

Environmental awareness media project



Ahmeed Saleem (right) and his team from DhiFM Radio, Maldives © Hanying Li

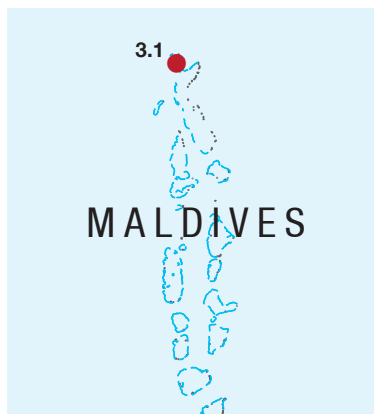
through a popular radio station, DhiFM. It also supported a nationwide environmental awareness campaign through songs and posters. These programmes helped intensify existing environmental awareness efforts in the Maldives.

Target beneficiaries

The programmes were broadly targeted at a national audience, and specifically at residents of Hoarafushi Island.

Outputs

- ▶ In all, 17 radio shows were produced plus five environmental songs on video, three video spots to raise awareness, and training on environmental issues for a local radio journalist.



LOCATION

Hoarafushi Island, Haa Alifu Atoll, Upper North Province, Maldives

PRIORITY POWS

- Civil Society Engagement

DURATION

Six months from 1 October 2009

MFF GRANT AMOUNT

US\$24,890

Objectives

This project's objectives were to instill an environmental consciousness in people of all ages, to bring to the attention of decision makers the environmental issues that concern people, and to share success stories from island communities to motivate others to try similar activities.

Background

Faced with rapidly changing socio-political conditions, the people of the Maldives have limited time for and awareness of the country's pressing environmental issues. Although the government and NGOs have organized several schemes to raise environmental awareness, many people in outlying islands continue to be left out. Despite the close links between the development of the Maldives and its environment, the country has few cohesive or sustained awareness-raising initiatives aimed at developing people's ability to engage in decision making for sustainable development.

The MFF Small Grants Facility supported three programmes aimed at disseminating information on the importance of mangroves

Accomplishments and challenges

There was a strong response to the radio shows and video spots from the general public. Further, the materials produced by the project are not copyrighted and so available to other broadcasters, NGOs and schools free of charge. The songs and video spots are expected to be broadcast widely on both radio and television.

The materials are also frequently used by school environmental clubs, environmental NGOs, and Scouts and Girl Guides groups during their activities.

Station managers expect the environmental messages in the songs, videos and radio spots to continue to reach audiences for a long time to come. They also expect that, with 17 shows produced and a journalist trained, the radio station will be more sensitive to environmental issues and pay more attention to environmental issues in its daily news coverage.

Challenges

The project originally planned to nominate and second a journalist from DhiFM to an

environmental organization in the region to expose them to environmental issues and challenges. In the end, it proved unfeasible for a short project to arrange an overseas attachment. In consultation with UNDP, it was eventually decided to place a journalist with the Atoll Ecosystems Conservation (AEC) Project in Baa Atoll. With support from AEC experts, a DhiFM journalist spent ten days travelling among islands in the Baa Atoll to learn about the environmental challenges faced by local communities, conduct interviews and collect audio and video materials for broadcasting.

Contributions to cross-cutting themes

Climate change

Coastal zone management is a part of national

policy to support and strengthen adaptation to the impacts of climate change. The Maldives MFF National Strategy and Action Plan (NSAP) reflects many of these considerations and climate-change related actions are mainstreamed in strategic actions, including the SGF projects in the Maldives.

Lessons learned

Looking back at the journalist training experience, project managers feel that modifying the activity benefitted the project more because the journalist was exposed to local issues of greater interest to listeners in the Maldives.

Partners and their contribution

DhiFM made an in-kind contribution valued at US\$10,000.

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