the project period, 1,883 students were trained and 85% are reported to have been employed immediately.

The Project at a Glance

Cost and financing: Asian Development Fund, \$6.2 million; Government of the Maldives, \$3.4 million

Project approval date: 30 September 1998

Project theme: Human development

Status of project implementation: Completed

Loan closing date: 14 May 2009

Executing agency

Ministry of Finance and Treasury
Riluwan Shareef
Deputy Minister
<http://finance.gov.mv>

ADB department

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Agriculture, Natural Resources
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Sources: Project information document, <http://pid.adb.org/pid/LoanView.htm?projNo=28161&seqNo=01&typeCd=3>; ADB. 2009. Project Completion Report. Available at <http://adb.org/Documents/PCRs/MLD/28161-MLD-PCR.pdf>