Global Indicators Workshop on Community Access to ICTS

16-19 November 2004, Mexico City
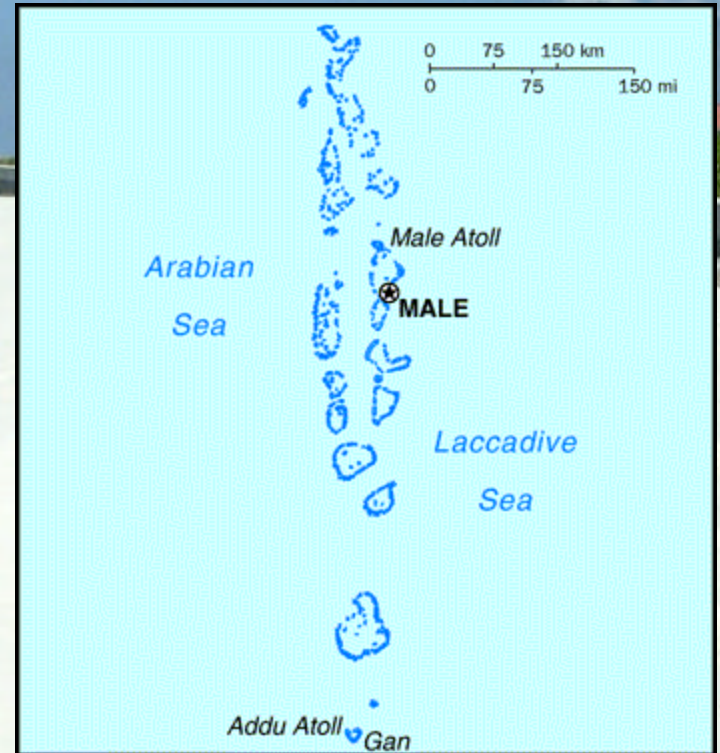
Maldives Initiatives
and ICT Indicators

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A Glance at Maldives

- **Where is Maldives?**

Situation

- **Regulator**
  - **Telecommunications Authority of Maldives**
- **Policy Maker**
  - **Min. of Communications Science & Technology**
- **Operators**
  - **Dhiraagu – A JV between Maldives Government and C&W**
  - **Focus Infocomm – A local company providing Internet service**

Situation (2)

- Market Place
  - The operator Dhiraagu provides all services
    - Exclusivity for basic services till 2008
  - Internet Market opened in 2003
  - Mobile Services being opened in 2004
  - Other Services to Follow
- Internet
  - Dialup, Satellite – Nationwide
  - ISDN, DSL, Cable – In urban and commercial areas

Developments

- By 2000, all inhabited islands had access to telephone

- GSM mobile service was introduced 1999, and highly successful

- Internet Service as dialup throughout, the country, broadband available in urban and commercial areas

Maldives Telecommunications Policy 2001 - 2005

- **The Policy focuses on ICT development**
  - **Making Maldives an extensive user of info-communication technology**
  - **Improve accessibility to the ICT**
  - **Reducing telecommunication charges**
  - **Strengthening the Regulator and the necessary legislative framework**
  - **Market Liberalization**

Initiatives

- **Multipurpose Telecentres**
  - **Pilot Project to Provide Public Internet Access**
  - **To be operated by the communities**
  - **More Telecentres to be introduced upon success of the pilot project**

Initiatives undertaken

- **Telephone lines at discount rates**
  - To Operate Public Internet Access at each Island Community

- **Free Internet Accounts**
  - User name + password for everyone
  - User only pays for telephone usage charges

- **Prepaid Internet**
  - Convenient, can be used with any telephone
  - No access charges to the telephone line
  - Peace of mind for parents, and owners of the line

Initiatives undertaken (2)

- **Affordability of Computer Equipment**
  - **All Equipment Imported**
  - **Import Duty Reduced to 5%, from 20%**

- **Government Network of Maldives (GNM)**
  - **To Interconnect All Government Offices**
  - **Public Interactions also encouraged in electronic form**
  - **Will set an example for the private sector to use IT**
  - **GNM will be implemented at the earliest possible**

Other Initiatives (ongoing)

- **Awareness on Internet**
  - **Internet Fairs**
    - **Annual Grand Event**
    - **Targeted at People of All ages**
    - **Exhibition of Technologies & Equipment**
    - **Free Internet Access at the Fair**
  - **Web Design Competitions**
    - **Different Categories**
    - **Free Hosting**
    - **Attractive Prizes**

Other Initiatives (ongoing) 2

- **IT in the Educational Curriculum**
  - IT now part of the primary education
  - IT training conducted in collaboration with local IT training industry

- **Training on IP & Networking**
  - in collaboration with ITU
  - Curriculum & Assistance from Cisco
  - Conducted locally by MCHE

Indicators

- **Internet users**
  - Majority of users are dialup
  - No registration required
  - Difficult to estimate
  - Guestimate – 15,000 users

Indicators (2)

Sources of Information

- **No. of Users**
  - **Service Provider Databases**
  - **Dialup lines used**
  - **No. of computers**

- **Community Access**
  - **Dhiraagu Discount Line Registry**
  - **TAM Cybercafe registrations**

Indicators (3)

Broadband Users (current estimate)

Leased Lines	66
ADSL	683
ISDN	217
Satellite	15
Cable	30
Wireless	260

Indicators (4)

Community Access

Digital Community Centres (DCC)	52
Other PIAC	14
Total	66
DCC - Rural	0.3
DCC - Urban	0.02

Indicators (5)

Teledensities

Fixed Line	66
Mobile	683
Teledensity (Fixed)	217
Teledensity (Mobile)	15
Teledensity (Overall)	30

Conclusion

- **Challenging geographic conditions to provide nationwide services**
- **Number of Initiatives by the Government and Industry**
- **Indicators show significant improvements**

- *Advancements in Technology, combined with the plans and initiatives taken by the Government and the Industry can keep us more connected*
  - *Both within Maldives, and globally.*