

Mental Health Services for Children – A Child Rights Perspective

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Background

- Children's Ombudsperson's Office monitors and oversees all matters related to children's rights and welfare in the Maldives.
- Mental health is an area of concern and the need for more accessibility has been highlighted throughout our work.

Children at-risk

**Children under-state
care**

**Children in conflict
with the law**

Objectives

- 1 Monitoring the implementation of the Child Rights Protection Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 2 Implementation of child rights perspectives in the delivery of mental health services.
- 3 Evaluating the regulation and accessibility to mental health services for children

Methodology

The methodology for the audits and investigations included a comprehensive review of:

- Laws and regulations
- International conventions and good practices
- Standards related to child rights and mental health

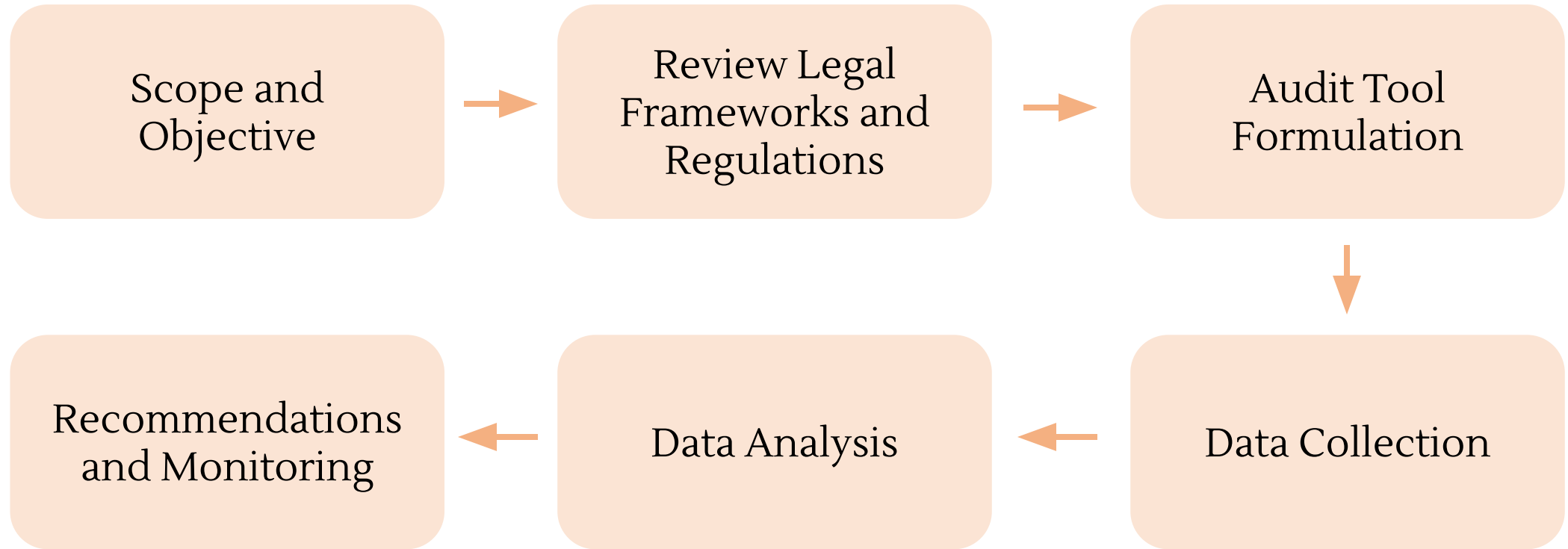
Data Collection

- Interviews
- Statements
- Document Reviews
- Record-checking
- Building Inspections

Institutions

- Family and Childrens Service Centers
- Hospitals
- Schools
- National Drug Agency
- National Reintegration Center
- Juvenile Detention Center
- Maldives Police Service

Audit Process



Audit Tool

#	Core Component	#	Laws and Regulations	Item	Status	Means of Verification
1	<p>සමස්ත ප්‍රතිපත්ති අනුපිළිවෙත් විස්තරය</p>	1.1	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Not Compliant	Interview
		1.2	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Partially Compliant	Interview
		1.3	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Partially Compliant	Document
2	<p>නිරීක්ෂණ</p>	2.1	(5) 8 19/2019	15 වන අංශයේ 18 වන කුලසටහනේ සඳහන් කර ඇති නිරීක්ෂණ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ විධිවිධාන.	Compliant	Interview
3	<p>සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක විස්තරය</p>	3.1	19 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන.	Compliant	Interview
		3.2	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Partially Compliant	Interview
		3.3	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Partially Compliant	Interview
		3.4	(ස) 34 19/2019	සෞඛ්‍ය සේවක පුහුණුව සහතික කිරීමේ ක්‍රමලේඛයේ 19/2019 වන අංශයේ විධිවිධාන අනුපිළිවෙත්.	Partially Compliant	Interview

Investigation Process

Preliminary Inquiry

Investigation

Evaluation

Information Report

Findings

Social Sector

- Lack of mental health services given for children under state-care.
- Distinction between forensic assessments and clinical assessments are not clear.
- Lack of effective rehabilitation programs for children in conflict with the law.

Education Sector

- Shortage of qualified trained mental health professionals within the education sector.
- Lack of effective early intervention and identification programs for at-risk children.
- Need for better support systems for children with special needs within school settings.

Healthcare Sector

- Shortage of qualified mental health professionals across the country.
- Centralisation of resources hinder accessibility for children outside of Greater Male Region.
- Lack of regulation of the mental health sector leading to ethical issues in service provision.

Rights-Based Approach

Article 2
Non-Discrimination

Article 3
Best-interest of the
child

Article 12
Respect for the child's
views

Article 19
Protection from
violence, abuse and
neglect

Article 23
Disabled children

Article 24
Health and healthcare

Recommendations

Providing continuous
standardized care

Establishing coordinated
referral mechanisms

Increasing mental health
related trainings

Establishing systematic
monitoring mechanisms

Early intervention and
prevention programs

Establishing a
community-based care
model

Discussion

- More context-specific research needs to be conducted on mental health in the Maldives.
- Early intervention and preventive measures are necessary to facilitate healthy development in children.
- Lack of evidence-based government policies, low resources and funding and a shortage of trained clinicians hinder the progress of service delivery.

References

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oevaru

mental health conference

15 - 16 october 2023

changing currents ~

~ forming connections

Thank you