

The Good Governance Advocate



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Newsletter of the Integrated
Governance Programme
of UNDP Maldives

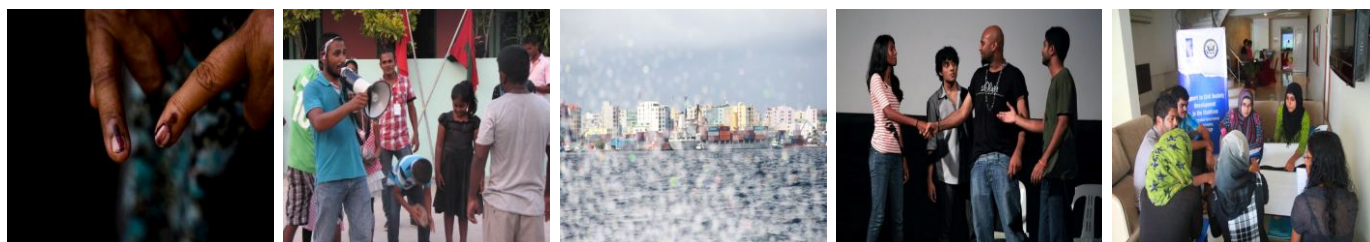
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Introduction

Welcome to the 3rd issue of The Good Governance Advocate; the newsletter of the **Integrated Governance Programme (IGP)** of the Maldives. We hope you find these periodic updates on the work of UNDP Maldives on Democratic Governance useful and informative.

IGP Goal

To help Maldives build a resilient and peaceful democratic society and deepen democratic principles in the country through effective and accountable governance institutions and enhanced social cohesion and capacity of civil society stakeholders.



Message from the RR

Dear Partners in IGP,

As we approach the end of 2013, on behalf of the UNDP team, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your support to the activities of the IGP. Without your commitment to our shared goals, we could not have had such a rewarding year. I'd like to particularly thank members of the Project Board for their consistent guidance on the programme direction, members of the technical working groups for valuable inputs and excellent coordination with their respective institutions, stakeholders, participants of our initiatives and international development partners, who have entrusted us with funding that made our activities possible and meaningful.

As the new Government articulates its priorities and development plans, we see many opportunities for further collaboration.

Best wishes for the New Year and we look forward to deepening our partnership in 2014.

Azusa Kubota
Resident Representative (Ad Interim)



IGP PROJECTS AND BUDGET 2013	AMOUNT US \$
Result 1: National and local level institutional capacities strengthened for improved transparency, accountability and democratic processes	538,619.00
Result 2: Equitable access to justice increased and Rule of Law strengthened through support to justice sector reform and promotion of human rights	222,933.00
Result 3: Enabling environment created and strengthened for enhanced social cohesion through inclusive and participatory decision making and development	662,957.00
Programme Management	421,788.00
TOTAL	1,846,297.00

PARTNERS

Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), U.S. Department of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea, UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF), UNDP Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund (DGTTF), UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) and the European Union (EU).

Maldives Elects New Leader

UNDP provided strategic support to the Elections Commission in the tightly-contested Presidential Election



Flag-lined streets of Male', looking festive during the campaigning period.
Photo: Jane Dinh 2013

On 17 November 2013, the Maldives saw the inauguration of new president Abdullah Yameen Abdul Gayoom, a day after his runoff victory ended a long and highly-contested election process. Yameen secured the majority of the votes, winning over the country's first democratically elected leader Mohamed Nasheed, by a tight margin.

The contesting candidates were praised by the people and the international community for their strong statesmanship, which resulted in a smooth transfer of power, but it has not been an easy journey for the tiny island nation. The final results were announced after an unexpectedly prolonged course, with the elections being postponed on multiple occasions.

However, after a much polarized and divided process, the people's desire for a free and fair election was not dampened, as was evidenced by the flocks of Maldivians lining outside polling stations eagerly looking forward to cast their vote in the long-awaited final leg of the elections.



Lamya Ibrahim, after casting her vote. Photo: Haveeru Online 2013

“I want us to climb out of this rut and end all this political turmoil. I'm voting today for better job opportunities and brighter prospects for my aging parents. In the end though, I hope that whoever comes to power is able to mend this deep divide between the people,” said voter Lamya Ibrahim, queuing outside a school in Machangoalhi ward to cast her ballot.

With voter turnout at more than 91 percent, this was a good indication of the support to the electoral process from partners such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with a view to improving the quality of political participation, to further consolidate democracy in the Maldives.

“We are pleased to have established strong partnerships with communities, national institutions and international partners to support a well-participated election, and provide space for dialogue and strengthen commitment to democracy in the country. The quality of the preparations and the conduct, and the acceptance of the results of the elections demonstrate resilience of the people and their commitment to moving forward for a stronger and more prosperous Maldives,” said Azusa Kubota, acting Resident Representative of UNDP Maldives.

Continued on page 03

UNDP supported the Elections Commission of Maldives for the preparation of 2013 Presidential Elections through advisory, technical and capacity building support.

UNDP assisted the EC to launch for the first time in the country, a nationwide voter education programme for the 2013 presidential election, following a workshop on voter education messaging held with political parties, media and local NGOs. All available media were used to deliver voter education materials. This included the distribution of over 50,000 booklets to all atolls. Key messages on election processes, including those displayed in 1000 posters focusing on the voting day process and additional 1000 posters on assisted voting were displayed outside polling stations across the country. A total of six different messages on posters (6000 copies per poster) were also visible throughout the capital Male and atolls. Six video spots and three radio spots were broadcasted nationally and on social media, which generated over 44,700 views on Facebook and other online sources.



Man photographed holding the 'Faahaga' logo as part of the social media campaign. Photo: Elections Commission/UNDP Maldives 2013

In the 2013 presidential election, 30,000 new voters were included in the voting list and 100,000 voters out of the approximate 240,000 were young voters. Given that Maldives does not have a civic education component in the school curriculum, educating young voters was specifically identified as a priority.

"Whenever someone asks me who I am voting for, I say 'Nubunaan' ('I won't tell'). I saw this on TV, and thought it would be a good line to deter the nosy types. It works!" explains new voter Izaan Ismail, alluding to how one of the video spots developed for the voter education campaign (to highlight that the vote is confidential and to discourage people from being pressured by parties, family or friends into voting for a specific candidate), helped shaped his outlook of the election process.

UNDP also supported training of trainers, who in turn trained the polling officials for the election. Master trainers provided Training of Trainers to 70 selected trainees. These trainers in turn trained approximately 3000 polling officials, based on the curriculum developed with UNDP assistance earlier in the year.

A youth dialogue series titled 'Elections Fever' was piloted in July, to create a space for youth to express themselves in light of the divisions and conflicts arising due to the elections. More than 200 youth attended the series, and many participated in the discussions that followed the plays based on the community-based theatre concept. In addition to this, community dialogue sessions, public lectures and media information sessions were held to disseminate critical information and discussions around the elections. In the final days of the process, a video spot encouraging stability and respect for one another was produced and aired with the slogan of 'Everybody wants a peaceful election'.

"We will continue to actively pursue our mandate to assist in improving electoral processes. We are working with national partners to build autonomous institutions and support democratic processes in order to meet the people's aspirations for democratic governance and advancing human development," UNDP's acting Resident Representative said.

Following the success of the presidential election, UNDP is gearing support towards the upcoming parliamentary and local council elections of the Maldives, slated for 2014.



One of the posters developed to educate on Election Day conduct

All these materials featured the official logo and branding concept developed for the voter education campaign, titled 'Faahaga'. The campaign provided important information and key messages on issues such as the right to vote, the value of voting, and voting day procedures. The aim was to make the election informed, free and fair. An online campaign around this was also launched, specifically targeting youth groups. EC has now trademarked the 'Faahaga' logo and this logo will be used in all future voter education programs conducted by the Elections Commission.



One of the 'Election Fever' theatre sessions. Photo: UNDP Maldives 2013

UNDP's Integrated Governance Programme has been providing technical and advisory support to national stakeholders and institutions, including EC in its preparation for the 2013 Presidential Election, with support from multiple donors, including FCO UK, US and AUSAID. Additionally EU, Germany, DGTTF, BCPR and UNDEF supported related activities, such as support to electoral assistance and dialogue etc. The rolling out of the voter education campaign was supported by local media partners and civil society groups and was managed under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme in the Maldives. It was implemented in partnership with the Elections Commission of the Maldives.

Youth dialogue sessions on the elections



A CBT session underway

A youth dialogue series titled 'Elections Fever' was piloted in July, to create a space for youth to express themselves in light of the divisions and conflicts arising due to the upcoming elections. The concept was developed through the five-day workshop on Community-based Theatre (CBT), guided by trained CBT facilitators, through which a play was developed that reflected youth and young peoples' concerns as the presidential elections approaches. The play looked into different types of conflict experienced at the family, peer and community levels by youth during the lead up to the elections and divisive

party politics. Twenty young people between the ages 18-23 participated in the workshop and play.

Following the training, four youth dialogue sessions were conducted in 3 different locations of the capital Male' and one in nearby Hulhumale' Island. The youth dialogues were conducted in partnership with local NGO DhiYouth Movement. Each session consisted of performing the play, after which audiences were invited to share and act out how characters in the play could bring positive changes to the issues depicted. This was followed by discussion sessions with a resource person on 'youth and voting'. Discussions and the Q&A sessions that followed focused on the importance of youth engagement in democratic and electoral process, their participation in policy discussions and building trust and tolerance for developing a strong nation. The role of youth as voters to elect responsible members to the parliament and local councils was also discussed. More than 400 youth attended the series, and many participated in the discussions that followed the play.

Support to establish training capacities in the Public Sector

Twenty seven (13 male and 14 female) trainers from the public sector were trained on adult learning techniques. The participants consisted of officials from Civil Service Training Institute, Civil Service Commission, President's Office, Anti-Corruption Commission, Local Government Authority, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, National Institute of Education, Capital Market Development Authority, and the Police Academy. They acquired skills on learning and teaching principles, methods for adult learning, designing guidelines and checklists for training and lesson planning. An international expert, Mr. Hans Rieger undertook the assignment. These trainers will be utilized for in house training in the future by the Civil Service Training Institute (CSTI) and their respective line ministries.

Support to Strengthen Parliamentary Committees

A training workshop for parliamentary committees focusing on legal drafting and budget analysis of bills, was held to increase the understanding and knowledge of parliamentary committee members on effective committee sessions and international best practices. One working session was held for the Social Affairs Committee and three working sessions were held with the Secretariat Staff on how to support the parliamentary committees to enable their smooth functioning. In addition, an analytical report covering:- the institutional aspects including existing rules of procedure in parliament; observations and reflection on the parliamentary committee set up; and recommendations to strengthen the current structure and existing procedures was produced. The task was led by an international expert and former speaker from the House of Commons in Canada, John Bosley.



Meeting of the Social Affairs Committee of the Parliament.
Photo: People's Majlis

Developing the local councillors orientation curriculum

By developing the full modules identified in the local councillor's orientation curriculum, a complete set of the following 10 modules will be included in the curriculum and will be accredited at Certificate 1 level by the Maldivian Qualification Authority. In the long term, it will be hosted at a training institute/teaching facility. The modules included;

1. Good Governance and Decentralization
2. Economic Sustainability
3. Planning for Development
4. Decentralization and local governance
5. Managerial skills for local councillors
6. ICT in public service delivery
7. Financial Management
8. Procurement and Property Management
9. Project Cycle Management
10. Monitoring and Evaluation.

SOPs for Women's Development Committees and Local Councils



Participants at a UNDP-organised workshop for women councillors. Photo: President's Office

Training of Trainers were conducted for 30 professionals (16 female and 14 male), from the Civil Service Training Institute (CSTI), and the Local Government Authority (LGA) in developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on administrative processes for the local governance framework. The training focused on the application of SOPs in the field and the procedure for amendments. Following the workshop, the trained facilitators are able to deliver similar trainings to island councillors.



Under UNDP's justice sector dialogues, stakeholders met to discuss the

Victims Support System in the Maldives

Staff from Maldives Police Service, Prosecutor General's Office, Ministry of Gender, Family and Human Rights and the Courts benefitted from the discussion forum on Victim Support. The objective of the forum was to identify how the agreed operating procedures between Maldives Police Service and Prosecutor General Office are applied in practice, pinpoint the challenges in implementation and find possible remedies to overcome these. The forum also discussed the need for capacity development of the relevant actors and to bring the agenda of Victim Support to a National Policy level discussion.

“ We don't want to see victims being abused because of loopholes in the system. We need trained staff and best practices to make this a success. ”

Hussain Siraj, Victims Support Unit, Maldives Police Service



“ At the moment, the roles of the responsible partners are not clear. There is some confusion. It is important for this responsibility to be properly and formerly assigned. ”

Asiath Abdul Hadi, Victims Support Unit, Maldives Police Service

“ It is important for all interlocutors and partners to work together. We need policy-level decisions to formalize the processes, and make the system work for the people who need it the most. ”

Sulthana Shakir, Witness Assistance Unit, Prosecutor General's Office



“ At the moment, the ministry is prioritizing domestic violence and child abuse cases. Without the proper guidelines, trained staff and other mechanisms in place, it will be difficult for us to concentrate on other equally important priorities, such as cases of the elderly and the disabled. ”

Fathimath Eman Nasheed, Case Management Section, Ministry of Gender and Family

Application of Human Rights in the Justice Sector



Professor Sarkins conducting the forum

Human Rights Commission of the Maldives with support from UNDP organized a stakeholder discussion forum with Staff from the Attorney General Office, Prosecutor General's Office, Maldives Police Service, Ministry of Gender Family and Human Rights, The Family Protection Authority, Disability Council to consult on the development of a monitoring program to assess the application of human rights in the justice sector of Maldives. The meeting was divided into

to 3 thematic areas; Juvenile Justice, Gender Based Violence & domestic violence, and person with disabilities. Experts and key stakeholders in the fields presented on the challenges faced in these thematic areas in justice sector. The stakeholder discussion forum was led by International Expert Professor Jeremy Sarkins.

Training was provided to 23 staff from the Human Rights Commission of Maldives (HRCM), including 4 males and 19 females, who acquired skills on application of human rights, specifically focused on juvenile justice, gender-based violence and domestic violence, persons with disabilities and migrant workers. Further, a manual with references to international standards and guidelines has been developed for HRCM staff, as well as a recommendation paper for stakeholders.

This is an innovative approach to assess how the justice sector institutions are in compliance with human rights standards and gives HRCM an avenue to pursue fulfillment of their mandate as per the Constitution.

Strengthening elections security



Police monitoring a crowd gathered to watch a street event.
Photo: Hussain Jinan

Assistance was provided to strengthen elections security through community policing and training of front line police officers in human rights, election security and gender sensitivity. Training of Trainers has been conducted for 40 police officers on election security. 3500 pamphlets outlining police conduct during elections were developed. They include physical distance police has to maintain from the ballot box, as well as the conduct of police and issues that police should be aware/cautious of while providing security during elections. These were based on the curriculum and the training materials developed by the Election Security Expert, made available through UNDP/IGP in early 2013.

Helping raise legal awareness of civil society actors and state institutions



UNDP facilitated an awareness workshop for the Human Rights Commission (HRCM) on the Police Act and police regulations that empower and regulate police on crowd control. At the awareness workshop the police made presentations focusing on the use of force, firearms and the guidelines on how police deals with certain types of situations. Demonstrations were given on the procedures set by police on the use of handcuffs, batons, tazers, and other equipments used in crowd control. The purpose of the workshop was to create awareness of HRCM staff, who will be engaged in monitoring the election and protest rallies, to ensure they have a better understanding of the laws that governs police conduct.



HIGHLIGHTS

Small Grants Programme for Civil Society

- Small grants awarded to five NGOs (out of 27 applicants) in the areas of women's empowerment, youth development, local governance and voter education.
- Additional 12 small grants projects ongoing (one implemented by national level NGOs and 11 by island based NGOs)
- Ongoing projects target human rights, women's rights and empowerment, women's participation in politics, youth participation, strengthening civil society networks at the regional level and enhancing institutional capacity of NGOs for improved local governance.

Preparing Women Leaders to Contest for Local Council Elections



Fahumeena Hussain wants to be an agent of change within her community.

The children giggle and chatter as they wait for their parents to collect them. As the last of them shakes her hand and leaves with a cheery "Bye, Auntie" (the moniker for teacher), Fahumeena Hussain, 30, lets out a sigh. She gathers the papers and crayons from the desks and stacks them in a neat pile on the shelf. Even though the pre-school session is done for the day, her job is far from over. She has to hurry to the Women's Development Committee (WDC) meeting.

As the Vice-President of Baa Atoll Hithaadhoo Island's WDC, Fahumeena has her work cut out for her. She goes over the day's agenda, and calls the President of the Committee to re-confirm some action points. Fahumeena is very excited about this meeting. One of their members, who had participated at a training specifically targeting the women of WDC's, will be sharing her experiences tonight. Conducted by an NGO on her island, the training had been supported by the Small Grants Programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

"We have all heard about Democracy, the Decentralisation Act and Local Governance. Today I am going to tell you how women have a central role in making these work for our community," her fellow WDC member commences the session and Fahumeena avidly starts taking notes.

"Back in 2012, I had lost the chance to participate in the first training. I heard really good things about the exercise though. I even collected the workshop materials from her," Fahumeena nods in the direction of the speaker. "In fact, I was inspired to contest in the WDC elections because of the trainees' feedback on the integral role of women and how we can be agents of change," she continues.

The information session is especially helpful for Fahumeena, as she plans to participate in the UNDP-supported second round of trainings by HIDA, the same NGO who undertook the training targeting the women of WDC. The theme this time would be focused on training people for the Local Council, and Fahumeena has decided to contest for a council seat in her island. "With the Local Council Election coming up, there couldn't be a better time for this training," Fahumeena says eagerly.

As the day dawned for the training facilitated by representatives from knowledgeable government institutions and civil society groups, Fahumeena joined many other men and women from her island who came inspired to take up leadership positions in the community.

Being a nascent democracy, the formation of Local Councils, and the changes to the role and operation of WDCs brought with it a considerable degree of confusion surrounding the different mandates and legislations. People were not aware of how these institutions were supposed to

operate. According to NGO HIDA, prior to their trainings, the people of Hithaadhoo Island; especially the women had only limited awareness about how a decentralized system works or how a Council Office was supposed to function.

At the training, Fahumeena shares that being the VP of the WDC has made her realise the challenges that exist in a local governance system. She says that things are not always as clear cut and there are many obstacles, especially for women in leadership positions.

The training focused on how local councils should operate. It detailed the important aspects of the Decentralization Act, including the functions and responsibilities of a local council and how a local council should communicate and interact with the community.

For the aspiring women candidates from the island, the training has been highly effective. "Women of Hithaadhoo have always been homely and somewhat docile. Our role at the community level has oftentimes been limited to cleaning and cooking for functions and such. This has been creating a gender imbalance in our community at a time of such rapid changes. Therefore such a training is necessary," one of Fahumeena's fellow participants said.

"I am now more confident than ever in my decision to run in the upcoming Local Council Election. I hope to bring change and show others that being a woman is not a reason for us not to be able to participate in our community's affairs. After all, anything a man can do, intellectually or otherwise, so can a woman," Fahumeena concludes with a clever grin.

Training workshop held for civil society focused on leadership development



The first in a series of workshops targeting capacity building of civil society organisations in the Maldives concluded on October 29, 2013. The workshop was held as part of the one-year capacity development programme for the local civil society sector, organized by the Integrated Governance Programme (IGP) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The four-day workshop was part of the first phase of the programme, which will introduce a series of training workshops in a number of key areas identified through a capacity needs assessment of the civil society sector conducted by UNDP. This first workshop, titled 'Developing Leadership for the Civil Society of the Future' saw 24 participants from 15 NGOs from Male', and Laamu and Lhaviyani Atolls successfully complete the workshop, which covered the topics of;

1. Positioning civil society in Maldivian context – role of CSOs and leaders
2. Understanding leadership – role of a leader; exploring your own leadership; leadership styles and approaches
3. Leadership skills – balancing task, team and individual needs; visioning and communicating an inspiring vision and mission; strategic thinking and planning; team feedback and communication
4. Leading vs managing – striking the right balance in the local context
5. People management and development – motivating, relationship building, delegation, feedback, coaching, and
6. Development of action plan.

"Civil society's contributions to development have a long and rich history in the Maldives. Civil society channels the voices of vulnerable groups, including youth and women. You all play an important role in ensuring that

development priorities and plans respond to the needs of the marginalized groups and in advocating for equity and inclusion. UNDP is committed to long-term and sustained partnership with civil society representatives and to help build institutional capacities of civil society organizations in the Maldives," said Ms. Azusa Kubota, Resident Representative a.i. of UNDP, speaking at the opening ceremony of the workshop.

Abdul Raheem Nashid Abdul Latheef, a participant at the workshop from NGO Naifaru Juvenile said that as the role of NGOs become bigger in the islands, the workshop was useful as it presented ways for NGOs to better plan and become more structured in their work. "We learnt a lot from the support received through the former UNDP and Government-led 'Atoll Development for Sustainable Livelihoods' project, in terms of planning and leadership skills. This workshop has reinforced and built up on that knowledge, and comes at an opportune time as we gear up to draft our new five-year strategic plan," he added.

The aim of UNDP IGP's capacity development programme for Maldivian civil society organizations is to enhance organizational capacity of civil society organizations for their effective participation in democracy and enhance their contributions in promoting development. It also aims to support committed civil society organizations to take leadership for information sharing, strengthening partnerships and networking among civil society organizations within their region.



Abdul Raheem Nashid Abdul Latheef, a participant at the workshop from NGO Naifaru Juvenile

Awareness activities on Right to Information

The first Training of Trainers for conducting awareness workshops on Right to Information for Community Based Organizations and Women's Development Committees was conducted by an expert from the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. The trained facilitators will conduct sessions on information as a right, international best practice, RTI in a democratic framework and community mobilization. This activity was implemented in partnership with NGO Transparency Maldives.



NGO Transparency Maldives taking forward the UNDP-supported Right to Information project. Participants hold up the "Ahaa Hoadhaa" campaign banner, which promotes how a culture of holding public officials accountable is critical for good governance. Photo: Transparency Maldives 2013.



Participant at one of the workshops conducted by NGO Transparency Maldives demand access to information. The workshops on access to information was conducted in five atolls; Gaaf Dhaal, Addu, Fuvahmulah, Baa, and Laamu. Photo: Transparency Maldives 2013.



NDP supports development of future leaders through the Youth Leadership Programme

UNDP supported Democracy House, a local NGO, to train 40 young leaders (half of them female) from 17 atolls in the Maldives through an intensive three weeks programme from 25th November to 15th December, 2013.

The Youth Leadership Programme consisted of class room sessions, lectures by eminent experts and exposure to a number of important state institutions including People's Majlis. They acquired different sets of skill on self awareness, team building and communication and practical knowledge about human rights, democracy, environment and climate change issues facing the country. In addition, the youth group was given opportunities to understand and discuss on a number of social, economic, political and development challenges facing the country. During the training, half day session was organized at the UN House where they acquired information and interacted with UN staff and learnt about the work of various UN agencies in the Maldives.



UNDP staff providing information about its work to participants of the Youth Leadership Programme.

The participants at the closing ceremony expressed how they benefitted from this training in widening their vision and realizing their own potential in transforming themselves as individual and young leaders in their societies. One of the greatest achievements they said was to respect differences in opinion and diverse views and understanding the feelings of others.

Community Dialogue to Promote Social Cohesion and Participatory Development



Community dialogues were held to ultimately influence national level policy direction and dialogue

There are few means through which communities can communicate, bridge differences between themselves, and proactively address the sources of potential disputes. The IGP initiated community dialogue processes in selected communities with the aim of bringing key development and socio-political actors together to facilitate dialogue and consensus, and also to allow inclusive formulation of policies

and development interventions at community level. Resource persons to facilitate community dialogue were trained in conflict analysis and dialogue facilitation in September 2013, and they provided support in rolling out the IGP community dialogue activities.

Dialogue Facilitators and IGP staff conducted preliminary visits to selected island communities in Laamu and Gaadu Dhaalu to assess the context, dynamics and key stakeholders of the respective communities. This was followed up with visits where joint meetings with representatives of key stakeholders met to discuss key priorities and issues within the communities that requires the convening of dialogue and consensus building meetings. In most cases the joint meetings were a first in recent times where representatives of all key institutions, NGOs, community groups and the Island Council sat down together to talk about common concerns and vision for their island.

Three community dialogue sessions were subsequently conducted in November and December of 2013 in Maabaidhoo and Fonadhu of Laamu Atoll, and Faresmaathoda of Gaafu Dhaalu Atoll, whereby a community vision was formulated and an issue that was prioritised in the previous community analysis meeting was discussed and a way forward identified.

The overall objective of the dialogue strategy of IGP is creating space for dialogue at community level and other professional level groups that feeds into policy debates on critical issues of national importance in order to influence national level policy direction and dialogue. Hence, The issues and concerns raised in the community dialogue activities will feed into technical, institutional and policy level dialogue that are planned for next year.

UNDP and UN Women initiates the development of a Women's Vision Document

UNDP Maldives in collaboration with UN Women is supporting the development of Women's Vision document that includes the issues, priorities and aspirations for the country of women from all walks of life, across the Maldives.

A total of four consultation meetings had been held, which included women from all walks of life living in Male', and representatives from Women's Development Committees of 33 selected islands. The consultation meetings employed participatory activities to collect and prioritize key issues and aspirations of over 100 women, and these will be compiled into a survey format. The surveys will be conducted by the women leaders in their communities to collect the views of a representative sample of women in selected islands, and will be analyzed to develop the final report.

The Women's Vision document will be used to gauge and lobby for the inclusion of women's priorities in formulating national policy and programmes, and would also contribute towards the formulation of the post MDG development framework. The final document would be launched in 2014 at an event targeting national leaders and policy makers.



Journalism Boot Camp held to strengthen understanding and skills on developmental issues and investigative reporting



Participants from the UNDP-led journalism boot camp meeting with WDC in the field visit to Maafushi Island.

Following the Presidential elections, the role of media in promoting evidence based, constructive dialogue and critique, and promoting peaceful means of resolving conflict and difference of viewpoints became a key factor. As there was very little debate on development and social issues facing the country in the last years, it was important to bring important social issues/agenda facing the country in media for generating public discourse. This was equally relevant to diffuse heightened political tension and bring conversation on issues of common concern inspite of political differences.

In view of this reality, a journalism boot camp was designed from 26-28 December, 2013 to serve as a platform where journalists could focus their attention on individual assignments through investigative journalism on key social issues. The training, therefore, was designed to include both knowledge sessions and story clinics combined with field visits where experts were invited to speak of pressing social issues (that one expects journalists to report about) that were followed up with sessions on journalism and discussions on how the issues flagged by the experts could be converted into in-depth feature stories.

The training included a visit to Kafue Maafushi Island where the trainees could meet local officials and ordinary people and interview them for stories they were planning to write about. It was also an opportunity for them to test the knowledge obtained in the training and refine/refocus their story ideas. The field visit was followed up with a debriefing session where the participants discussed and agreed on a timeline for completing the drafts for their stories.

Topics Covered in the Boot Camp

Knowledge sessions:

Key development priorities for the Maldives
Democratic governance
Story ideas for feature stories
Gender-sensitive reporting
Conflict-sensitive reporting

Clinics:

Key themes

Environment
Youth in the Maldives
Access to justice
Gender and social inclusion



Media training on ethical reporting on conflict sensitive topics and situations



reporting. The expert also held meetings/discussions with Maldives Media Council and Maldives Broadcasting Commission on monitoring media during election.

As a result, Maldives Broadcasting Commission initiated monitoring of the election. These interventions will be followed up for developing a core team of change leaders in media and journalism.

To promote objective, independent and balanced reporting in the media sector, UNDP supported the job training and coaching of over 60 participants (journalists from 3 TV stations, two on-line news sites, and students from the Department of Journalism from Maldives National University).

An international expert, Mr. Binod Bhattarai, provided technical support for organizing a series of in-house training. Topics covered included Basic News Writing, Television News Production and Writing, Ethical Reporting, Investigative Journalism and Feature Writing.

The end evaluation demonstrated that knowledge and skills among the journalists were enhanced on ethical and balanced

In addition, following the first round of the presidential elections, UNDP partnered with NGO Maldives Journalist's Association to conduct a dialogue between media organizations on the role of media during elections.

Ten individuals from seven media organizations and Maldives Broadcasting Commission took part in the discussion session, which looked at the experiences of the different media organizations during first round of elections, the challenges faced and how media's role could be strengthened for the second round and/or subsequent elections.

IGP Team Farewell & Welcome

Former Assistant Resident Representative - Democratic Governance, Ms. Zindu Salih, departs UNDP Maldives to take up a post as Governance Programme Specialist in UNDP Timor Leste



We are also saying goodbye to (from left) Ms. Shaliny Jaufar (Programme Analyst) and Ms. Yasmeen Rasheed (M&E Associate). We thank them all for their dedicated contributions to UNDP/IGP and wish them all the best in their new endeavors.



We welcome Ms. Aishath Rizna, the new Assistant Resident Representative - Democratic Governance



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Resilient nations.*

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