

Enhancing community participation in sustainable coastal management

S4S, community members and hotel staff clean and restore mangroves, Port Glaud © E. Talma, S4S



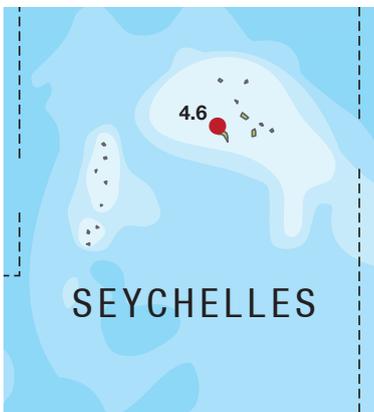
built between the beach and the mangrove swamp, and was expected to open in early 2010. This project sought to help the residents of Port Glaud work together with the resort and other local partners to develop a sustainable community development plan to take advantage of the increased tourism traffic, improve livelihoods, and at the same time protect and enhance the area's coastline and cultural heritage.

Target beneficiaries

Residents and stakeholders in Port Glaud.

Outputs

- ▶ Establishment of a community based organization (CBO) in Port Glaud to lead the process of sustainable development.
- ▶ A sustainable management plan written by and for the community.
- ▶ Increased public awareness of the importance of natural and cultural heritage sites.
- ▶ Increased public participation in sustainable development activities.
- ▶ A survey report comparing community attitudes, awareness and involvement at the beginning and end of the project.
- ▶ Education and awareness materials to promote coastal management and training for stakeholders and to share with other communities.



LOCATION

Port Glaud, Mahé, Seychelles

PRIORITY POWS

- Knowledge for Management
- Civil Society Engagement
- Sustainable Livelihoods

DURATION

One year

MFF GRANT AMOUNT

US\$24,500

Objectives

This project had three objectives:

- 1 to increase public participation in environmental planning and management, and improve networking between the community, a resort and other stakeholders;
- 2 to improve people's awareness and appreciation of their natural and cultural heritage, as well as the risks from climate change and unsustainable development; and
- 3 to help the community explore new ways of generating sustainable income from wetlands and other natural and cultural features

Background

Port Glaud is a district on the north-west coast of Mahé, the main island of the Seychelles. It has a rich cultural and natural heritage, including a Ramsar-designated mangrove swamp and several sites of historic interest. At the time this project was proposed, a large five-star resort was being

Accomplishments and challenges

Through the project, the grantee Sustainability for Seychelles (S4S) brought together residents of the community to identify important local features, brainstorm challenges and opportunities, and develop an action plan to improve the environment, community life

and the local economy. Participants also produced a community map.

Different generations were able to share their perspectives of the community and how to work with government and private sector partners to improve the district. A presentation of the results of a community survey conducted by local youth with S4S impressed stakeholders, and the results were used in planning the development of small eco-businesses.

The main success of the project was the close collaboration of all partners concerned. S4S worked closely with the management of the new resort, successfully bridged the gap between them and the community. The resort has now opened its doors to the community for visits, and also strongly supported project activities.

Challenges

Until a local leader could be identified to coordinate project activities, S4S staff had to play this role. This proved challenging given the distance to Port Glaud from the S4S head office.

Contributions to cross-cutting themes

Communications

Project activities were documented using print and broadcast media. The Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC TV) aired a seven-minute report on mangrove planting by Port Glaud residents and resort staff. A two-page article in a local magazine featured local people's active role in protecting and improving the environment, especially within

their own communities. The article mentioned both of the MFF SGF projects directly working with community-based initiatives in the Seychelles.

Gender equality

Both men and women participated in the project at the community and resort levels. The local youth group also has a mixture of boys and girls, and the new CBO is open to both male and female membership.

Lessons learned

Although the community is more engaged in environmental action, it needs a facilitating organisation like S4S to help it organize and communicate with the resort and other partners.

Having a neutral body like S4S facilitate dialogue and collaboration between stakeholders with different interests in a development project like a large resort can be extremely useful, particularly in its early stages.

Partners and their contribution

UNDP GEF contributed US\$40,000 in co-financing. The Seychelles Department of Environment contributed to project management and activities, and in-kind contributions were made by the Port Glaud District Administration. Other organisations that made in-kind contributions or support project activities included Port Glaud School, the Small Enterprise Promotion Agency, and the Seychelles Heritage Foundation. From the private sector, the Ephelia Resort at Port Glaud made both cash and in-kind contributions.

“The MFF small grant is enabling community members of all ages and partners to learn together and to decide what is best needed for the sustainable development of their community in fun, interactive and participatory ways. Thanks for the guidance and the funding for the project. It is getting very exciting and we are glad that other partners find an interest in the programme.”

– MICHELE MARTIN
PROJECT COORDINATOR, S4S

CONTACT INFORMATION

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