



MFF Maldives

REPORT ON

PRIVATE SECTOR SENSITIZING WORKSHOP

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Summary	This document outlines the challenges and opportunities for the MFF Programme to engage with the private sector in the Maldives. The focus of the workshop was Corporate Social Responsibility, and how MFF can become a platform for private sector's investments on coastal communities.
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Mangroves for the Future: Private Sector Sensitizing Workshop

December 3, 2012

Traders Hotel, Male', Maldives

I. BACKGROUND

Coastal ecosystems are of utmost importance to the Maldives given the unique geography of the country. The sustainability of the tourism industry lies on the health of the coasts, and communities live mainly on the available natural, marine and coastal resources. Businesses directly benefit from exploiting these resources and, like communities, rely on the marine environment for many of their income-generating activities. The Mangroves for the Future (MFF) Programme recognizes this important link between the private sector and the coastal ecosystems and believes that the private sector should be an important player in shaping the coastal ecosystems. Regionally, Maldives is part of the MFF private sector engagement initiative implemented by MFF Secretariat in Bangkok and CSR-Asia. At the national level, the MFF Programme has outlined the following strategies to engage strategically with the private sector.

1. To develop a sustainable long term strategy for MFF's private sector engagement focusing on concrete opportunities for business involvement in MFF activities and enhancing internal and external capacity to effectively engage businesses in MFF.
2. To leverage opportunities for MFF more widely, to promote strategic business engagement within its overall goals, and promote business investment to strengthen the sustainability of coastal zones.
3. To position MFF as a strategic partner for businesses seeking meaningful and strategic investment opportunities in environmental protection and community development, by promoting coastal ecosystems and communities as a focus for such initiatives.

The MFF Programme has outlined two activities directly related to strategizing private sector engagements. In partnership with CSR- Asia, the MFF Secretariat conducted a regional project on 'Private Sector Engagement Initiative', held on May 10, 2012. The second activity is the 'Private Sector Sensitizing Workshop' aimed at small to medium businesses and State-owned Enterprises in the Maldives, held on December 4, 2012.

Private Sector Sensitizing Workshop



The objective of the workshop was to identify the current challenges for the engagement of the private sector, share its successes and similar experiences and identify a set of recommendations for up scaling private sector engagement initiatives and innovate catalytic public private partnerships. The MFF Programme invited businesses from the Maldives National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, State-owned Enterprises namely Dhiraagu, and State Trading Organization, and resort management from Anantara Resort Maldives.



Three important areas were identified for collaboration:

1) Technical assistance and knowledge transfer: STO, Dhiraagu and Adaaran resorts agreed to collaborate with the MFF Programme on sharing technical assistance for its activities. The businesses are at a comparative advantage on sustainable project management, which is one of the Programmes of Work of the MFF Programme.

2) Collaborating on connecting to the island communities: A major constraint identified by the MFF programme is the difficulty to connect to the island communities (advertising the call for proposals and getting proposals or other documents from the island communities). Dhiraagu and STO suggested using their regional centers in different parts of the country to advertise and disseminate information. Suggestions included

advertisements on the call for proposals and leveraging interested NGOs to use their expertise in these regional centers to draft project documents.

3) Assistance to the small grants projects: All parties suggested to the MFF project to share their selected list of proposals in order to identify the projects that these businesses could assist with and collaborate on.



The participants also invited the MFF Programme to participate in their future CSR activities as a way of disseminating good practices and possible opportunities for assistance.

Introduction: CSR Asia, MMF and GEF

The session began with an introduction of the attendees, which was followed by an introduction of CSR and the benefits of it to businesses by Ms. Mia Overall. The three collective goals of economic, social and environmental benefits were highlighted and how each of these can contribute to the company's growth was shown. The role of the private sector was described as operating in a responsible way so that there can be mutual gain to both the communities and the business. The ISO26000 framework for social responsibility was discussed and how social and economical development in Maldives can be linked to the framework was noted.



This was followed by an exercise where the three subcategories of Operating Responsibly, Environmental Investments and Social Investments were given and the attendees were asked to place some examples of initiatives by Maldivian companies into each of the subcategories. Discussion was carried out where the attendees agreed and disagreed on some points and learned about some new initiatives that companies were carrying out.

In the presentation about MMF by Ms. Aminath Mihdha, the aim of the program was highlighted as conservation and restoration as well as strengthening frameworks for people development.



The three thematic areas of knowledge, empowerment and governance were highlighted and the following strategies for private sector engagement were explained:

4. Develop a sustainable long-term strategy for MFF's private sector engagement focusing on concrete opportunities for business involvement in MFF activities and enhancing internal and external capacity to effectively engage businesses in MFF.
5. Leverage opportunities for MFF more widely to promote strategic business engagement within its overall goals and promote business investment to strengthen the sustainability of coastal zones.
6. Position MFF as a strategic partner for businesses seeking meaningful and strategic investment opportunities in environmental protection and community development, by promoting coastal ecosystems and communities as a focus for such initiatives.

The National Coordinator of the MFF Programme then explained some of current constraints and challenges faced by the MFF programme as opportunities for businesses to assist as part of their CSR activities.

Following the presentation by the MFF Programme, a short presentation was given by the National Coordinator of the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Projects, Ms. Fathimath Ghina. The focus areas of the GEF SGP were climate change, land degradation, forest management and international waters. The GEF SGP Coordinator then showed examples of some of the ongoing projects under the programme.



Presentation by the State Trading Organization



Mr. Ibrahim Shareef Mohamed, General Manager of State Trading Organization presented the CSR initiatives that STO has taken. The three areas for CSR activities in STO included ethical human resources management, responsible market behaviour and social and environment initiatives. The company was established to import and provide basic goods and services which are not available in the Maldives, at reasonable prices. STO plays an important price stability role in the Maldivian markets by lowering the prices of basic goods during times of high demand. More recently and more related to the goals and objectives of the MFF Programme, STO recently initiated a MVR 2.58million project on renewable energy with the Government of Maldives. The project however came to an end after the change in government.

Presentation by DHIRAAGU



The presentation by Mr. Mohamed Mirshan Hassan, Manager, Marketing, Communications and PR of Dhiraagu Plc. Ltd explained the CSR initiatives by the company. Currently ongoing initiatives include the renewable energy initiative and the Dhiraagu Apprenticeship Program. Dhiraagu is one of the highest users of renewable energy and while it started as a need, it has grown to become a CSR initiative. Dhiraagu has solar energy stations in 40 islands in the Maldives and this constitutes approximately 10% of the company's energy use. In future, Dhiraagu hopes to increase the current 10% use to 40 %. The apprenticeship program is conducted both in Male' and eight other regional offices aimed to tackle the problem of youth unemployment.

Discussions

The latter half of the workshop discussed the following areas:

1. How does the private sector see opportunities in the Maldives to expand businesses by effectively enhancing the CSR activities?
2. How can the private sector become a driver of responsible and inclusive coastal development projects?
3. Identify innovative and effective modalities for the private sector to engage with the rural community to enhance their livelihoods.



The NC briefly highlighted some of the challenges faced by the NGOs in the island communities; - difficulties in reaching out to offices in Male', lack of capacity on project implementation, and financial management. Mr. Ibrahim Naeem, Chair of the MFF Programmes' National Coordinating Body and Head of Environment Protection Agency, highlighted that if the private sector were to contribute more to such developments then projects can get easily approved for its quality management. The Chair further inquired on the possibility of

the businesses who have established outlets in different parts of the country to assist the Programme in monitoring the projects that are being implemented.



Mr. Ahmed Solih from Adaaran Resorts offered to provide assistance to both MFF and GEF projects implemented near Adaaran Resort in the areas of agriculture, training and capacity building. Dhiraagu and STO offered to act as information hubs and help in delivering the message as well as give technical assistance to project managers operating in the islands. Maldives Post Limited also offered to keep the leaflets and posters of the MFF programme in their regional offices all around the country.

Concluding Remarks

The NC made the concluding remarks for the workshop attendees by thanking them for taking time of their busy schedules and highlighting once again the discussion points and agreed areas for collaboration.

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Invitees

Column4	Column6	Column7	Column8	Column10
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MANRGOVES FOR THE FUTURE PRIVATE SECTOR SENSITIZING WORKSHOP

3rd December 2012

Traders Hotel, Maldives

MFF Maldives Private Sector Engagement Initiative

Protection of and investing in coastal ecosystem is vital to countries like the Maldives whose survival and economic growth depends on it. While recognizing the contribution the private sector is currently making to the development of the country, MFF Maldives programme seeks assistance from the private sector in making strategic investments in small and medium projects through means of co-financing and other forms of in-kind contribution. The business sector has the vested interest of protecting the ecosystem by increasing resource efficiency and playing an essential role in the sustainability of the ecosystems.

Benefits to the business sector:

- Increased national and international recognition of the business and improved reputation and relations with local communities through increased corporate social responsibility activities
- Partnership with the MFF Maldives governing body for exchange of technical know-how.
- Increased opportunity for networking and exchanging experiences with other businesses and national organizations collaborating on similar programmes in the Maldives and regionally

Expected outputs and outcomes of the workshop

The MFF Maldives programme led private sector engagement initiative is expected to revisit the paradigm of the current private sector contributions to the development of the country, by establishing a platform for the private sector to strategically invest in coastal ecosystems, and encouraging environmentally sustainable business practices in coastal areas in one of MFF's priority Programmes of Work.

The workshop is expected to initiate a platform for partnerships by bring together the leading businesses to better acknowledge the role of the private sector in the development process as a key partner; identify the current challenges for the engagement of the private sector; share its successes and similar experiences; identify a set of recommendations for scaling up private sector engagement initiatives and innovative catalytic public private partnerships.

The private sector is currently making large sums in the form of donations to health and education in the country. While these are important contributions to the social sector of the country, strategic investments as part of their CSR activities

will increase their visibility and improve relations with local communities and government, increase potential for expanding their businesses, strategically invest by co-financing with the existing programmes, share knowledge and build capacity on coastal zone protection and sustainable coastal zone management.

AGENDA

MANGOVES FOR THE FUTURE PRIVATE SECTOR SENSITIZING WORKSHOP	
9.00 – 9.15	Welcome and introductions
9.15–9.20	Introduction to the project, aims and overview of the workshop by CSR Asia
9.20 – 09:40	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the role of business in environmentally sustainable and inclusive development, and the business case for private sector investment in coastal ecosystems and communities (Mia Overall, CSR Asia)
10:00 – 10:15	Tea break
10:15 – 10:45	Potential areas for partnership through the existing Small Grants Programmes (MFF Programme and GEF SGP Programme)
10:45 – 11:30	Showcase initiatives presented by the private sector where successful private sector ventures and public private partnerships have been built. In each case, identify the factors that have led to the successful public private partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ STO▪ State Electric Company▪ Dhiraagu▪ Moderator: Mia Overall, CSR Asia
11:30 – 12:15	Discussion (facilitated by Aminath Mihdha and Mia Overall) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• how the private sector sees opportunities in the Maldives to expand business by effectively enhancing their CSR activities• How can the private sector can become a driver of responsible and inclusive coastal development projects?• Identify innovative and effective modalities for the private sector to engage with the rural community to enhance their livelihoods (using MFF Maldives as a platform)
	Conclusion and wrap up
12.15 – 13.30	Lunch