

## Maldives




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### Responding institution:

#### ***National Library of Maldives***

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This is the first response from the Republic of Maldives. There are 80 public libraries, 5 university research libraries, 79 school libraries and 13 government research libraries.

Internet access stands at 41-60% for public libraries, 21-40% for school libraries, 61-80% for university libraries and 81-100% for government libraries.

Internet access is usually free of charge for a specified period of time, after which a fee is charged. The state has not provided additional funding for Internet access and libraries make their own efforts to acquire computers in order to improve access.

Very little of the content on the Internet is local and also very little content is available in local languages. The Maldives has an impressive literacy rate of 96.3%. There is a certain amount of filtering software on library computer terminals in the country for the protection of children and the safeguarding of religious values.

No anti-terror laws have been passed in the past two years, and the respondent has contended that it is unlikely that such legislation would impact on user privacy. Although there is no indication of whether the keeping of records would affect the freedom of expression of the user, it has been pointed out that having such records would allow librarians to render better services. The report also indicates that there

have been no reported incidents of violation of intellectual freedom in the past two years.

Although libraries have been concentrating on basic services such as human resources and acquiring hardware and software, leaflets and other resources on HIV/Aids are available in the libraries. There are no special programmes for promoting women's literacy or for providing access to special categories of information for women, because there are other institutions that do so.

The library association is in the process of amending its constitution, and the intention is to adopt a code of ethics within the next two years. The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not yet been adopted, as the focus is on basic development, but the association intends to adopt it within the next two years. The same reasoning and intention apply to the Glasgow Declaration.

### **User privacy and anti-terror legislation**

No anti-terror laws have been passed in the past two years. The respondent has contended that it is unlikely that such legislation would impact on user privacy. It has not been indicated whether keeping user records would affect the freedom of expression of the user, but it has been noted that having such records would allow librarians to render better services.

### **Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years**

The report indicates that no incidents of violation of intellectual freedom have been reported in the past

two years. Independent reports, however, point out a number of incidents that took place in the country.

The general atmosphere in the Maldives is not conducive to intellectual freedom. The arrests of human rights activists and protesters have been followed by incidents such as the arrest and imprisonment of a photographer, as well as the expulsion and banning of a reporter who ran a website that opposed the views of the government. There have also been calls from international and local journalists for reforms to media legislation in order to promote freedom of expression, as more news reporters come under attack and are threatened with imprisonment.

*Sources:*

<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/view/full/1011/>

[http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.phpURL\\_ID=24535  
&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/ci/en/ev.phpURL_ID=24535&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

[http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=20790&  
Valider=OK](http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=20790&Valider=OK)

#### **HIV/Aids awareness**

There are no specific programmes for raising HIV/Aids awareness in libraries in the Maldives, and the reason offered is that libraries are currently focusing on basic

services such as human resources and acquiring hardware and software. There are, however, leaflets and other resources on HIV/Aids available for library users.

#### **Women and freedom of access to information**

No special programmes for promoting women's literacy or for providing access to special categories of information are offered by libraries, because other institutions are rendering these services.

#### **IFLA Internet Manifesto**

The library association has not adopted the Internet Manifesto because the focus is still very much on basic development, but it intends to adopt the Manifesto within the next two years.

#### **IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom**

The same reasoning and intention apply to the Glasgow Declaration.

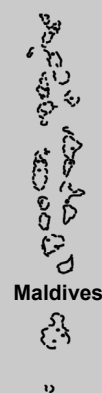
#### **Ethics**

The library association is in the process of amending its constitution. In all probability, a code of ethics will be adopted within the next two years.

### Main indicators

Country name:	Maldives
Population:	369 031 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Maldivian Dhivehi (dialect of Sinhala, script derived from Arabic), English spoken by most government officials
Literacy:	96.3%
Literacy reported by respondent:	96.3%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the  
*CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition  
 (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).



Maldives

### Libraries and Internet access

Maldives participated for the first time in the IFLA/FAIFE World Report in 2007. No comparisons can therefore be made with previous reports.

#### Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	80
Estimated number of school libraries:	79
Estimated number of university libraries:	5
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	13
Source of these numbers:	Registration of Island Libraries database, Survey of Libraries in Male; Maldives country report 2006 for CDNLAO Conference

#### Internet access

Population online**:	20 100 Internet users as of April 2007 (6.6%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	21-40%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very little
<i>To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:</i>	Very little
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No data provided
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – for the protection of children and to safeguard religious values
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	No – free Internet access is given for a specified duration (e.g. 15 or 30 minutes), after which a fee is charged
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	No – individual efforts are made by libraries to obtain computers to provide access to the Internet

\* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

\*\* Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats ([www.internetworldstats.com](http://www.internetworldstats.com)).

\*\*\* Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.