



Handover of JSTOR Subscription to Higher Education Institutions **Remarks by: Enrico Gaveglia, Resident Representative - UNDP Maldives**

*Honourable Dr. Ibrahim Hassan, Minister of Higher Education
Representatives from Maldives Polytechnic, MAPS College and the education sector
Special invitees gracing our ceremony today
Assalaam Alaikum. A very good morning.*

It is an honour for UNDP in the Maldives to support our national partners as you strengthen the gateways for resilient and future-forward education systems.

We are delighted to handover the JSTOR Subscription to Higher Education Institutions, which will provide access to important scholarly literature through a powerful research and teaching platform.

Today's handover of the JST Subscription is a crucial step in providing uninterrupted access to education for more students across the Maldives islands and enhance their learning experience through crises such as pandemics and beyond, and bridge the digital divide.

Ladies and gentlemen. We are welcoming the opportunities that digitalization can provide towards building the sustainable society of the future.

With today's support, a total of 15 higher education institutions across the country will be given access to JSTOR and also trained on its use.

Our gratitude and thanks go out to our partner Japan, for the continued support to UNDP's work, and the endowment to bridge the access gap and promote inclusive and equitable lifelong learning opportunities for the Maldivian people.

As part of our project together on 'Promoting Social Cohesion in the Maldives', Japan has been providing digitalization support to the Ministry of Higher Education to improve their capacities in providing educational services in a decentralized and effective manner.

Under this project, we already had a successful engagement with the Ministry to provide ICT equipment to conduct online vocational training classes which connected regional students to lecturers logging in centrally.

UNDP is happy to continue this collaboration with our national partner, the Ministry of Higher Education. This time to provide access to the academic community to enrich their libraries and connect students and faculty to vital content, in a more resourceful manner. This opens doors for independent researchers with access to new opportunities, and for publishers to reach new audiences and preserve their content for future generations.

Digital solutions are expected to revolutionize how people access basic services, such as health and education, and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The efforts of the Government of Maldives and service institutes to embrace existing and emerging digital technology and accelerate provision of services in a decentralized and effective manner, is a step towards greater inclusion, equity and opportunities.

Today's handover initiative specifically will contribute towards SDG 4 on Quality Education, and SDG 10 on Reduced Inequalities.

This is a step we are honoured to be a part of. UNDP is committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the principles of universality and equality. We remain committed to serve our partners in their efforts to achieve the SDGs, and ensure vulnerable populations are not left behind.

We once again thank the Ministry of Higher Education, as well as the academic, technical, and vocational education institutions in attendance, and our development partner - the Government and people of Japan. Our actions today will help to build strong and resilient education systems for a more equitable world and a better tomorrow.

Together, let's build a future that works for everyone.

I thank you.

Shukriya. Stay safe and well.