A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the disaster

On 20 September 2019, around 19:30 local time, a fire broke out in a residential area of the Maldives capital, Male’ city, which displaced more than 300 people. According to the Maldives National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), over 700 people (450 males and 336 females) were affected, including over 100 migrant workers. Varying degrees of damage were sustained to 24 surrounding buildings, of which 8 were declared uninhabitable and has since been demolished.

During the emergency, several evacuations were made and one casualty declared after a 46-year-old woman was found after reported to be trapped. The Maldivian Red Crescent (MRC) worked with other first responders on the scene including Maldives National Defense Force (MNDF), MNDF Fire and Rescue Services (MNDF FRS) and Maldives Police Service (MPS). MRC assisted with guiding people to safety following evacuations, provided first aid to affected and transported the more seriously injured to the hospitals.

Summary of current response

Overview of Maldivian Red Crescent

Since MRC’s inception, first aid has been an essential service for which the organization is recognized, while psychosocial support (PSS) has steadily grown to become another service that is identified with MRC, given MRC’s increasingly important role in facilitating PSS interventions during emergency response when required. In 2016, MRC’s Malé branch established a PSS
“centre” with the aim to acquire knowledge, capacity and develop resources to provide sustainable PSS to the greater Malé region. This centre functions by establishing standards and guidelines to provide PSS, design and deliver programmes following the established guidelines and develop relevant partnerships with stakeholders to be better able to deliver psychosocial support services to a wider group of people. These are done with the support of PSS facilitators, counsellors and health professionals as well as volunteers who have been trained in psychological first aid. They have been actively involved in providing PSS support to those affected by recent disaster events and emergencies.

The extensive experience mentioned above, and the National Emergency Operations Plan gives MRC the lead in coordinating PSS functions in emergencies. As such, MRC was requested by the government to take a lead role on PSS services for this emergency at a national level. MRC deployed volunteers to the scene of the relief centre set up in Kalaafaanu school and was represented in the national level emergency operations centre.

The relief centre set up in Kalaafaanu school hall facilitated registration of displaced people, where MRC took the lead with NDMA in providing first aid, engaged relief aid distribution, registration of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and identification of further PSS. Temporary accommodations were arranged for 302 people from 53 families while several people moved in with their extended families. Accommodation for displaced migrants were arranged by the government or by their employers.

MRC responded to the immediate needs of the emergency with the relevant authorities by supporting safe transport to temporary shelters once people were evacuated from the fire site, providing first aid for 34 affected people, psychosocial support for 145 affected people and shelter management since MRC is legally mandated to provide humanitarian services, especially in emergencies. MRC also supported by distributing relief items such as clothes, toiletries and essential items to over 500 affected people in NMDA’s relief collection centre. Thereafter, a psychosocial support helpline was set up and run by MRC volunteers to help support people affected by the fire.

Two months post-fire, MRC Male’ Branch is still continuing engagement through the established emergency response teams and through the set-up of a PSS operation team specifically for this operation, supported by staff as necessary. Key means of engagement include, operating a telephone hotline, which started as a 24-hour service for the first week following the fire and now moved on to a more stable structured plan of targeted PSS interventions, with the support of this DREF.

Overview of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in country

MRC in its day-to-day programmes, services and other areas of work, is continually supported and guided by IFRC and ICRC. There is currently no IFRC presence in-country. However, the MRC is closely guided by the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team (CCST) in New Delhi, ICRC Regional Delegation in New Delhi and the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Overview of non-Red Cross Red Crescent actors in country

MRC is working together with the NDMA, MNDF, MNDF FRS, and MPS. NDMA is the lead coordination authority for disasters and emergencies. MNDF together with the Fire and Rescue Services is the lead in providing first responders along with MPS and MRC. Some other organizations including the Maldives Cadet Corps, Girl Guides Association and Scouts Association has operated as secondary support groups under the lead of the above.

Needs analysis and scenario planning

Needs analysis

The current needs of the people directly affected by the fire, after addressing the immediate needs as identified by NDMA and MRC, are more around medium to long-term needs, such as relocating to more permanent living spaces, for both locals and migrants alike. In addition to this, some of the more severely affected are in need of household items and facilitation of day-to-day routines such as clothes, doing laundry, toiletries, kitchenware, utensils, etc. The initial assessment was done by NDMA and did not collect disaggregated data. Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Services are conducting an assessment, but MRC has not as yet received the report.

The concerns around protecting the rights of migrants, especially during emergencies, has been heightened. MRC work with public authorities to ensure that they can work within its humanitarian space to provide assistance and services impartially and to lobby and advocate for the protection of the rights of immigrant workers.

There are a number of children affected by the incident, and many of them have had their school and daily routines interrupted following the emergency. Based on the information received through the assessment report of local authorities, MRC plans to implement its PSS work for children around child-friendly spaces as part of the DREF.
With comprehensive PSS interventions set up and implementation, referral pathways will also be established. Moreover, through targeted PSS groups and house visits, those affected can reach out for more help to address their concerns. PSS interventions will be made as inclusive as possible with migrant volunteers who can act as interpreters when speaking to migrants who have been affected by the emergency.

For the above reasons and due to request from the government to support on PSS, MRC identified the need for a PSS Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) who arrived on 11 November 2019 and since his arrival has been supporting the current temporary operation centre for PSS activities in further developing and implementing PSS programme. In addition, a PSS officer as well as an administrative officer has been hired to develop and implement the PSS activities outlined.

With regards to livelihood interventions such as multi-purpose cash grants, MRC has already been providing cash assistance to the affected people through funds raised by MRC nationally, and the support through this DREF operation will be utilized for unmet psychosocial needs.

**Targeting**

This operation’s target population currently considers all those who were directly affected by the fire, which totals 786 affected people (450 males and 336 females), of which 66 are children and 150 are migrant workers (19 per cent of total affected population).

**Scenario planning**

The most likely scenario is that people impacted by the fire will return to accommodation within the city with similar hazards that led to the fire with only some of the needs addressed. The preferred scenario would be for those affected by the fire to be accommodated in residences where potential hazards to safety are removed, needs are addressed, financial burdens are eased and rights are fully protected. This will also offer opportunities for more resilience. The worst-case scenario would be for the situation to remain the same and risk of a similar disaster happening again.

**Operational risk assessment**

MRC will ensure that the volunteers and staff engaged in implementation of activities are protected by taking into account any necessary measures to ensure their safety, by working with and abiding by the regulations that are set out by relevant authorities, especially if the work requires going to the scene of the fire.

Volunteers and staff who interact with the affected will be briefed and sensitized on conduct and interaction to ensure that the needs and dignity of those affected are prioritised. MRC has a referral mechanism which will be utilized for both volunteers and staff. Regular debriefings will be held with volunteers and those needing mental healthcare will be identified and addressed promptly by trained MRC volunteers and staff engaged in the operation.

An operational risk could be the limited human resources due to volunteer unavailability. To mitigate this, as is the current practice and as a motivational measure, is to continue writing to government agencies with the relevant capacities to seek their support in releasing their staff (sometimes MRC volunteers).

It is also anticipated that there could be a reluctance to seek PSS, especially within migrant communities. To mitigate this, outreach efforts will be increased. Related to this, language barriers that exist can be mitigated by training migrant volunteers to provide PSS directly to their communities.

**B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY**

**Proposed strategy**

**Overall operational objective**

This operation aims to assist 786 people affected by the fire. It will also indirectly support at least 100,000 people in the city community through PSS, integrated social inclusion and mental health activities. The operation will be implemented over a period of four months. The primary focus of this work will be on providing psychological first aid and psychosocial support to the people who were directly affected by the fire.

Through broader activities after the DREF operation, MRC also intends to create more public awareness around the prevention of and preparedness for emergencies and disasters, and the PSS needs that arise during this fire event, through campaigns, advocacy and communications work, to impact positive behavioural change for the future.
Proposed strategy

MRC’s response aims at enhancing overall well-being of the affected families through comprehensive psychosocial support (PSS) activities to provide assistance and protection, promote rights, dignity and resilience, help identify opportunities, and promote social inclusion. An additional focus of this response is to reach out to the most vulnerable groups affected by the fire, such as the migrant workers, which comprise of 19 per cent of the total affected population.

At present, MRC is leading PSS services for this emergency at national level. The operation centre for PSS activities of MRC’s Malé branch is the main capacity and knowledge hub for the programme during the four months operation. MRC will work closely with other stakeholders to ensure no duplication of work and efforts.

Trained MRC volunteers together with trained staff have been providing PSS for affected families. The operation centre for PSS activities is set up at the Social Center, where the affected people can easily visit and access services such as teleconsulting, referral support to mental health issues identified and follow-up with the people. In order to facilitate the grieving process and strengthen the social support systems of the affected families, MRC will very soon be establishing or supporting self-help groups and peer support networks.

To ensure the implementation for the above, MRC has developed the operational strategies in active collaboration with technical personnel from IFRC’s Psychosocial Centre. In order to implement the strategies, MRC has been recruiting technical staff who will ensure quality programming as for now, there is very limited capacity to support this type of operation. To this end, one PSS officer and one Admin officer have already been hired in order to sustain the operation. One more PSS officer will be hired, preferably a migrant.

The PSS officers’ main tasks are as follows:
- Plan and strategize action plan.
- Technical support in ensuring all activities are results-oriented and follows best practices.
- Volunteer guidance and mentoring.
- Documenting, monitoring and evaluating PSS interventions.
- Conduct PSS interventions themselves.
- Develop guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

The Admin officer’s main tasks are as follows:
- Support administrative tasks:
  - Organize an efficient administrative system of the day-to-day running of the operation centre for PSS activities.
  - Maintain a central filing system, database and incoming and outgoing files.
  - Provide administrative support for matters relating to the management of volunteers and personnel engaged in the operation centre for PSS activities.
- Support coordination tasks:
  - As per the plans for the PSS operations, coordinate all necessary implementation procedures which includes, planning, logistics, human resources, procurement, arranging meetings, coordinating with relevant focal points and stakeholders, etc.
  - Ensure regular maintenance of logs and data, weekly reportings to the technical working group, conducting and documenting debriefs, etc.

Assistance provided via DREF funding is being linked to longer-term programming in alignment with the strategic priority areas of MRC, a key component of which is PSS via health, well-being and social inclusion. Longer-term mental health and psychosocial interventions will focus on enhancing overall well-being through the establishment of sense of place and by this, MRC will ensure that affected people will not be left behind after the DREF operation is completed.

Human resources

At branch level, two PSS officers (to ensure full coverage of the affected populations including migrants) and one Admin officer will be needed for the duration of this operation in order to sustain the operation considering the situation that Malé branch only has one staff member while MRC headquarters has one staff who takes care of all health and inclusion related programs nationally. On top of that, the branch staff does not have technical PSS background and relies completely on volunteers for technical input and programmatic interventions. PSS capacities have been identified among volunteers who can potentially fill in these staff positions and deliver concrete outputs. As per reporting period, one PSS officer and one Admin officer have already been hired and another PSS officer will follow suit. One PSS RDRT has also been deployed to support this DREF operation.
Logistics and supply chain

The supply chain strategy for this operation will be sourcing required items locally or if needed, internationally following MRC and/or IFRC procedures, ensuring efficient and timely delivery of these items for the success of the operation. MRC headquarters is providing logistics technical support to the branch to ensure transparency and accountability in the procurement process. IFRC CCST office in Indian and IFRC Asia Pacific Operational Logistics, Procurement and Supply Chain Management (OLPSCM) department in Kuala Lumpur will provide technical support to MRC as needed.

Information technologies (IT)

High-speed Wi-Fi internet connectivity is available for the MRC branch and headquarters staff members. Support of corporate telecom partners are sought towards procuring and expediting telecom needs. MRC will prepare the essential materials and systems, such as SIM cards and its phone line to the telephone devices donated by one of the cooperate partners of MRC, which can be utilized to implement the PSS hotline service.

Communications

MRC communications staff are working in close coordination with the IFRC regional communications team to ensure that the evolving humanitarian needs and MRC’s response are well profiled and disseminated across social media platforms and in national and international media.

Security

MRC and IFRC security focal points will continue to monitor the situation. Any security concerns will be handled with local authorities as per existing security framework. All volunteers and staff involved in this operation will be briefed accordingly and insured before attending any activities.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation, & reporting (PMER)

MRC will oversee all operational, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting aspects of the operation in the targeted areas through the Malé branch. This will also be supported by the CCST and the RDRT PMER. In addition to the responsibility for day-to-day monitoring of the operation, MRC will conduct a lesson learned workshop towards the end of the operation.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People reached: N/A (data is not available yet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome 1: The immediate risks to the health of affected populations are reduced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators:</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of affected population report reduction in immediate risks</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Will be updated in final report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output 1.1: Psychosocial support provided to the target population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators:</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of volunteers and staff trained in PSS</td>
<td>75 volunteers, 5 staff</td>
<td>69 volunteers, 0 staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of people reached by PSS interventions through pre-test and post-test with indicative questions</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress towards outcomes

A rapid needs assessment was conducted following the fire, through telephone as the primary mode of data collection. The interventions were 2-fold. First, a bulk message was sent out to all individuals affected, using the
database received from NDMA. The SMS were sent in English, Dhivehi and Bangla and asked affected people to reach out should there be a need to, along with a contact number they can call. Secondly, calls were made individually by PSS volunteers, to affected families and migrants.

In both cases, those who reached out were given PSS, through phone or through home visits where needs were identified. Referral pathways were established and followed-through. There are also a number of children who were affected by the incident, and many of them have had their school and daily routines interrupted by this emergency. Over the next months as part of this DREF, based on the needs assessment, MRC intends to implement its PSS work for children and the establishment of child-friendly spaces that can be set up as part of the work that is to be done through the recovery efforts.

Although MRC carried a rapid needs assessment (stated above), a detailed needs analysis was not carried out due to the challenges in obtaining access to timely up to date and disaggregated information from the state authorities. Additionally, since the NDMA and the Ministry of Gender had conducted their own needs assessments, it was seen as an added burden on the affected families to do one again by MRC. Therefore, it was discussed and agreed by both state authorities that the analysis will be shared with MRC to be utilized for the PSS interventions. However, while the NDMA data was being regularly shared, the data from the analysis by Gender Ministry is yet to be received. MRC is in constant contact and the delay is due to delays in report compilation from the Ministry’s end, and latest updates received ensure that the report will be ready soon.

Operationally, a major challenge was the unprecedented delay in hiring staff for the plan of action (PoA) implementation. Recruitment took over several attempts over the course of a month, which delayed implementation substantially. To address these, MRC went into headhunting for potential individuals and have been able to hire two staff (Admin Officer and PSS Officer).

### Protection, Gender and Inclusion

People reached: N/A (data is not available yet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Male:</th>
<th>Female:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Outcome 1: Communities identify the needs of the most vulnerable and particularly disadvantaged and marginalised groups, as a result of inequality, discrimination and other non-respect of their human rights and address their distinct needs

**Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized are identified and addressed</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Will be updated in final report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Output 1.1: Emergency response operations prevent and respond to sexual- and gender-based violence and all forms of violence against children**

**Indicators:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of staff and volunteers engaged in promotion of child protection activities</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75 Volunteers, 5 Staff</td>
<td>Not started</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of community members in the target population reached through awareness and advocacy activities</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Not started</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Progress towards outcomes

No activities have yet been conducted towards this outcome yet due to challenges in kick-starting full implementation due to challenges in recruitment of human resources. This is being planned for the upcoming weeks.

### Strengthen National Society

S1.1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform.
Indicators:  
NS capacity building objectives are set and met at the end of the operations  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Will be updated on final report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output S1.1.4: National Societies have effective and motivated volunteers who are protected

Indicators:  
% of volunteers engaged as first responders and in PSS who are provided with regular debriefing and PSS support  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress towards outcomes

Operationally, a major challenge was the unprecedented delay in hiring staff for the PoA implementation. Recruitment took over several attempts over the course of a month, which delayed implementation substantially. To address these, MRC went into headhunting for potential individuals and have been able to hire two staff (Admin Officer and PSS Officer).

International Disaster Response

Outcome SFI2.1: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured

Indicators:  
% of operations in accordance to established guidelines  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output S2.1.1: Effective and respected surge capacity mechanism is maintained

Indicators:  
% of compliance with IFRC HR procedures  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress towards outcomes

As per reporting period, one PSS officer and one Admin officer have already been hired and another PSS officer will follow suit. One PSS RDRT has also been deployed to support this DREF operation. The operation is being conducted based on established guidelines of IFRC and MRC.

Influence others as leading strategic partner

Outcome S3.1: The IFRC secretariat, together with National Societies uses their unique position to influence decisions at local, national and international levels that affect the most vulnerable

Indicators:  
IFRC and MRC are considered as reliable and effective partners at the National Level  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output S3.1.1: IFRC and NS are visible, trusted and effective advocates on humanitarian issues

Indicators:  
% of positive interactions and responses to MRC’s media engagement  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>At least 90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Output S3.1.2: IFRC produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming

Indicators:  
All reporting requirements set and adhered to for the duration of the operation  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Progress towards outcomes
As mentioned earlier, MRC communications staff and the IFRC regional communications team are working in close coordination to ensure that communications and media matters is being managed accordingly. Additionally, a lesson learned workshop shall be conducted at the end of the operation and a final report will be issued within three months after operation ends.

**Effective, credible and accountable IFRC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome S4.1: The IFRC enhances its effectiveness, credibility and accountability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicators:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of operations in accordance to established guidelines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Output S4.1.3: Financial resources are safeguarded; quality financial and administrative support is provided contributing to efficient operations and ensuring effective use of assets; timely quality financial reporting to stakeholders**

| Indicators: | Target | Actual |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Compliance and efficiency of MRC’s financial reporting to IFRC | Yes | Yes |

**Progress towards outcomes**

MRC is overseeing all operational, implementation, monitoring and reporting aspects. IFRC is providing technical support in programme management to ensure the operational objectives are met. IFRC will continue to provide necessary support to the operation and ensure financial compliances are in place.

**D. BUDGET**

A total of CHF 70,103 has been allocated for MRC to respond to the needs of 786 people affected by the fire. It will also indirectly support at least 100,000 people in the city community through PSS, integrated social inclusion and mental health activities. A financial report on the expenditures will be made available for the final report.
Contact

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

In the Maldivian Red Crescent
- Aishath Noora, secretary general; email: aishath.noora@redcrescent.org.mv
- Yasmin Rasheed, manager, programs and services, operation coordination, phone: +960 334 1009; email: yasmin.rasheed@redcrescent.org.mv

In the IFRC country cluster support team (CCST), New Delhi
- Abhishek Rimal, acting head of office, Phone: +91 11 2332 4235; email: abhishek.rimal@ifrc.org
- Meenu Bali, officer – disaster preparedness & logistics; phone: +91 9971641414; email: meenu.bali@ifrc.org

In the IFRC Asia Pacific regional office in Kuala Lumpur
- Mohammed Omer Mukhier, deputy director; email: mohammedomer.mukhier@ifrc.org
- Necephor Mghendi, head of DCPRR; email: necephor.mghendi@ifrc.org
- Vinod Muniandy, operations coordinator; email: opscoord.southasia@ifrc.org
- Riku Assamaki, regional logistics coordinator; mobile: +6012 298 9752; email: riku.assamaki@ifrc.org
- Rosemarie North, communications manager; mobile: +60 12 230 8451; email: rosemarie.north@ifrc.org

In the IFRC Geneva
- Nelson Castano, manager, operations coordination; email: nelson.castano@ifrc.org
- Tiffany Loh, senior officer, response and recovery; email: tiffany.loh@ifrc.org
- Karla Morizzo, DREF senior officer; phone: +41 (0) 22 730 4295; email: karla.morizzo@ifrc.org

For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges
- Alice Ho, partnership in emergencies coordinator; email: rm.asiapacific@ifrc.org

For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)
- Siew Hui Liew, PMER manager; email: siewhui.liew@ifrc.org

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO’s) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC’s vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.