

EMPOWERING WOMEN, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

5 Year Policy Framework and Action Plan

2026-2031

Prepared by MDP Women's Wing
for Women's Development Committees

MDP
WOMEN'S WING

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Introduction

This document has been developed by the MDP Women's Wing as a practical guide to support Women's Development Committees (WDCs) in effectively fulfilling their mandate under the Decentralization Act. It outlines policies, strategic priorities and action plans across the five key areas of responsibility entrusted to WDCs:

1. Enhancing women's political participation and representation.
2. Promoting women's participation in business and entrepreneurship.
3. Strengthening social wellbeing, religious awareness and community support for women.
4. Preventing domestic violence and workplace sexual harassment.
5. Improving community awareness of women's and children's health, with an emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention.

For each of these areas, the document examines the current situation, identifies the key challenges and barriers, and proposes a five-year action plan with specific objectives and targets. These plans are intended to provide WDCs with a clear framework for setting priorities, developing initiatives and implementing meaningful interventions within their respective communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who generously contributed their time, knowledge and perspectives through the many hours of discussions and deliberations that went into preparing this document. The collective effort and commitment behind this work have been invaluable in shaping a framework that reflects the needs, challenges and aspirations of women in our communities.

We hope this document will serve as a useful and practical resource for all WDCs, empowering them to translate their mandate into tangible action and measurable results. Achieving the objectives and targets set out in this five-year plan would represent a significant milestone in advancing women's development, strengthening women's participation in all aspects of community life, and building safer, healthier and more inclusive communities.

Our hope is that this document will not simply remain a policy guide, but will become a foundation for meaningful action and lasting progress in the lives of women and their communities.

Rozaina Adam

President

MDP Women's Wing

Chapter 1

Enhancing Women's Political Participation and Representation

Policy Proposal

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1. Title

"Women in Leadership: A City/island Initiative to Increase Women's Participation in politics and governance"

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2. Background & Rationale

Despite high literacy and active community engagement among women, their representation in political and decision-making roles remains limited. Barriers include:

- Lack of exposure to political processes
- Limited access to leadership training
- Social and cultural constraints
- Financial constraints
- Practical challenges such as childcare and time constraints

Strengthening women's participation is essential for:

- More inclusive and representative governance
- Improved policy outcomes for families and communities
- Alignment with national gender equality goals

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3. Policy Objectives

1. Increase the number of women actively participating in local/national governance processes
2. Support and prepare women candidates for local/national elections.
3. Remove structural and social barriers to women's political engagement.

4. Increase the number of male advocates for female leadership.
5. Promote gender-inclusive decision-making within _____ City/island

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4. Key Policy Actions

4.1 Leadership Development Program

In collaboration with council, NGOs, political parties, parliament and ministries:

- Conduct structured training on:
  - Local/national governance systems
  - Parliament
  - Public speaking and advocacy
  - Policy development and budgeting
- Organize mock council sessions and debates

Target: WDC to decide minimum number of women to be trained annually.

4.2 Women Candidate Support Program

- Establish a pre-election support framework for aspiring women candidates:
  - Guidance on nomination procedures
  - Campaign strategy workshops
  - Communication and media training
  - Campaign financing strategies
- Provide access to shared campaign resources (venues, materials)

Target: WDC to decide the minimum number of female candidates to be identified per election cycle

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4.3 Mentorship & Networking Platform

- Pair aspiring women leaders with:
  - Current/former council/WDC/parliament members or cabinet/state/deputy ministers
  - Professionals and community leaders
- Host networking forums

4.4 Removal of Practical Barriers

City/island Council to:

- Provide childcare services during:
    - Public consultations
    - Training programs
- Ensure:
    - Safe, accessible venues
    - Scheduling of meetings at inclusive times

4.5 Public Awareness & Social Norm Change

- Launch campaigns promoting women's leadership:
    - Social media features
    - Community events
    - Public discussions involving men and families

4.6 Institutional Gender Inclusion Measures

- Ensure equal speaking opportunities in council forums
- Encourage gender-balanced representation in committees
- Integrate gender perspectives into policy planning

4.7 Youth & Civic Engagement

- Partner with schools and youth organizations to:
    - Conduct civic education programs
    - Establish youth councils with strong female participation
    - Conduct leadership training programs for student leaders in collaboration with Education Ministry.

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5. Implementation Framework

Lead Agency:

- City/island WDC

Key Partners:

- Council
- Civil society organizations (local & international)
- Educational institutions
- Relevant government ministries
- Parliament
- Political parties

Phased Implementation Timeline

Phase 1:

- Conduct survey
- Program design
- Stakeholder engagement
- Participant recruitment

Phase 2:

- Rollout of training programs
- Launch mentorship platform
- Begin awareness campaigns

Phase 3:

- Candidate preparation support
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Policy refinement

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6. Budget Considerations

Funding can be mobilized through:

- City/island Council and WDC allocations
- National gender equality programs
- Partnerships with local and international NGOs and private sector (CSR initiatives)

Major cost areas:

- Training programs
- Awareness campaigns
- Childcare services
- Administrative coordination

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7. Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- Number of women trained annually
- Number of women attending council meetings and public consultations.
- Number of women candidates in local/national elections
- Number of male advocates
- Participation rates in public consultations
- Number of mentor-mentee contact hours

Reporting:

- Annual progress reports
- Mid-term review (end of Year 3)
- Final evaluation (end of Year 5)
- Public transparency through council platforms

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8. Expected Outcomes

- Increased confidence and capacity among women leaders
- Increased number of men advocating for women leaders
- Higher number of women candidates

- More inclusive and responsive local governance
- Long-term cultural shift toward acceptance of women in leadership

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9. Conclusion

This policy provides a structured and achievable pathway for the city/island council and WDCs to collaboratively strengthen women's political participation. By addressing both systemic and practical barriers, city/island can become a model for inclusive governance in the Maldives.

5-Year Action Plan on Enhancing Women's Political Participation and Representation

(2026–2031)

Overall Goal

To significantly increase women's participation, representation, and influence in politics and governance.

Baseline (Year 0 – To Be Established)

Within first 3 months:

- % of women attending council meetings
- % of women speaking in public consultations
- Number of women candidates in last election
- Number of elected women representatives
- Number of men advocating for female leadership

Strategic Targets by Year 5

- At least 50% women participation in council meetings and public consultations.
- Minimum x number of women trained for local elections.
- X number of women trained in leadership and governance. (Target number to be decided by the WDC).
- Sustained mentorship and support system in place.
- Increase number of men advocating for female leadership by 20% (or higher depending on baseline) and identify at least x number of new male advocates (target number to be decided by the WDC).
- Established network of female leaders.

YEAR 1: Foundation & Awareness

Objectives

- Build systems, partnerships, and initial interest
- Normalize women's participation in civic spaces
- Conduct a survey to identify key areas of interest and challenges for women in the political arena.

Key Actions

- Establish Women in Leadership Taskforce (Council + WDCs + 3 female leaders from within the community).
- Establish links with key partners:
    - Council
        - Ensure equal speaking opportunities in council forums.
        - Encourage gender-balanced representation in committees
        - Integrate gender perspective into policy planning.
    - Local Government Authority
    - At least 3 Civil society organizations (2 local and 1 international)
    - Educational Institutions – schools, universities, Polytech institutions
    - Relevant government ministries
    - Parliament
- Develop and conduct baseline survey and mapping of potential women leaders and male advocates.
- Discuss with education ministry to build a leadership program for women in politics.
- Conduct training sessions in association with an International organization for youth/college students
    - Conduct civic education programs
    - Establish youth councils with strong female participation
- Launch awareness campaign ("Women Can Lead (city/island)").
    - Social media features
    - Community events
    - Public discussions involving men and families.
    - Could include events like family evenings for kids, social gatherings etc.
- Hold quarterly council/WDC public consultation meetings. Meetings should:
    - Be held at safe, accessible venues.
    - Be scheduled for inclusive times.
    - Ensure friendly discussion environments, especially for women.
    - Encourage women to speak and contribute ideas.
    - Provide childcare service.

In order to encourage more women to participate,

  - send them invitations individually.
  - keep note of those who attended, send them a positive message after the meeting and encourage them to keep attending future meetings.
  - After the meeting, stay back and talk to the women who didn't speak at the meeting, get their output and encourage them to speak at the meeting next time.
  - Contact those who didn't attend, and find out why they didn't come.

- Start Leadership Training Program (Cohort 1)on:
  - Local/national governance systems
  - Parliament
  - Public speaking and advocacy
  - Policy development and budgeting
  - Importance of gender equality in leadership

    Should have at least one training session by council with gender balanced participation, 60% of the participants being youth, with a component on increasing awareness of gender equality in leadership and recruiting male advocates for female leadership.

- Introduce childcare support during meetings

Targets

- Train x number of women
- Identify x number of potential women leaders
- Identify at least x number of male advocates
- Achieve 20% female attendance at public consultations
- Conduct x number of awareness events

Target numbers to be decided by WDC based on the population of the city/island.

YEAR 2: Capacity Building & Engagement

New Objectives

- Deepen skills and increase active participation
- Build confidence and visibility
- Retain trained leaders

Key Actions

Ongoing Actions

- Run Leadership Training (Cohort 2) including recruitment of youth male advocates
- Maintain links with key partners:
    - Council
    - Local Government Authority
    - Civil society organizations
    - Educational Institutions – schools, universities, Polytech institutions
    - Relevant government ministries
    - Parliament
- Establish links with additional 3 civil society organisations.
- Continue training sessions in association with an International organization for youth/college students
- Continue awareness campaign ("Women Can Lead (city/island)")
- Continue quarterly council/WDC public consultation meetings.
- Continue childcare support during meetings

New Actions

- Launch Mentorship Program (pair x number of women with mentors)
    - Identifying mentors (current/former council/WDC/parliament members or cabinet/state/deputy ministers, professionals and community leaders) with the help of NGOs, political parties, government
    - Identifying mentees
    - Connecting mentors to mentees
- Organize annual Women's Forums with council participation
- Conduct leadership training programs for student leaders in collaboration with Education ministry
- Introduce mock council sessions & debates
- Increase media visibility of women leaders
- Form Trained leaders' Alumni
- Hold 1 networking event

Targets

- Train additional x number of women
- 30% of women participation in consultations
- At least x number of women regularly speaking in public forums
- X number of women in mentorship program
- Identify at least x number of additional male advocates
- Identify at least x number of students interested in politics

Target numbers to be decided by the WDC based on the population of the city/island.

YEAR 3: Pre-Candidate Development

New Objectives

- Transition from participation → leadership pipeline
- Prepare serious potential candidates

Key Actions

Ongoing Actions

- Run Leadership Training (Cohort 3) including recruitment of youth male advocates.
- Maintain links with key partners:
    - Council
    - Local Government Authority
    - Civil society organizations
    - Educational Institutions – schools, universities, Polytech institutions
    - Relevant government ministries
    - Parliament
- Establish links with additional 3 civil society organisations.
- Continue training sessions in association with an International organization for youth/college students.
- Continue awareness campaign (“Women Can Lead (city/island)”).
- Continue quarterly council/WDC public consultation meetings.
- Continue mentorship program.
- Continue annual Women’s Forum with council participation.
- Continue leadership training programs for student leaders in collaboration with Education ministry.
- Continue mock council sessions & debates.

- Continue media visibility campaign of women leaders.
- Continue adding newly trained leaders to the alumni.
- Hold 1 networking event
- Continue childcare support during meetings

New Actions

- Launch Candidate Preparation Program
- Provide training on:
    - Campaign strategy
    - Public communication and media management
    - Policy development
    - Campaign financing strategies
- Provide access to shared campaign resources (venues, materials).
- Expand childcare and logistical support

Targets

- Train additional x number of women
- Identify minimum x number of potential candidates
- 35% women participation in consultations
- Identify at least x number of additional male advocates
- Identify at least x number of additional students interested in politics

Target numbers to be decided by the WDC based on the population of the city/island.

YEAR 4: Election Readiness & Support

New Objectives

- Ensure women actually contest elections
- Achieve measurable increase in contesting and elected women in parliamentary election.

Key Actions

Ongoing Actions

- Run Leadership Training (Cohort 4) including recruitment of youth male advocates.
- Maintain links with key partners:

    - Council
    - Local Government Authority
    - Civil society organizations
    - Educational Institutions – schools, universities, Polytech institutions
    - Relevant government ministries
    - Parliament
- Establish links with additional 3 civil society organisations.
- Continue training sessions in association with an International organization for youth/college students.
- Continue awareness campaign ("Women Can Lead (city/island)").
- Continue quarterly council/WDC public consultation meetings.
- Continue mentorship program.
- Continue annual Women's Forum with council participation.
- Continue leadership training programs for student leaders in collaboration with Education ministry.
- Continue mock council sessions & debates.
- Continue media visibility campaign of women leaders.
- Continue adding newly trained leaders to the alumni.
- Hold 1 networking event
- Continue childcare support during meetings

New Actions

- Provide direct support to candidates:
    - Campaign planning
    - Volunteer coordination
    - Media exposure
    - Public engagement skills development
- Run public campaigns encouraging voting for women.
- Organize candidate debates with at least 10% gender focused questions.

Targets

- Train minimum x number of potential women candidates for council/WDC election.
- 40% women participation in consultations
- At least 50% visibility of women in campaign events/media
- Identify at least x number of additional male advocates
- Identify at least x number of additional students interested in politics

  Target numbers to be decided by the WDC based on the population of the city/island.

YEAR 5: Consolidation & Representation

New Objectives

- Achieve measurable increase in contesting women in the local councils and WDC election.
- Institutionalize successful programs

Key Actions

Ongoing Actions

- Run Leadership Training (Cohort 5) including recruitment of youth male advocates.
- Maintain links with key partners:
    - Council
    - Local Government Authority
    - Civil society organizations
    - Educational Institutions – schools, universities, Polytech institutions
    - Relevant government ministries
    - Parliament
- Establish links with additional 3 civil society organisations.
- Continue training sessions in association with an International organization for youth/college students.
- Continue awareness campaign ("Women Can Lead (city/island)").
- Continue quarterly council/WDC public consultation meetings.
- Continue mentorship program.
- Continue annual Women's Forum with council participation.
- Continue leadership training programs for student leaders in collaboration with Education ministry.
- Continue mock council sessions & debates.
- Continue media visibility campaign of women leaders.
- Continue adding newly trained leaders to the alumni.
- Hold 1 networking event.
- Continue childcare support during meetings.

New Actions

- Provide direct support to council/WDC candidates:
    - Campaign planning
    - Volunteer coordination
    - Media exposure

    - Public engagement skills development
- Run public campaigns encouraging voting for women.
- Organize candidate debates with at least 10% gender focused questions.
- Evaluate and formalize programs into council policy.
- Publish Women in Governance Report (city/island).

Targets

- 50% women participation in consultations.
- Total x number of women trained (target number to be decided by the WDC).
- At least x number of women actively engaged in governance processes.
- At least 50% visibility of women in campaign events/media.
- At least x number of male advocates identified.
- At least x number of students interested in politics, identified.
- Established Alumni of women leaders.
- Established mentoring program.
- Minimum x number of potential women candidates trained for council/WDC election.

  Target numbers to be decided by the WDC based on the population of the city/island.

Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

Key Indicators (Tracked Annually)

- Number of women trained
- Attendance & speaking rates in consultations
- Number of women in mentorship programs
- Number of male advocates
- Number of women candidates

Reporting

- Annual public report by WDC
- Mid-term review (end of Year 3)
- Final evaluation (end of Year 5)

Resource Strategy

- Council budget allocation
- National gender programs
- Partnerships with NGOs
- CSR contributions from private sector
- Fundraising events

Risk Management

Challenges:

- Cultural resistance
- Low sustained participation
- Drop-off after training

Mitigation:

- Engage men and community leaders early
- Provide continuous support (not one-off programs)
- Focus on practical enablers (childcare, scheduling, transport)

What Will Make This Work

- Consistency over 5 years (not short-term projects)
- Strong WDC–Council coordination
- Clear tracking of results

Chapter 2

Enhancing Women's Participation in Business and Entrepreneurship

Policy Proposal

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1. Title

"Women in Business: A Community-Based Strategy for Economic Empowerment"

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2. Background & Rationale

Women in Maldivian communities, particularly in urban areas like Malé and in outer islands, face barriers to entering and sustaining businesses, including:

- Limited access to finance
- Lack of structured business training
- Restricted market access
- Time constraints due to caregiving responsibilities

Despite this, there is strong potential in:

- Home-based enterprises (food, tailoring, crafts)
- Tourism-linked services (guesthouses, catering, experiences)
- Digital and service-based businesses

A coordinated effort between WDCs and local councils can unlock this potential and contribute to household income, local economic growth, and gender equality.

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3. Policy Objectives

1. Increase the number of women engaged in income-generating activities
2. Support women to start and sustain viable businesses
3. Improve access to finance, training, and markets

4. Create an enabling environment for women entrepreneurs

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4. Key Strategic Areas

4.1 Skills Development & Business Training

Proposed Actions

WDCs, with council support, will:

- Conduct tiered training programs:
    - Basic level: Financial literacy, pricing, budgeting
    - Intermediate: Business planning, marketing, customer service
    - Advanced: Scaling, digital marketing, supplier management
- Offer sector-specific training, such as:
    - Food production & packaging
    - Tourism services (housekeeping, excursions, guiding)
    - Tailoring and crafts
    - Digital skills (social media selling, online platforms)

Implementation

- Partner with:
    - Local businesses
    - Training institutes
    - NGOs
    - Government ministries
- Use council facilities to reduce cost

Targets

- Train x number of women annually. (Council/WDC to set number)
- At least 25% transition into income-generating activity

4.2 Access to Finance & Funding Mechanisms

Proposed Funding Models

A. Community Micro-Grant Scheme (Council sets aside a specific budget for small women run businesses)

- Small grants: MVR 3,000–10,000
- Target: startups and home-based businesses
- Managed jointly by WDC + council

B. Advocate for and where possible create Revolving Loan Fund

- Advocate to the government and banks for Low-interest loans for women entrepreneurs.
- Where possible, create a revolving loan fund.
- Funds recycled as repayments are made

C. Council Co-Financing

- Matching grants:
    - Example: Woman invests MVR 5,000 → council matches partially

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D. External Funding Mobilization

WDCs to:

- Apply for:
    - Government schemes
    - NGO grants
    - International donor programs
- Partner with private sector (CSR from resorts, businesses)

Targets

- Support x number of women with funding annually (Council/WDC to decide target based on the number of women interested in starting up/expanding their own businesses).
- Achieve 70% repayment/sustainability rate (for loans) if a loan fund is set up.

4.3 Market Access & Business Promotion

Proposed Actions

- Establish monthly Women's Market Days
- Create online selling platforms (Instagram, WhatsApp groups)or support existing platforms
- Partner with:
    - Cafés and restaurants
    - Guesthouses and hotels
- Promote "Made by Women" branding

Targets

- Organize x number of market events annually.
- Ensure at least x number of active women vendors.
- Increase average monthly income of participants.

  Council and WDC to decide target numbers based on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs.

4.4 Business Support & Mentorship

Proposed Actions

- Create a Women Entrepreneurs Network
- Pair new entrepreneurs with experienced mentors
- Provide ongoing support in:
    - Pricing
    - Supply chain
    - Customer handling

Targets - Council and WDC to decide target numbers based on established/potential female entrepreneurs.

- X number of women enrolled in mentorship annually
- Improved business survival rates after 1 year

4.5 Enabling Environment & Support Systems

Proposed Actions

- Provide childcare support during training programs
- Advocate for:
    - Flexible use of public spaces for women vendors
    - Simplified business registration processes
- Offer shared resources:
    - Kitchen facilities
    - Equipment (ovens, sewing machines)
    - Common market place

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5. Budget & Resource Considerations

Major Cost Areas

- Training programs
- Micro-grants/loan fund
- Market event organization
- Administration

Funding Sources

- Council budget allocation
- National programs
- Private sector CSR
- Donor funding

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6. Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Indicators

- Number of women trained
- Number of businesses started
- Income increase among participants
- Number of women accessing funding

- Business survival rates after 1 year

Reporting

- Annual progress reports
- Annual impact review

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7. Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Low participation	Outreach + flexible timing
Businesses not sustainable	Ongoing mentorship
Misuse of funds	Clear criteria + monitoring
Market saturation	Diversify training sectors

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8. Expected Outcomes

- Increased financial independence of women
- Growth of small and micro businesses
- Stronger local economy
- Improved household wellbeing

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9. Conclusion

This policy provides a practical, scalable framework for increasing women's participation in business through coordinated efforts between WDCs and local councils. With targeted training, accessible funding, and strong market linkages, women can transition from informal work to sustainable entrepreneurship.

5-Year Action Plan on Enhancing Women's Participation in Business and Entrepreneurship (2026–2031)

Implementation Framework

Lead Agencies

- Women's Development Committees (WDCs)
- Local Council

Key Partners

- Private sector businesses
- NGOs and training providers
- Financial institutions
- Relevant government ministries

YEAR 1: Foundation & Pilot

Objective: Establish systems, test programs, and build initial participation

Key Actions

- Conduct community needs assessment (skills, interests, barriers)
- Design and launch pilot training programs (2–3 sectors eg; food production, skill development etc)
- Establish micro-grant scheme (pilot batch) where possible.
- Form core partnerships (businesses, trainers, NGOs)
- Identify and support first cohort of women entrepreneurs
- Set up basic monitoring and tracking systems

Targets - Islands to decide on their own target numbers depending on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs

- Train x number of women
- Support x number of women with micro-grants
- Launch 1–2 pilot market events
- Establish at least 3 key partnerships

YEAR 2: Expansion & Program Development

Objective: Increase participation and refine programs based on lessons learned

Key Actions

- Expand training to more sectors (identified by WDC) and participants
- Formalize Women Entrepreneurs Network
- Launch monthly Women's Market Days
- Introduce mentorship program
- Strengthen micro-grant scheme (second round) if ongoing.
- Begin basic digital selling initiatives (Instagram/WhatsApp)

Targets - Islands to decide on their own target numbers depending on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs

- Train x number of women
- Support x number of women with funding
- Conduct x number of market events
- Enroll x number of women in mentorship program

YEAR 3: Market Integration & Business Growth

Objective: Transition from small-scale activity to sustainable businesses

Key Actions

- Develop market linkages:
    - Cafés, restaurants, guesthouses
- Introduce advanced business training:
    - Scaling, branding, customer retention
- Establish revolving loan fund (if feasible)
- Provide shared resources (equipment, kitchen space, etc.)
- Strengthen digital presence and online sales

Targets - Islands to decide on their own target numbers depending on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs

- Support x number of active women entrepreneurs
- Establish x number of formal business partnerships

- Increase average income of participants
- Achieve x% business continuity rate

YEAR 4: Scaling & Institutional Strengthening

Objective: Expand reach and embed programs into community systems

Key Actions

- Scale successful business models
- Expand funding mechanisms (larger grants/loans) where possible
- Formalize partnerships with:
    - Private sector
    - Tourism industry
- Advocate for policy support from council
- Strengthen branding (e.g., “Women-Owned” products)

Targets - Islands to decide on their own target numbers depending on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs

- Support x number of active businesses
- Engage x number of private sector partners
- Increase women-led business visibility across the community
- Achieve x% business survival rate

YEAR 5: Sustainability & Long-Term Impact

Objective: Ensure long-term sustainability and independence of programs

Key Actions

- Institutionalize programs within WDC and council operations
- Transition funding schemes into self-sustaining revolving funds
- Conduct impact evaluation and documentation
- Expand successful models to other communities (share what works among councils/WDCs)
- Strengthen long-term mentorship and peer networks

Targets - Islands to decide on their own target numbers depending on the number of established/potential female entrepreneurs.

- X number of active women-led businesses
- Sustainable funding mechanisms in place
- Demonstrated increase in household income levels
- Publish annual Women in Business report

Chapter 3

Strengthening Social Wellbeing, Religious Awareness, and Community Support for Women

Policy Proposal

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1. Title

"Stronger Women, Stronger Communities: A Community-Based Policy for Social Wellbeing, Religious Awareness, and Support Systems"

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2. Background & Rationale

Women in Maldivian communities face a range of interconnected social, religious, family, and lifestyle challenges that affect their wellbeing and participation in society. These include:

- Limited awareness of women's rights in Islam
- Social isolation and lack of safe social spaces
- Parenting and childcare pressures
- Online harassment and digital safety concerns
- Mental and emotional stress
- Limited opportunities for sports and healthy recreation
- Challenges faced by women caring for elderly family members or persons with disabilities

Women's Development Committees (WDCs), in partnership with local councils and community stakeholders, are well positioned to create structured community support systems that strengthen women's wellbeing, participation, dignity, and social inclusion.

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3. Policy Objectives

1. Increase awareness of women's rights and responsibilities in Islam
2. Address key social issues affecting women and families
3. Promote healthy, inclusive, and supportive communities
4. Strengthen social support and wellbeing systems for women, children, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities
5. Increase women's participation in community life, recreation, and positive social activities

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4. Key Social & Religious Issues Identified

4.1 Religious Awareness & Misconceptions

- Limited awareness of rights granted to women in Islam
- Cultural practices incorrectly attributed to religion
- Lack of accessible Islamic education opportunities for women

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4.2 Parenting & Childcare Challenges

- Parenting stress and burnout
- Child behavioral and emotional challenges
- Limited childcare support systems

4.3 Mental Health & Social Isolation

- Loneliness and social isolation
- Emotional stress from caregiving responsibilities
- Limited safe spaces for women to gather and socialize

4.4 Online Safety & Digital Awareness

- Cyberbullying and online harassment
- Lack of awareness regarding digital safety and privacy
- Harmful social media influences on women and youth

4.5 Disabilities & Elderly Care

- Limited community awareness regarding inclusion
- Stress on caregivers
- Social exclusion of elderly women and persons with disabilities

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4.6 Physical Wellbeing & Sports Participation

- Limited participation of women in sports and recreation
- Lack of women-friendly spaces for physical activity

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5. Strategic Areas of Action

5.1 Islamic Awareness & Women's Rights Education

Proposed Actions

Conduct regular:

- Islamic study circles (halaqas)
- Awareness sessions on:
    - Rights of women as wives
    - Rights and status of mothers
    - Women's participation in society and leadership
    - Mutual respect and responsibilities in families
    - Personal safety, hygiene, body boundaries, safe and unsafe relationships, Islamic understating of dignity and respect.

Implementation

- Collaborate with qualified scholars and female educators
- Produce simple educational materials in Dhivehi

5.2 Social Support & Community Wellbeing

Proposed Actions

- Establish:
    - Women's support groups
    - Social clubs and peer groups
    - Safe discussion spaces
- Organize:
    - Community gatherings
    - Family wellness activities
    - Hobby and skill-sharing groups

5.3 Parenting & Childcare Support

Proposed Actions

- Conduct parenting workshops on:
    - Positive parenting
    - Child emotional wellbeing
    - Managing screen time
- Advocate for:
    - Community childcare support systems
    - Child-friendly public spaces

5.4 Digital Awareness & Online Safety

Proposed Actions

Conduct awareness programs on:

- Cyberbullying and online harassment
- Privacy and online safety
- Responsible social media use
- Digital literacy for women and parents

5.5 Disability Inclusion & Elderly Care

Proposed Actions

- Raise awareness about:
  - Rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities
  - Respect and care for elderly persons
- Organize:
  - Caregiver support sessions
  - Inclusive community events
- Advocate for:
  - Accessible public spaces
  - Community assistance programs

5.6 Sports & Healthy Recreation

Proposed Actions

- Organize women-only:
  - Fitness sessions
  - Walking groups
  - Recreational sports events
- Promote:
  - Physical activity for women and girls
  - Healthy lifestyles and social wellbeing

5.7 Community Infrastructure & Social Development

Proposed Developments

Advocate with councils for:

- Women and children's community centres
- Safe indoor gathering spaces for women
- Child-friendly parks and play areas
- Multipurpose halls for:
  - Training
  - Halaqas
  - Sports and recreation

- Elderly-friendly social spaces
- Accessible infrastructure for persons with disabilities

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6. Conclusion

This policy provides a practical and culturally appropriate framework for improving the social wellbeing, religious awareness, and community participation of women in the Maldives. Through coordinated action between WDCs, councils, religious educators, and community stakeholders, stronger and more inclusive communities can be developed for women, children, families, and future generations.

5-Year Action Plan on Strengthening Social Wellbeing, Religious Awareness, and Community Support for Women (2026–2031)

Expected Outcomes at the end of 5 years

- Increased awareness of women's rights in Islam
- Reduced social isolation among women
- Improved parenting and family wellbeing
- Greater digital awareness and online safety
- Increased participation of women in sports and recreation
- Stronger inclusion of elderly persons and persons with disabilities
- Development of safer and more supportive community spaces

Year 1: Foundation & Awareness

Objectives

- Establish baseline understanding and initial programs

Key Actions

- Conduct community needs assessment
- Launch awareness campaigns on:
    - Women's rights in Islam
    - Parenting and digital safety
- Start monthly women's gatherings and halaqas
- Identify priority infrastructure needs

Targets – (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Conduct (x number) awareness sessions
- Reach (x number) women and families
- Establish partnerships with scholars and service providers

Year 2: Community Engagement & Support Systems

Objectives

- Build active support and social networks

Key Actions

- Establish:
    - Women's support groups
    - Parenting support groups
    - Walking and fitness groups
- Conduct online safety workshops
- Begin elderly care and disability awareness sessions

Targets - (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Establish at least (x number) active support groups
- Reach (x number) participants
- Conduct (x number) community activities

Year 3: Expansion & Community Development

Objectives

- Expand programs and strengthen inclusion

Key Actions

- Advocate for women's community gathering spaces and child-friendly recreation areas
- Expand sports and recreation programs
- Launch youth-focused digital awareness initiatives

Targets

- Increase participation across all age groups
- Conduct community-wide family events
- Establish regular sports/recreation activities

Year 4: Institutional Strengthening & Partnerships

Objectives

- Strengthen sustainability and partnerships

Key Actions

- Formalize collaboration with:
    - Schools
    - Religious institutions
    - Health and social service providers
- Expand accessibility initiatives for elderly and disabled persons
- Develop long-term community programming calendar

Targets- (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Reach (x)% of women in the community
- Increase participation of youth and families
- Demonstrate increased awareness and engagement

Year 5: Sustainability & Long-Term Impact

Objectives

- Institutionalize successful programs and developments

Key Actions

- Integrate programs into regular WDC activities
- Conduct final evaluation and impact assessment
- Publish annual community wellbeing report
- Continue long-term operation of social and support programs

Targets - (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Reach (X)% of women and families in the community
- Establish sustainable women's and family support systems
- Demonstrate improved social participation and wellbeing

Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Indicators

- Number of awareness sessions conducted
- Participation rates in programs and activities
- Number of support groups established
- Community feedback and satisfaction
- Progress on infrastructure developments

Reporting

- Half yearly progress reports
- Annual review submitted to council

Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Low participation	Flexible scheduling and targeted outreach
Sensitivity of religious/social topics	Engage qualified facilitators and scholars
Sustainability challenges	Build partnerships and community ownership
Lack of infrastructure funding	Advocate through phased development plans

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Chapter 4
Prevention of Domestic Violence and Workplace Sexual Harassment

Policy Proposal

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1. Legal Basis

This policy is aligned with the laws and institutional framework of the Maldives, including:

- Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (Law No. 3/2012)
- Regulations issued under the Act for coordination and service delivery
- Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Act (Law No. 16/2014)
- Sexual Offences Act (Law No. 17/2014, as amended)
- Relevant labour and workplace protection regulations

The Family Protection Authority is the legally mandated body to:

- Coordinate national efforts on domestic violence
- Provide services to victims
- Lead awareness and prevention initiatives

The Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare is responsible for:

- Social protection services
- Case management and support services
- National response coordination

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2. Purpose

To provide a structured framework for councils to work in coordination with WDCs to:

- Prevent domestic violence and workplace sexual harassment
- Support survivors in accordance with Maldivian law
- Ensure coordination with national protection systems

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All council and WDC members and council staff
- Community-level interventions
- Partnerships with employers and state institutions

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4. Definitions

4.1 Domestic Violence

As defined under the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act:

Violence occurring within a domestic relationship, including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse

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4.2 Sexual Harassment (Workplace)

As defined under the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Harassment Act:

- A sexual act (verbal, non-verbal, or physical) done against or in relation to a person, by another person without the consent of that first person, that creates a hostile or intimidating work environment
- A sexual act can be inferred from a person's speech or words, written communications, drawings or images, sounds, actions or movements, looks or other conduct.

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5. Policy Objectives

1. Strengthen prevention of domestic violence and workplace harassment
2. Ensure safe, confidential, and lawful handling of cases
3. Establish formal coordination with national authorities
4. Improve access to protection, reporting, and support services

6. Guiding Principles

- Legal compliance with Maldivian laws
- Confidentiality and survivor protection
- Survivor-centered approach
- Coordination, not duplication of government services
- Zero tolerance for violence and harassment

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7. Institutional Coordination Framework

7.1 Coordination with the Family Protection Authority

Councils shall:

- Refer all domestic violence cases through established national mechanisms
- Follow national referral protocols issued under the Domestic Violence Act
- Participate in awareness and prevention programs led by the Authority
- Share anonymized data (where required) for national monitoring

The law mandates coordination across institutions to prevent and respond to domestic violence

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7.2 Coordination with the Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare

Councils shall:

- Refer survivors for case management and social services
- Assist victims in accessing:
    - Shelters
    - Counseling
    - Financial and legal support
- Coordinate during emergency responses

7.3 Coordination with Maldives Police Service

- Immediate referral in cases involving:
    - Physical violence
    - Threats to life
    - Sexual offences
- Support survivors in reporting cases

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8. Key Policy Actions

8.1 Prevention & Awareness

Councils shall:

- Conduct regular awareness sessions on:
    - Domestic Violence Act rights and protections
    - Sexual harassment laws and workplace rights
- Promote reporting mechanisms and available services
- Engage men and community leaders

8.2 Reporting Mechanism (Community Level)

- Establish a council Focal Point for Protection Issues
- Establish a council hotline where necessary
- Provide a confidential first point of contact
- Clearly inform survivors:
    - Councils are not investigative bodies
    - Cases must be referred to authorized institutions

8.3 Referral Pathway (Mandatory)

Upon receiving a case:

Step 1: Ensure immediate safety
Step 2: Obtain consent from survivor (except high-risk cases)
Step 3: Refer to appropriate authority:

- Domestic violence → Family Protection Authority
- Social support → Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare
- Criminal matters → Police

National reporting channels include police, ministry hotlines, and FPA services

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8.4 Workplace Engagement

Councils, with WDCs, shall:

- Encourage employers to adopt anti-harassment policies
- Promote compliance with the Sexual Abuse and Harassment Act
- Conduct workplace awareness programs

8.5 Capacity Building

All council and WDC members must be trained on:

- Domestic Violence Act procedures
- Safe handling of disclosures
- Referral protocols
- Ethical and legal responsibilities

8.6 Safe Spaces & Support

- Facilitate peer support groups
- Provide safe environments for discussion
- Avoid acting as counselors beyond basic support

8.7 Data & Documentation

- Maintain anonymized records only
- No unauthorized data sharing
- Report trends (not identities) to relevant authorities

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9. Roles & Responsibilities

Local Council in coordination with WDCs

- Awareness and prevention
- First contact and referral
- Community engagement
- Provide institutional and logistical support
- Ensure coordination with national agencies

Family Protection Authority

- Lead national domestic violence response
- Coordinate services and protection

Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare

- Provide social services and case management

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10. Prohibited Actions by Councilors and WDCs

Councilors and WDC members must not:

- Investigate cases independently
- Mediate in serious abuse situations
- Pressure survivors to reconcile
- Share confidential information

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11. Monitoring & Compliance

Indicators

- Number of awareness sessions
- Number of referrals made
- Number of partnerships with workplaces
- Training completion rates

Compliance

- All council, WDC members and staff must sign confidentiality agreements with regard to domestic violence cases
- Violations may result in referral to authorities

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12. Policy Review

- Review every 2 years
- Update based on legal amendments and national strategies

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13. Conclusion

This policy ensures that Councils and WDCs operate within the Maldivian legal framework, while playing a critical role in prevention, awareness, and community-level support. By working in structured coordination with the Family Protection Authority and the Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare, councils and WDCs can strengthen protection systems and contribute to safer homes and workplaces across the Maldives.

5-Year Action Plan on Domestic Violence and Workplace Sexual Harassment (2026–2031)

"Safe Communities, Safe Workplaces – WDC Implementation Plan"

Overall Goal

To strengthen prevention, reporting, and response systems for domestic violence and workplace sexual harassment through coordinated, legally compliant community-level action.

Baseline (First 3 Months)

Establish:

- Number of DV/harassment awareness sessions currently conducted
- Number of reported/referral cases (if any)
- Number of Council/WDC members , council staff trained
- Existing coordination with authorities

5-Year Strategic Targets

- 100% of Council members, WDC members and council staff are trained on Prevention of Domestic Violence Act and prevention of Sexual Harassment Act.
- The council has a trained protection focal point.
- At least 70% of women in the community reached through awareness
- Functional referral pathway established and used in all cases
- X number (number to be decided by council and WDC) of workplaces engaged on anti-harassment practices
- Increased reporting (indicating trust in the system)
- Zero breaches of confidentiality by WDCs

YEAR 1: System Establishment & Legal Alignment

Objectives

- Build foundational systems aligned with Maldivian law
- Ensure council focal point's readiness to handle cases safely

Key Actions

- Appoint Council Protection Focal Point for Domestic Violence and sexual harassment cases.
- Conduct mandatory legal and safeguarding training in collaboration with:
    - Family Protection Authority
    - Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare
- Develop and distribute:
    - Referral directory
    - SOPs for case handling

- Establish confidential reporting channels - All council, WDC members and staff must sign confidentiality agreements with regard to domestic violence cases.
- Launch initial awareness campaign.

Targets

- Train 100% of council and WDC members and council staff
- Appoint focal point in council
- Conduct 2 awareness sessions per island/ward
- Establish formal referral linkages with authorities

YEAR 2: Awareness & Community Engagement

Objectives

- Increase public awareness and trust
- Normalize reporting and help-seeking behavior

Key Actions

- Conduct sustained awareness campaigns on:
    - Domestic Violence Act rights
    - Workplace harassment protections
- Engage:

    - Men and boys
    - Religious/community leaders
- Launch community dialogue sessions
- Introduce youth education programs (coordinate with HPA and ministry to involve school children as well)
- Launch Workplace Engagement Program:
    - Awareness for employers
    - Support for workplace policy adoption

Targets

- Reach 50% of women in the community
- Conduct x number (number to be decided by council and WDC) of awareness sessions annually.
- Establish at least 1 ongoing community discussion group.
- Increase referrals by 20% (from baseline)
- Engage x number of workplaces (numbers to be decided by council and WDC) in the campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace.

YEAR 3: Strengthening Response & Workplace Engagement

Objectives

- Improve response quality and coordination
- Extend policy impact into workplaces

Key Actions

- Strengthen referral tracking and follow-up systems
- Continue awareness programs

Targets

- Ensure 100% of reported cases are referred properly
- Achieve 60% community awareness level

YEAR 4: Expansion & Institutional Strengthening

Objectives

- Expand coverage and deepen institutional coordination
- Strengthen prevention systems

Key Actions

- Scale workplace engagement program
- Conduct joint campaigns with national authorities
- Introduce community-based prevention initiatives:
    - Family counseling awareness
    - Early warning/community support networks
- Strengthen data collection and reporting

Targets

- Engage x number (number to be decided by council and WDC) of workplaces
- Achieve 65–70% community awareness
- Conduct quarterly coordination meetings with authorities
- Demonstrate consistent increase in safe reporting rates

YEAR 5: Sustainability & Evaluation

Objectives

- Institutionalize systems within Council operations
- Evaluate and refine approach

Key Actions

- Conduct independent evaluation of program impact
- Integrate policy into standard Council operational guidelines
- Publish community safety report (anonymized)
- Continue training and awareness as ongoing programs

Targets

- Maintain 100% trained focal point coverage
- Achieve 70%+ awareness among women
- Ensure all cases handled through formal referral system

- Zero confidentiality breaches

Risk Management

Risks

- Underreporting due to stigma
- Mismanagement of cases by untrained members
- Breach of confidentiality
- Resistance from workplaces

Mitigation

- Continuous training
- Strict SOP enforcement
- Strong coordination with national authorities
- Awareness targeting men and employers

Critical Success Factors

- Strong coordination with:
    - Family Protection Authority
    - Ministry of Health, Family and Welfare
- Consistent awareness efforts
- Clear referral pathways (no informal handling of cases)
- Trust-building within the community

Chapter 5

Improving Women's and Children's Health Awareness and Prevention in the Community

Policy Proposal

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1. Title

"Healthy Women, Healthy Families: A Community-Based Strategy for Women's and Children's Health in the Maldives"

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2. Background & Rationale

Women and children are among the most important pillars of community wellbeing. While the Maldives has made significant progress in healthcare access and maternal-child health, several health challenges continue to affect women and children at community level, including:

- Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity
- Mental health issues including anxiety, depression, stress, and social isolation
- Nutritional concerns among women and children
- Reproductive and maternal health challenges
- Lack of awareness regarding preventive healthcare and early intervention
- Lifestyle-related illnesses linked to inactivity and unhealthy eating habits
- Child developmental, behavioral, and emotional wellbeing concerns
- Increasing social and digital pressures affecting youth mental health
- Substance use disorders

Women's Development Committees (WDCs), working in coordination with councils, health authorities, schools, and communities, are well-positioned to strengthen awareness, prevention, and early support systems at community level.

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3. Policy Objectives

1. Increase awareness of major health issues affecting women and children
2. Promote preventive healthcare and healthy lifestyles
3. Improve mental health awareness and reduce stigma
4. Strengthen community support systems for women and children
5. Encourage early detection and timely referral to health services
6. Awareness on and prevention of substance abuse
7. Awareness on seasonal communicable diseases

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4. Main Health Issues Identified

4.1 Women's Health Issues

A. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Obesity
- Heart disease
- Cancer
- Alzheimer's

Contributing Factors

- Sedentary lifestyles
- Poor diet
- Stress
- Lack of regular screening

B. Reproductive & Maternal Health

- Pregnancy-related complications
- Poor reproductive health awareness
- Menstrual health issues
- Anemia and nutritional deficiencies
- Infertility issues

C. Mental Health Issues

- Anxiety and depression
- Stress related to caregiving and financial pressures
- Postpartum depression
- Social isolation and burnout
- Adolescent mental health

D. Domestic Stress & Violence

- Emotional and psychological impacts of family conflict and abuse

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4.2 Children's Health Issues

A. Nutrition & Physical Health

- Childhood obesity
- Poor nutrition
- Lack of physical activity

B. Mental & Emotional Health

- Anxiety and stress among youth
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Social media-related mental health impacts
- Behavioral and emotional regulation challenges
- Gaming addiction

C. Developmental & Educational Concerns

- Learning difficulties
- Speech and developmental delays
- Lack of early intervention awareness
- ADHD Awareness
- Autism awareness

D. Child Safety & Protection

- Neglect
- Emotional abuse
- Online safety concerns
- Social anxiety (eg: Trauma related to divorce)

4.3 Elderly Women Issues

A. Physical Health Issues

- Sensory and functional impairments
- Reproductive & hormonal issues

B. Mental & Emotional Health Issues

- Psychosocial Issues

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5. Strategic Areas of Action

5.1 Health Awareness & Education

Proposed Actions

- Conduct regular awareness sessions on:
    - NCD prevention
    - Nutrition
    - Maternal health
    - Mental health
    - Child development and wellbeing
    - Elderly wellbeing
    - Drug awareness
- Develop:
    - Educational materials in Dhivehi
    - Social media awareness content

5.2 Mental Health Awareness & Support

Proposed Actions

- Conduct community discussions on:
    - Stress management
    - Anxiety and depression
    - Parenting stress
    - Youth mental health
    - Elderly health
    - Intergenerational trauma
- Promote stigma reduction regarding seeking help
- Facilitate:
    - Women's support circles
    - Parenting support groups
    - Peer to peer support service

5.3 Preventive Health & Screening

Proposed Actions

- Organize community health screening programs:
    - Blood pressure
    - Blood sugar
    - BMI checks
    - Maternal health checkups
    - Vision testing
    - Reproductive health consultations
- Promote:
    - Early medical consultation
    - Routine health screenings

5.4 Healthy Lifestyle Promotion

Proposed Actions

- Promote:
    - Physical activity programs for women and children
    - Healthy cooking awareness

    - Reduction of sugary drinks and unhealthy foods
- Organize:
    - Community fitness activities
    - Healthy family events

5.5 Child & Youth Wellbeing

Proposed Actions

- Conduct awareness sessions for parents on:
    - Child mental health
    - Positive parenting
    - Screen time management
    - Online safety
    - Awareness against bullying
- Collaborate with schools and youth organizations

5.6 Partnerships & Referral Systems

Proposed Actions

- Strengthen coordination with:
    - Health centres
    - Hospitals
    - Schools
    - Relevant ministries
    - NGOs
    - National Drug Agency
- Establish referral pathways for:
    - Mental health support
    - Child developmental concerns
    - Domestic violence-related health impacts

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6. Conclusion

This policy provides a practical, community-based framework for improving women's and children's health awareness and prevention in the Maldives. Through coordinated efforts between WDCs, councils, healthcare providers, and community stakeholders, healthier families and stronger communities can be built over the long term.

5-Year Action Plan on Improving Women's and Children's Health Awareness and Prevention in the Community

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Expected Outcomes at the end of 5 years

- Increased awareness of women's and children's health issues
- Increased awareness against substance abuse
- Improved preventive healthcare practices
- Reduced stigma around mental health and substance abuse
- Stronger family and community wellbeing
- Earlier identification and referral of health concerns

Year 1: Foundation & Awareness

Objectives

- Establish systems and baseline awareness

Key Actions

- Conduct baseline health awareness survey
- Launch community awareness campaign
- Conduct monthly health talks
- Train council health focal points

Targets - (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Reach x number of women and parents
- Conduct x number of awareness sessions
- Establish partnerships with local health services

Year 2: Community Engagement & Screening

Objectives

- Increase preventive healthcare participation

Key Actions

- Organize quarterly health screening camps
- Launch women's support groups and peer to peer support
- Train facilitators and launch support group for substance abuse victims
- Conduct nutrition and healthy lifestyle workshops
- Begin youth mental health awareness programs

Targets - (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Conduct x number of screening camps annually
- Reach x number of community members
- Establish at least 1 support group
- Train at least x number of facilitators to support substance abuse victims

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Year 3: Mental Health, Drug Awareness & Family Wellbeing Focus

Objectives

- Strengthen mental health awareness and support systems
- Strengthen drug awareness and support systems

Key Actions

- Conduct specialized mental health campaigns
- Conduct specialized awareness campaigns against substance (drug) abuse
- Introduce parenting workshops
- Organize youth wellbeing sessions in schools which also includes substance abuse awareness.
- Promote stress management and emotional wellbeing

Targets - (Target numbers to be decided by the council and WDC)

- Reach 60% of women in the community
- Conduct x number of mental health-focused sessions
- Increase referrals for support services where needed

Year 4: Expansion & Community Integration

Objectives

- Expand program reach and strengthen partnerships

Key Actions

- Scale successful programs community-wide
- Conduct family wellness events
- Strengthen collaboration with schools and healthcare providers
- Introduce physical activity initiatives for women and youth

Targets

- Reach 70% of households
- Conduct large-scale community wellness events
- Increase participation in preventive health programs

Year 5: Sustainability & Long-Term Impact

Objectives

- Institutionalize successful health initiatives

Key Actions

- Integrate health programs into regular WDC activities
- Conduct final impact assessment
- Publish annual community health awareness report
- Continue long-term support and awareness systems

Targets

- Reach 80% of women and families in the community
- Establish sustainable annual health programming
- Demonstrate increased awareness and preventive health behaviors

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Monitoring & Evaluation

Key Indicators

- Number of awareness sessions conducted
- Number of participants reached
- Screening participation rates
- Number of support groups established
- Community feedback and awareness improvements
- Number of facilitators trained in supporting substance awareness victims
- Number of referrals in the substance abuse support group

Reporting

- Quarterly progress reports
- Annual review submitted to council

Risks & Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Low participation	Flexible scheduling, outreach and non-judgmental approaches
Mental health and substance abuse related stigma	Community education, normalization and testimonials
Lack of resources	Partnerships with health providers
Sustainability challenges	Integrate into ongoing council operations

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Budget & Resource Considerations

Major Cost Areas
• Training and awareness programs
• Event organization
• Administration

Funding Sources

- Council budget allocation
- National programs
- Donor funding

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