

Introduction

This publication contains the Analysis of Census 2006 covering demographic and socio-economic aspects of the population. The report comprises of the following 15 chapters. Census history and procedures used in Census 2006; Population growth, age and sex composition; Fertility; Mortality; Migration; Nuptiality, patterns, trends and differentials; Education characteristics; Youth; Labor force and employment; Housing conditions and household amenities; Family structure and households; Situation population displaced by the tsunami; Population projections; and Gender and development. It also compares 2006 data with the past censuses to explore the ways the population of Maldives has changed overtime. A chapter on the characteristics of establishments in the country and their economic activities is also included in this report.

Although, a modern type of census was first conducted in the Maldives in 1977, the first census, a rudimentary process, was undertaken in the year 1911. The enormity of the costs involved and the experiences of prior censuses, together with rapid changes in the population characteristics, population censuses have been carried out every five years from 1985 to 2000. Census scheduled for 2005 was postponed to 2006 due to the Tsunami in December 2004.

Census 2006 was carried out in all 194 administrative islands, 88 resort islands and 34 industrial and other islands of the country. Data relating to size, geographical distribution, and socio-economic characteristics of the population such as age, sex, educational attainments, marital status, and employment were collected in the census and are analysed in the chapters of this report. Four questionnaires were administered for census data collection, namely: Household listing form, Persons listing form, Household form (includes household and persons information) and Establishment Form.

The countrywide exercise involved a total of 2,808 census staff. The enumeration of the people was carried out similar to previous censuses, on a de facto basis (i.e. counting the person where he/she was present at the time of enumeration). However, Maldivians who were temporarily out of the country were also included. Foreigners residing in the country for employment purposes were not included in the census. The Census 2006 also marks a change in census taking in the country, with engendering of the census and the use of Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR) for data scanning.

Since the population census was carried out during 21-28 March 2006, many different publications have already been released with many tabulations at national, atoll and island level, graphs and summaries, census questionnaires, manuals and the complete data base. For easy access and reference, all these publications are also made available on the MPND website www.planning.gov.mv.

It is important for data users to keep in mind that census provides a snapshot of the country. Hence, at the time of the census, population of some of the islands were displaced due to the 2004 tsunami and were living in temporary shelters, many of whom have already moved back to their home islands or other islands. Similarly, the census enumerates the population in the island where they were living at the time of the census, and hence the registered population figures in the administrative records of the Ministry of Atolls Development and maintained by the island offices may differ from the census figures.

Ministry of Planning and National Development

Male' Republic of Maldives

September 2008