

United Nations Development Programme



UN  
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Maldives

2005 - 2008  
UNDP Tsunami Recovery  
Efforts in the Maldives



RESTORATION OF LIVELIHOODS

**SHARING EXPERIENCES**

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# FOREWORD

Despite the overwhelming nature of the losses of the December 2004 tsunami, many Maldivians are on the road to recovery; survivors have recommenced work, communities are close to completion, and several have bounced back while others continue the steady progress toward recovery. Through grants, loans and capacity building exercises, the United Nations Development Programme has worked to help survivors of the tsunami restore their businesses and incomes, and find opportunities to remain outside the boundary lines of poverty.

For UNDP, the Tsunami Recovery Programme has been of utmost significance. It is through the extraordinary generosity of our donors, government counterparts,



the civil society and private-sector partners, that UNDP has been able to help people and communities in the Maldives to recover their livelihoods.

With the nationwide Tsunami Recovery Programme drawing to a close on 31 December 2008, this is a good time to reflect on and assess the effectiveness of the relief and reconstruction operations.

This report serves a dual purpose; - to outline the work that has been undertaken by UNDP and partners to restore and improve the livelihoods of the tsunami-affected people and; to share the lessons learnt in the process.

An important component of the Tsunami Recovery Programme was the Livelihoods Project as it covered recovery efforts in 17 atolls and addressed a wide range of sectors; ranging from agriculture and waste management to decentralization - that required immediate response as well as short to medium-term

recovery intervention.

Our efforts to assist in the process of recovery for men and women determined to achieve self-sufficiency, has not been without obstacle. Human resource shortages, geographical barriers, the construction boom and working with organizations with limited capacity in formal project management are just some of the challenges that had to be addressed and overcome during our operations.

In spite of the barriers, the achievements highlighted in these pages give testament to the success of UNDP's work. Under UNDP's commitment to "building-back-better", foundations have been laid in many areas for future growth and development.

UNDP support was critical in supporting the fisheries and agricultural sector; our contributions are reflected in initiatives to develop capacity of government counterparts such as the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture and Marine Resources and in introducing and implementing new innovative approaches such as the AUTOPOT growing systems, creation of fish markets and stimulating women's livelihoods through opportunities to address inequality.

Support in participatory development through involvement of island-based organizations, particularly NGOs, paves the way for future efforts in decentralisation, local governance and increased strengthening of civil society.

Moreover, in order to address ways of establishing public-private partnership, efforts have been made in integrating livelihood activities of communities with local tourist resort operations.

Today, as the country embarks on major transitions; from its efforts to achieve democratic reforms and graduate into the UN's group of 'middle-income' countries, the lessons learnt and experiences of the tsunami will be reflected upon while moving forward towards achieving the development goals of the country.

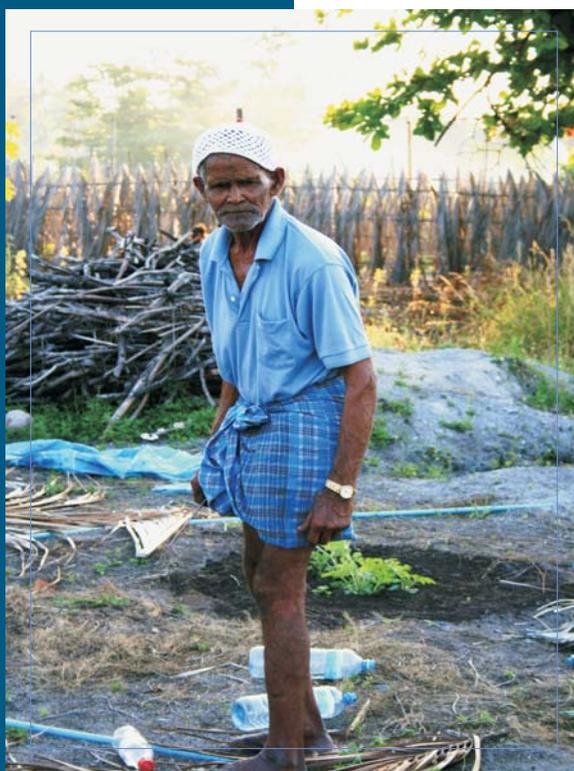
UNDP remains committed to helping people create sustainable, improved livelihoods, as well as preventing more people from facing the possibility of a life of poverty.

**Patrice Coeur-Bizot**

UNDP Resident Representative

Maldives

# BACKGROUND



For the Indian Ocean nation of the Maldives, the tsunami of 2004 represented the worst natural disaster in the country's history. Comprised of 1,190 coral islands with an average elevation of 1.8 metres about sea level, and dispersed across 900 kilometres of ocean, the Maldives is home to some 300,000 people – virtually all of whom were affected by the disaster. Though the loss of life was not as great as in several other countries there were approximately 100 fatalities the tsunami's impact on the Maldivian economy was unparalleled, washing away 62 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in a matter of minutes. By comparison, other tsunami-affected countries suffered losses of 3 to 5 percent of GDP.

On nearly all of the country's 200 occupied islands, the people of the Maldives found their livelihoods in ruins. Tourism, fisheries, and agriculture, which together comprise more than two-thirds of GDP, were among the hardest hit sectors. Many tourist resorts were damaged and had to close; large numbers of fishermen lost their boats and women their home-based fish-processing businesses; and some 15,000 farmers lost a year's harvest due to salt water contamination of agricultural land.

In light of the tremendous challenges facing the country in the aftermath of the tsunami, UNDP launched a nation-wide tsunami recovery programme with a focus on five main areas:

- Shelter response and recovery;
- Infrastructure restoration;
- Livelihoods restoration;
- Disaster risk management; and
- Aid coordination.

Specifically, the Livelihoods Project aimed to restore livelihoods and food security on the worst affected islands in the areas of agriculture, fisheries, waste management, women's livelihoods, and capacity building.



# LIVELIHOODS PROJECT

## at a glance

**Objective:** The objective of the UNDP Tsunami Recovery Livelihoods Project was to restore livelihoods and food security and to revitalise the most affected families and small enterprises in the fisheries sector (2,783 affected people), in agriculture (2,924 affected farmers), among unemployed men and women (2,342 affected people), and in tourism, manufacturing, and other sectors (2,660 affected people).

**Budget:** \$6.2 million

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 12,000

**Strategy:** The strategy of the Livelihoods Project was based on the National Recovery and Reconstruction Plan developed by the Government of the Maldives as well as the Tsunami Recovery Plan developed by UNDP. The project closely followed the “building back better” theme of the UN Recovery Strategy, which seeks to ensure that communities are better off following the recovery process than they were prior to the tsunami.

**Duration:** The project was officially signed on May 2005 and closed on 31 December 2008. However, all major activities were completed by the end of the first quarter of 2008.

**Coverage:** 109 islands across 17 atolls



# UNDP MALDIVES TSUNAMI RECOVERY PROGRAMME

## Restoration of Livelihoods (Relief Phase & Recovery Phase)



In addition, activities such as the provision of micro-credit loans, capacity-building of local island-based organizations, and support to decentralisation in local governance complemented the efforts of the project. New possibilities for income generation and/or alternative livelihoods were explored through a pilot project on revival of the local handicrafts industry.

During the **Relief Phase 2005-2006**, immediate needs of the communities to restore and restart their income generation in agriculture, fisheries, and home-based businesses were met through the provision of cash and the replacement of assets that were damaged or lost in the tsunami.

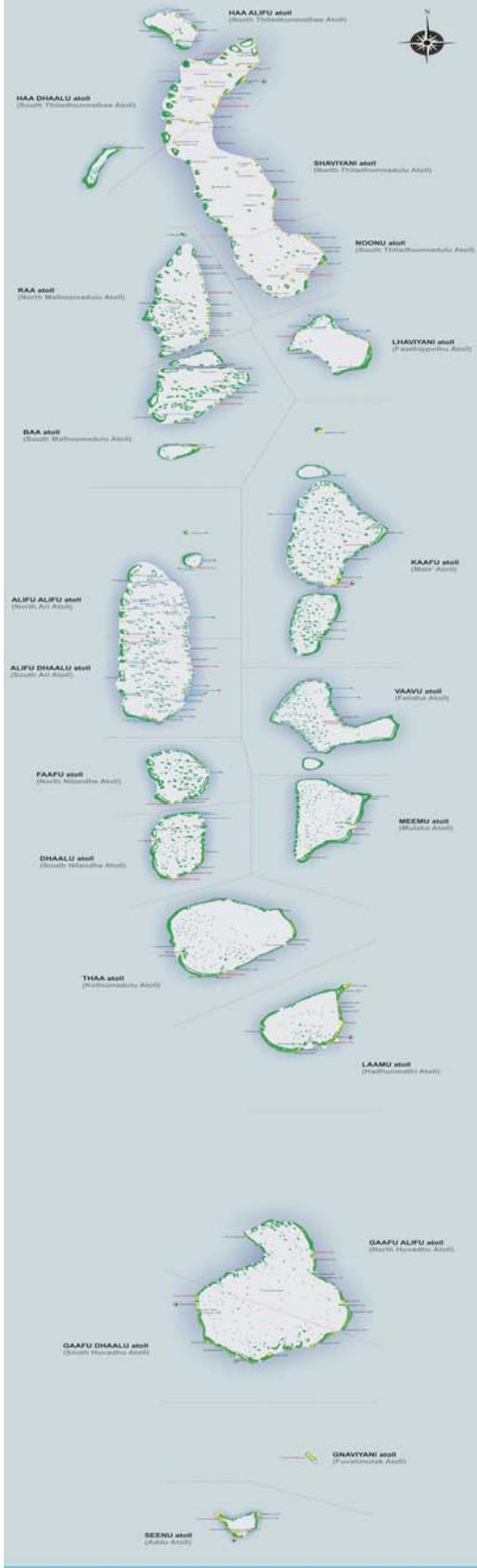
The **Recovery Phase 2006-2008** focused on strengthening the livelihoods of these affected communities through skills development, the introduction of improved production techniques, value-addition methods (e.g., processing and improving quality of products), establishing productive infrastructure, and by facilitating partnerships and networks with civil society, the private sector, as well as the government.



# MAP



# MALDIVES



<p><b>Location:</b> 8° 30' N 75° 30' E</p> <p><b>Official language:</b> Dhivehi</p> <p><b>Government:</b> Republic</p> <p><b>Head of State:</b> Mohamed Nasheed</p> <p><b>Head of Government:</b> Ibrahim Mohamed Solih</p>	<p><b>Area:</b> • Total: 298 km<sup>2</sup> • Water: 292 km<sup>2</sup> • Land: 6 km<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Population:</b> • 2014: 494,100 • 2015: 500,000 • 2016: 505,000</p> <p><b>GDP (PPP):</b> • 2014: \$1.23 billion • 2015: \$1.28 billion • 2016: \$1.33 billion</p> <p><b>Time zone:</b> UTC+5</p>	<p><b>ISO 3166-2:</b> MD</p> <p><b>ISO 3166-3:</b> MD</p> <p><b>ISO 4217:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-2:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-3:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-4:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-5:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-6:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-7:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-8:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-9:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-10:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-11:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-12:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-13:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-14:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-15:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-16:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-17:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-18:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-19:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-20:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-21:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-22:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-23:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-24:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-25:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-26:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-27:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-28:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-29:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-30:</b> MVR</p>	<p><b>Capital:</b> Malé</p> <p><b>Government:</b> Republic</p> <p><b>Head of State:</b> Mohamed Nasheed</p> <p><b>Head of Government:</b> Ibrahim Mohamed Solih</p> <p><b>ISO 3166-2:</b> MD</p> <p><b>ISO 3166-3:</b> MD</p> <p><b>ISO 4217:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-2:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-3:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-4:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-5:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-6:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-7:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-8:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-9:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-10:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-11:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-12:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-13:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-14:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-15:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-16:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-17:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-18:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-19:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-20:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-21:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-22:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-23:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-24:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-25:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-26:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-27:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-28:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-29:</b> MVR</p> <p><b>ISO 4217-30:</b> MVR</p>
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# DONORS AND PARTNERS



The following Donors and Partners, through their generous contributions and invaluable cooperation, have made an important difference in the lives and livelihoods of the island communities of the Maldives.

### Donors

- The European Commission
- The European Community Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO)
- The Government of Australia (AusAid)
- The Government of Canada (CIDA)
- The Government of Netherlands
- The Government of New Zealand (NZAID)
- The Government of the United Kingdom (DFID)
- Rotary Club of Dubai, United Arab Emirates
- Flinders Council, Australia
- Tomaree Community and Rotary Club of Salamander Bay, Australia
- The Force of Nature Aid Foundation, Malaysia
- United Nations Foundation
- United Nations Volunteers (in-kind personnel)
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR)
- UNDP Special Unit for South-South Cooperation

### Partners

#### Government of Maldives:

- Department of External Resources of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)
- Ministry of Atolls Development (MoAD) - Atoll/Island Offices of target islands of the project

- Environment Research Centre (ERC) of the Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Water (MoEEW)
- Ministry of Finance and Treasury
- Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture, and Marine Resources (MoFAMR)
- Ministry of Gender and Family (MoGF)

#### International Agencies:

- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)
- French Red Cross

#### National NGOs:

- Care Society
- Creative Arts and Crafts Training Centre (CACTC)
- Women Entrepreneurs Council (WEC)

#### Island-based Organisations:

- Island Development Committees (IDCs)
- Island Women's Development Committees
- Cooperative Societies
- NGOs

#### Private Institutions:

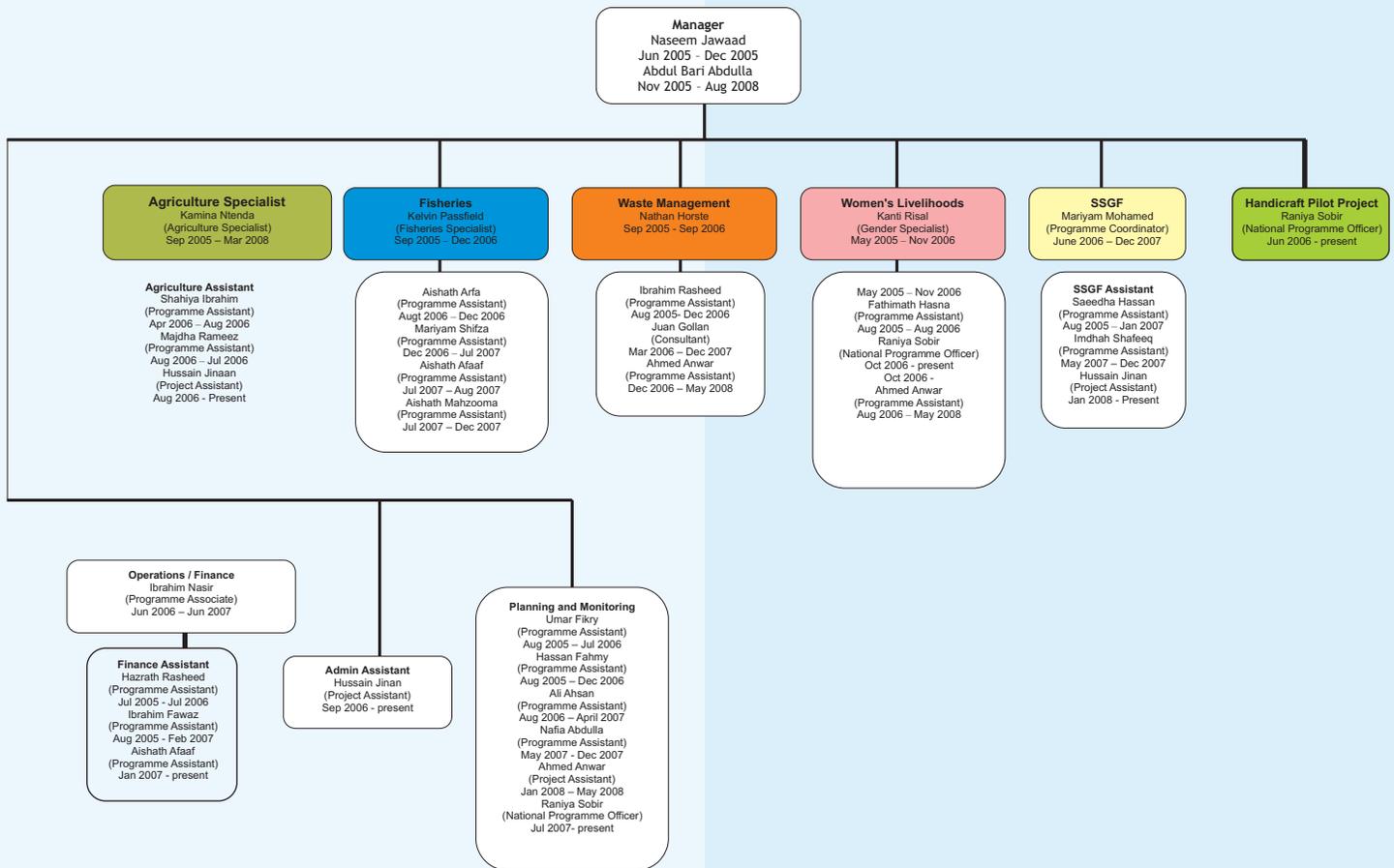
- Comtronics Pvt. Limited
- Focus Education Centre (FEC)
- Modern Academy for Professional Studies (MAPS)



# THE TEAM



# Livelihoods Organigram 2008



# PROFILE: AGRICULTURE

## The Young Agri-Shop Manager

Zara, a nineteen-year-old, is the manager of the agriculture shop established in Raa Alifushi under the UNDP Tsunami Recovery Livelihoods Project. As part of its agriculture extension assistance to tsunami-affected communities, UNDP signed an agreement with the Alifushi's vibrant Island Women's Development Committee (IWDC) to establish a sales centre to facilitate a more regular and less expensive supply of fertilizers, pesticides, and seedlings to the community. The shop is operated by the IWDC as a business, and its earnings support the salary of Zara and her colleague, who each receive an income of MRF 2000 (\$150) a month.

Zara has her sales counter and store room nicely organized and keeps excellent records of sales and expenditures. She also checks regularly the expiration dates and other qualities of the products sold. Next to the sales centre, Zara and her friend also maintain a cultivation plot and nursery. Here they grow plants, seedlings, fruits, and vegetables, which they sell to increase the IWDC's earnings and boost agriculture on the island.

According to Zara, almost all the households on the island have now started growing their own fruits and vegetables. People have greater awareness on the use of pesticides and fertilizers, and they have easier access to these inputs.

"I get stopped on the road all the time by people enquiring on pests and what's available at our shop," claims Zara, who also explained that it is a great feeling to be able to help those who are enthusiastic about agriculture.

Zara is also one of the most active trainees who continue to assist the community on agriculture consultation, following her participation in an agriculture training programme at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka, organised by UNDP in 2006.

According to Zara, the process of procuring

materials for the shop is not too complex. She buys through contacts in Male', the capital, and the committee president assists in the coordination of the purchase and its transport to Alifushi. "We are slowly expanding," says Zara proudly, "and nearby islands have started placing orders with our shop."



The efforts of Zara and the young women's group have today resulted in the revival of agriculture and home gardening on Alifushi Island, enabling the community to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables.

**Objective:** Restore livelihoods of agricultural families affected by the tsunami.

**Budget:** \$ 1.5 million

**Beneficiaries:** 4500 farmers and home gardeners

**Islands:** ADh Maamigili, Dh Kudahuvadhoo, Dh Maaemboodhoo, GDh Vaadhoo, HA Kelaa, K Kaashidoo, L Dhan'bidhoo, L Gaadhoo, L Gan (Mathimaradhoo), Lh Kurendhoo, Lh Olhuvelifushi, N Kendhikolhudhoo (2 wards), R Alifushi, and Th Kandoodhoo.

## Relief

Following damage assessments, the Ministry of Fisheries, Agriculture, and Marine Resources (MoFAMR) identified the need to provide agriculture assets and inputs to farmers and home gardeners as a priority in the relief phase. Beneficiaries were identified and relief kits were developed. Assistance was provided to approximately 4,000 farmers through a \$700,000 joint UNDP/Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) project. The relief kits were composed of agriculture inputs (seeds, seedlings, fertilisers), tools, and equipment to compensate the losses caused by the tsunami. All assistance was delivered through MoFAMR in close coordination with other donors working in the sector, such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

## Recovery

To recover the economic losses in the agriculture sector and to strengthen agriculture in the country as part of “building back better,” agriculture extension projects were initiated on 14 target islands in collaboration with MoFAMR.

- Community consultations were undertaken on the target islands to identify needs and issues specific to each island. Activities were developed accordingly, and were composed of one or more of the following components: setting up of demonstration plots cum nursery; establishing local sales centres to enable a more regular and less expensive supply of agricultural inputs to farmers; installing irrigation systems and producing bio-fertilizers; supporting the promotion of cash crops and marketing (post-harvest technology); improving home gardening and introducing cropping systems. Projects were signed with the Island Development Committees (IDCs) through a micro-capital grant agreement for implementation at island level.

- Agriculture inputs were also provided to complement assistance in extension services.

- Hands-on-training, demonstration, and awarenessraising were also provided to farmers, including training on watering and cropping systems, spacing, the production of seedlings, and crop protection methodologies. The work was undertaken at the field level by agricultural specialists recruited through the UN Volunteer (UNV) programme. Support has also been provided to two target islands through the Farmer Field School (FFS) programme, a longer-

term initiative whereby farmers learn to understand and appreciate ecologically sustainable and profitable livelihood activities.

- To improve exposure, knowledge, and capacity, overseas training programmes were organised in Sri Lanka and Philippines.

- New and innovative approaches to farming have also been introduced on some target islands. Group farming, for example, while used elsewhere, is new to the Maldives; and the automatic pot growing (autopot) system, which addresses water and soil conservation, is a completely innovative technology that was introduced in the Maldives as a pilot activity through the project.

## Results

- Immediate needs of farmers were met through relief assistance to restore agriculture production.

- Agriculture extension services were established and operational on 13 of the 14 target islands.

- Scale of agriculture production beyond home gardening was increased to more than what previously existed.

- Farmers' knowledge of production methods and pest and disease control was greatly improved.

- Capacity of local bodies such as the Island Development Committees and MoFAMR was strengthened to coordinate and deliver agriculture assistance more efficiently and with greater transparency due to the participatory approach of the project.

## Impact

- Improved food security of the target communities, now less reliant on imported fruits and vegetables.

- Improved diet and nutrition of the target communities

- Improved income and economic status of farmers from increased agriculture production.

- Increased economic opportunities as support services (transport, marketing, etc.) are established to cater to agriculture production

- Established ground-work for strengthening the agriculture sector over the long-term (e.g., Farmer Field School programme, group approach to farming, operation of cooperatives, and introduction of new research technologies). MoFAMR is seeking ways to expand these initiatives through additional external assistance.



# PROFILE: FISHERIES

## Case Study: Naifaru Fish Market

Naifaru is an island in Lhaviyani Atoll with an area of 14.27 hectares and a current population of 4,611 (2,171 women and 2,440 men). The island's main economic activities are fishing, masonry, carpentry, sewing, and resort-related employment. Social services include a government-run school (grades 1-12), two pre-schools, and a government-owned Atoll Hospital.

Naifaru fishermen and fish processors took the initiative to construct a fish market and store (which was later changed to a cafeteria) prior to the tsunami of December 2004, but the work was brought to a halt due to shortage of funds. In the meantime, the tsunami destroyed the fish landing site of Naifaru. Following the destruction of the site, the Naifaru Island Office requested the development of a fish market through MoFAMR under its Fisheries Development Programme for tsunami recovery. UNDP accepted the IDC's proposal given that the initial site had been destroyed, and given that the community had taken the initiative to build a fish market prior to the tsunami.

UNDP contracted out the construction work to Sun Wind Maldives Pvt. Ltd., and the IDC and Island Office closely supervised the work. Given that the market foundation had already been laid by the community itself, the design followed the community's earlier plans, giving the community a strong sense of ownership of the building. Work was completed as scheduled and handed over to the community within a period of 1-2 months.

There is a high likelihood of the long-term sustainability of the project, given that the fish market and cafeteria are earning an income through different services and that the market is the only site where fish unloading is allowed on Naifaru. The IDC receives rental charges from the café, and additional income is generated through renting out of the butchery stall for fish cleaners. Finally, the IDC collects the fish innards and sells it to Felivaru Canning Factory to produce fish meal. The innards are collected and transported by the factory, which pays MRF 2,000 (\$150) per month for the product.

The market is managed by the IDC in

consultation with fishermen and fish processors, and the earnings approximately MRF 3,000-3,500 monthly are retained by the IDC. One person is employed to maintain the market and record exchanges.

### Lessons Learnt

The Naifaru fish market offers an excellent example of a sustainable project that was well conceived and well executed. The various incomes that the IDC earns from the

market leave it with a profit, and there is a strong sense of ownership of the market by the Naifaru community. This project is an encouraging example of an empowered community taking long-term responsibility for its island infrastructure; and the flexibility of the UNDP Livelihoods Unit in considering and incorporating community needs was a significant factor in the success of this project.



Project	Naifaru Fish Market
Location	Naifaru, Lhaviyani Atoll
Type of project	Establishment of fish market
Beneficiaries	Fishermen and fish processors of Naifaru and nearby islands
Implementing Institution(s)	Island Development Committee (IDC)
Implementing Period	7 July 2006 - 7 December 2006
Budget	\$79,009
Primary Organisation	Island Development Committee
Project Contacts	Abdul Wahhab Abdul Rahman - Naifaru Island Chief Abdul Matheen - Naifaru Kuda Katheeb Mohammed Hussein - IDC Member
Mailing Address	Naifaru Island Office, Naifaru, Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

**Objective:** Restore food security and revitalise livelihoods of fishermen and fish processors.

**Budget:** \$1 million

**Beneficiaries:** 700 fishermen and fish processors

**Islands:** Dh Kudahuvadho, GA Dhaandho, L Dhan'bidho, Lh Naifaru, and M Dhiggaru.

### Relief

Because fishing is a major source of income and food for the island communities, great efforts were made to provide relief assistance to fishermen to compensate their losses. Fishing gear such as bait, nets, generator sets, water pumps, anchors, and ice boxes was provided to nearly 230 through MoFAMR. In addition, nine boat sheds were repaired by UNDP.

### Recovery

Of the 16 islands prioritised for development of fisheries by MoFAMR, UNDP selected five islands to establish community managed fish markets/fish processing centres. Training in hygienic fish handling and the making of tuna jerky were also provided on these five fishery islands. The main activities under this component included community consultations with regard to proposed activities, and the development of designs and bills of quantities (BoQs) for the fish markets with MoFAMR. On three of the five islands, two-storey markets are designed to be self-sustaining as they accommodate a café and shop in the top-storey, which can be rented out to offset the costs of the market operation. Once the designs were finalised, the bidding process was carried out and contracts were awarded. All contracts were awarded for a period of six months, but were extended due to delays in construction. The Naifaru fish market was completed in December 2006, Kudahuvadho in March 2007, and Dhambidho, Dhaandho, and Dhiggaru in early 2008.

### Results

- Immediate needs of affected fishermen were met from relief assistance delivered through MoFAMR and FAO. Over 90 percent of the fishermen were able to return to their normal fishing life.
- Availability of fish for food was restored on the islands.
- The Naifaru fish market, which was damaged by the tsunami, was replaced with a new one-storey market in 2006, and Kudahuvadho received a one-storey fish market in 2007. Dhaandho, Dhambidho, and Dhiggaru received two-storey fish markets (with café and shop) in 2008.
- More than 100 community members have been trained in hygienic fish handling and in making tuna jerky.

### Impact

- Improved quality of landed fish for consumption and processing, and minimal losses from spoilage. Previously, fish were landed and cleaned on the beach, and were subject to spoilage and mixture with sand.
- More efficient cleaning and sale of fish in the market facilities. It is therefore expected that incomes of fishermen as well as fish processors will improve.
- Sustainable community management of fish markets on four of the five target islands. In addition to the three two-storey markets, user fees have been introduced to cover maintenance costs of the market on Naifaru, and a café built by the community next to the market generates additional income to cover operational costs. This project represents that first time that user-fees to manage community infrastructure was introduced in the Maldives, and it is expected that this practice will become more common in the country in the long-term.
- Improved quality and the addition of new products. Trainees are exploring the production of such value-added fish products as smoked fish, packaging of fish soup, and more, and are giving greater attention to hygiene, food quality, and packaging.



# PROFILE: WASTE MANAGEMENT

## Case Study:

Waste Management in Baa Maalhos

Maalhos is a tsunami-affected island of 23.20 hectares located in Baa Atoll with a current population of 554 (279 women and 275 men). The island's main economic activities are tourism-related work, thatch weaving, carpentry, and fishing. Social services include a government health centre, government secondary school (grades 1-9), and public pre-schools.

Under the Relief phase of the Livelihoods Project, members of Maalhos community were paid cash to gather debris to one location and to separate it according to categories. UNDP hired the FOCUS Education Centre, a private training institution, to implement the training component of the activity, which was to create awareness among the community on the benefits of waste management.

In preparation for the Recovery phase of the project, the UNDP Livelihoods Unit conducted pre-consultation trips to confirm the need for consultation in the formulation of an island Waste Management Plan. A three-day workshop was held in Maalhos for community consultation and to identify problems and solutions, during which time residents identified the establishment of a waste management centre (WMC) as their priority. The agreement for construction of a WMC was signed on the final day of the workshop.

The workshop led to the development of a comprehensive Waste Management Plan for the island, with input from the broad community. The plan, which was later reviewed and voted upon, sought to assess the root causes of the island's waste problems, identify measures for improvement, and identify possible sources of funding.

Construction of the center was undertaken by the community itself, which also brought about economic advantages to the island. Further, the establishment of a WMC has enabled the separation of waste into various categories, which has facilitated an arrangement with the nearby resort, Sonevafushi Resort & Spa, to carry waste off the island for environmentally correct

disposal.

### Lessons Learnt

Given the challenges facing islands in removing their waste to be recycled or transported to the landfill near Male', Maalhos is a good example of how a partnership with a nearby resort can help to relieve the waste issue.



Project	Waste Management in Baa Maalhos
Location	Maalhos, Baa Atoll
Type of project	Cash-for-work tsunami debris clean-up, construction of waste management centre, and provision of metal compactor
Beneficiaries	Residents of Maalhos
Implementing Institution(s)	Island Development Committee (IDC)
Implementing Period	21 April 2006 - 31 December 2007
Budget	\$31,000
Primary Organisation	Island Development Committee
Project Contacts	Yosuf Abdul Rahman, Island Chief
Mailing Address	Island Development Committee, Maalhos, Baa Atoll, Maldives

**Objective:** Provide immediate cash relief and establish “environment friendly” waste management.

**Budget:** \$ 1.6 million

**Beneficiaries:** 14000 residents of the beneficiary communities

**Islands:** ADh Dhangethi, ADh Mandhoo, B Fehendhoo, B Goidhoo, B Hithaadhoo, B Kamadhoo, B Maalhos, F Magoodhoo, K Gulhi, M Raimmandhoo, N Holhudhoo, R Inguraidhoo, R Maduvvaree, R Vaadhoo, Th Kandoodhoo, and Th Kinbidhoo.

### Relief

To provide immediate cash relief following the tsunami, a cash-for-work programme was initiated whereby locals were hired to remove hazardous waste and clean up the tsunami debris on 16 selected islands (20-40 beneficiaries per island). The process led to the separation of waste by type and the gathering of waste to one main location on each island.

### Recovery

Given the growing magnitude of the country's solid waste management issues, which were exacerbated by the tsunami in the absence of systematic waste collection and management on the islands, UNDP agreed to continue addressing waste management issues in collaboration with the Ministry of Energy, Environment, and Water (MoEEW) on islands where the cash-for-work programme had been implemented.

- A three-day intensive community consultation workshop was held on each island to discuss and identify waste issues specific to the island. Representatives of IDCs, IWDCs, NGOs, health centres, schools, and the general public participated in these consultations. A waste management plan was formulated, which identified and prioritised the issues for action.

- Waste management projects were developed based on the waste plans for each island, and UNDP signed micro-capital grant agreements of \$20,000 with each of the IDCs. Initially, projects for 15 islands involved the development of waste management centres, as waste disposal was identified as their main priority. The remaining island, Noonu Holhudhoo, already had a waste centre and opted to roof the existing site, to build an auto-combustion incinerator, and purchase a metal compacting machine. Also, of the initial 15 islands, it was later realized that Kaafu Gulhi did not have the space or reclaimed land for such a centre that would be safe from erosion, and that the population of Baa Atoll Fehendhoo Island were to be relocated under the government's population consolidation programme.

- Designs and BOQs of the waste management centres were developed and approved by the MoEEW, which were then shared with Island Development Committees. The waste management centre design includes four compartments for separation of waste (metal, plastic, hazardous, and others) and a floor

area for composting organic waste.

- The IDCs identified the sites for the proposed centres, and approval was sought from the relevant authorities, including the MoEEW. The centres were then built by local contractors/construction workers selected by the IDCs. In addition, islanders were compensated for any trees belonging to them that were on the approved land area.

### Results

- Waste management plans were developed for all 16 islands, identifying and prioritising problems and solutions.

- A waste management centre with space for separation of waste has been established on 13 islands. On Fehendhoo and Gulhi, temporary sites have been set up and the removal of waste from the islands has been facilitated.

- These activities also resulted in pilot initiatives for various aspects of waste management. On Holhudhoo Island an auto-combustion incinerator was tested, with training from an external consultant. (It was found, however, that the incinerator was not suitable for the household waste generated on the island.) In addition, metal compactors were provided to three islands to compress metal that could then be sold to private firms for reuse.

### Impact

- Awareness of the importance of waste management was greatly increased on the target islands.

- Community operation and management of waste centres was facilitated.

- Inputs derived from the initial planning process on all 16 islands was fed into the formulation of the country's first National Solid Waste Management Policy, enacted by the government in 2007, to improve country's overall waste management.



# PROFILE: WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS

## Case Study:

Hydroponics for Vilufushi Community

Buruni, located in Thaa Atoll with an area of 30.50 hectares, has a population of 557 (293 women and 264 men). The island's main economic activities are fishing, masonry, and thatch weaving. Social services include the government owned school (grades 1-10) and the privately owned health post. Currently sharing the island is the Vilifushi community, which consists of 1,006 women and 1,030 men, all of whom were relocated to Buruni following the tsunami while their island which was very badly damaged was being re-built. It is anticipated that the Vilifushi population will move back to their home island in 2009.

Under the Recovery phase of UNDP Livelihoods Project's Women's Livelihoods component, IWDCs were invited to submit proposals for training projects that would lead to income generation by women. Following this, Vilifushi's very active IWDC submitted a proposal for a small grant to support a hydroponics project on Buruni, which helped procure a hydroponics system and arrange hydroponics training. As a result, 63 Vilifushi women acquired the potential to earn an income from agricultural production. The agricultural nature of the Vilifushi population and their keen interest in home gardening can be seen in the small garden plots they have created in front of each of their temporary shelters.

At first all the trained women took part in the project collectively, and the first crop tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, and chillies was reaped by everyone working together. After the first crop was sold the IWDC took one quarter of the profits and the rest was divided amongst the course participants, generating MRF 18 per woman. Not all the women continued in the program following their training; but for those who have continued the income potential is now considerably higher, because the women have organized themselves into four working groups, with six women in each group. Each group has responsibility for taking care of the hydroponics plot on set days, including watering, feeding, and tending the plants. All women working on the project will receive an equal amount from the sale of their products after the IWDC takes its one quarter share. Since the training emphasised use of local materials, especially fertilizers and pesticides, the trainees have the added advantage of not being overly reliant on imported products. A market for the project's produce has been easily found amongst the populations of Buruni and Vilifushi.

The Vilifushi IWDC plans to keep the project running, and also plans to move the project to Vilifushi when the population returns to their home island. They have already requested land to set up a hydroponics plot in Vilifushi, and the Vilifushi women are keen to use their skills to set up home gardens of their own.

### Lessons Learnt

A creative outlet has been provided for latent talent in the community one that will provide livelihoods for those who actively use their new skills. This, in turn, will contribute to



Reducing the high rate of local unemployment and under-employment, as well as provide a means for previously 'unemployable' people, such as school dropouts, to be engaged in productive activity.

It is highly likely that the Vilifushi hydroponics project will continue to be a success, since the IWDC has twice demonstrated its interest in the project and successfully implemented the project both in Vilifushi and Buruni.

Project	Hydroponics for Vilufushi Community
Location	Vilifushi community in Buruni, Thaa Atoll
Type of project	Creating income generating opportunities through provision of hydroponics training
Beneficiaries	63 direct women beneficiaries and their families
Implementing Institution(s)	Vilifushi Island Women's Development Committee (IWDC)
Implementing Period	16 July 2007- 31 December 2007
Budget	\$4,809 (\$3,253 UNDP contribution and \$1,556 IWDC contribution)
Primary Organisation	Vilifushi IWDC
Project Contacts	Fathimath Jaariyaa, Vice President
Mailing Address	Island Women's Development Committee, Vilifushi, Thaa Atoll, Maldives

**Objective:** Enhance livelihoods of women affected by the tsunami  
**Budget:** \$300,000

**Beneficiaries:** 1500 home based workers and trainees

**Islands:** B Kamadhoo, B. Eydhafushi, Dh Kudahuvadhoo, Dh Rinbidhoo, Dh Vaanee, F Magoodhoo, GDh Vaadhoo, L Gan (Mukurimagu), L Gan (Thundi ward), Lh Hinnavaru, Lh Kurendhoo, M Raimmandhoo, Th Guraidhoo, Th Kinbidhoo, and Th Vilufushi.

## Relief

Livelihood assessments were completed by the Ministry of Gender and Family (MoGF) on two of the worst-hit atolls, Meemu and Thaa, indicating the need for assistance to women's home-based livelihood activities in the informal sector. Lists of beneficiaries and lost assets were drawn and verified with aid of the Island Women's Development Committees (IWDCs). The assistance was delivered in two phases, the second phase taking into account beneficiaries overlooked in the first phase, who were mainly internally displaced persons (IDPs) those who had been temporarily located to other islands. UNDP replaced assets used in women's income generation such as sewing machines, banking ovens, freezers, and weaving tools for nearly 1,200 women from 13 islands. The assets were complemented with a cash grant to each woman ranging from MRF 1000 to 1500 to allow purchase of raw materials and other inputs to restart their activities.

## Recovery

To address the need for skills development among women engaged in income generation, a small-grants scheme was initiated with the IWDCs of 15 islands. Through proposals received and evaluated, grant agreements of up to \$5000 per island were signed to implement a local skills-development programme. These included agricultural training on six islands, handicrafts training on four islands, sewing/embroidery training on three islands, cake decoration on one island, and electrical wiring training on one island. The IWDCs were targeted to implement the trainings at island level, to strengthen their capacity, and to empower them to engage in economic activities. Using the grant funds, the IWDCs identified trainers, selected participants, procured training materials, organised the training programmes, and in many cases supervised the continuation of activities after training was completed.

## Results

- 1,197 women were compensated with tools and cash grants to restore their livelihood activities, such as tailoring, handicrafts making, weaving, coir making, and cake baking.
- 387 people on 15 islands have been trained in various livelihood skills in areas that have potential for expansion, such as agriculture and handicrafts.

- The capacity of IWDCs to implement local projects has been significantly strengthened.

## Impact

- Women's livelihood activities severely affected by the tsunami and initially unaddressed by any agency/donor or the government were restored.
- Women's income generation improved. In response to a survey designed to evaluate the project's outcome, most women reported a higher income following the assistance compared to pre-tsunami levels.
- Women's ability to cope with the economic and psychological impact of the tsunami improved.
- The visibility and importance of home-based workers generating income in the informal sector increased.
- Through small grants, the skills training programme provided islands the opportunity to address issues that had not been given priority by development partners. For example, on six islands where agriculture was affected, the IWDCs used their grants to purchase agriculture inputs and revive their cultivated land. The activity also provided islands with the opportunity to explore new and alternative livelihood opportunities through training in handicrafts, hydroponics, etc.
- Skills programmes in 13 affected communities improved livelihood opportunities and capacities.
- The role and participation of IWDCs in the nation's recovery process were strengthened.



## Broadband Internet to Hinnavaru Homes

Abdulla Naail a fourteen year old from the island of Hinnavaru is one of many students benefiting the Internet services established on the island by the NGO Hesperus Sports Club with the support of the South-South Grant Facility (SSGF).

The community cybercafé which had been the one source of Internet access on the island prior to its destruction by the 2004 tsunami was re-established under the SSGF project, and with faster Internet access using broadband via satellite. In addition, direct Internet service was even provided to households and other entities at affordable prices through a cable network. The use of the network was later extended for the provision of cable television services.

The cybercafé was opened to the public on 12 May 2006, offering Internet, email, printing and scanning facilities seven days a week for nine and a half hours on Saturdays through Thursdays and six and a half hours on Fridays. Naail also explained that initially they didn't have Internet facilities which can be used from home. When the cybercafé opened they installed a line to every house and because of that he gets it at home.

Naail studies Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Mathematics, Computer studies, Dhivehi and Islam at the Lhaviyani Atoll Education Centre (secondary school) and is able to get a lot of information on these subjects online. 'It is great that we can access past papers online. We can prepare well for exams by doing the sample papers' exclaimed Naail who will be sitting the O'Level exams in 2009. Naail is also pleased that he can use the Internet to get information regarding what is happening around the world. As a big football fan it also allows him to be well updated with the sports news.

In conjunction with the introduction of the service, the NGO held information sessions for secondary school students, the staff of the Island Office and the Health Centre, and the Women's Development Committee on how to browse the web and utilise the resources therein.

Following the project, the Hinnavaru community is much more conversant with

# PROFILE:

## SMALL GRANTS SCHEME/ SOUTH-SOUTH GRANTS FACILITY (SSGF)

Internet usage. People use the Internet now for email, for trade and business purposes, and to get general information. Internet resources are also being used extensively for education purposes with students accounting for 75% of users.



### Cybercafé Browsing Charges

30 minutes - MRF 12
45 minutes - MRF 16
60 minutes - MRF 20
Each additional 30 minutes -MRF 10
<b>Monthly Package</b>
Students - MRF 150
Others - MRF 200
Download speed (kbps) 256
Upload speed (kbps) 64

**Budget:** \$565,558

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 3000 residents of beneficiary communities

**Islands:** Phase I included B Kamadhoo, B Maalhos, GA Dhaandhoo, GDh Maathoda, HDh Vaikaradhoo, K Huraa, K Kaashidhoo, L Maabaidhoo, Lh Hinnavaru, Lh Naifaru, N Kudafaree, R Meedhoo, Sh Maroshi and Th Hirilandhoo. Phase II included ADh Maamigili, Dh Hulhudheli, F Magoodhoo, GDh Hoandeddhoo, GDh Rathafandhoo, HDh Vaikaradhoo, K Kaashidhoo, L Fonadhoo, Lh Hinnavaru, Lh Naifaru, Th Hirilandhoo, and Th Thimarafushi.

## Objective

The South-South Grant Facility (SSGF) was an initiative of the UNDP's Special Unit for South-South Cooperation that provided small grants directly to local non-governmental organizations to implement projects contributing towards the tsunami recovery process at the community level. The SSGF consisted of two main programmes: Livelihood Development and One-Island-at-a-Time. The Livelihood Development component aimed at restoring livelihoods and "building back better" by assisting entrepreneurs, particularly women, to improve or gain technical and/or management skills that had not existed prior to the tsunami.

## Phase I and Phase II

Phase I of the programme began at the end of 2005, during which time \$290,727 was disbursed to 17 community-based organisations (CBOs)/NGOs on 14 islands. The first stage was completed within a year and its success led to the Maldives receiving a second grant from SSGF. The second phase was then initiated in November 2006, during which time \$199,830 was disbursed to 13 CBOs/NGOs on 12 islands. Activities that led to the implementation of the grants scheme included the invitation for proposals from all tsunami affected islands, evaluation of grants through a steering committee formed for the programme, and awarding grants for successful projects.

The supported projects were many and varied, including:

- Agriculture projects, such as revitalising banana plantations, training of farmers, and establishing hydroponics systems;
- Projects for restoring lost livelihoods, such as replacement of income-generation assets, cake decoration training, and handicrafts training;
- Awareness projects, such as computer training and waste management awareness building; and
- Projects on productive infrastructure, such as restoring a cyber-café, repairing damaged social centres, building local markets and fertiliser shops, and more.

## Results

- Projects proposed and implemented through 29 small grants that were disbursed under the programme have been completed. Only one has been cancelled due to non-performance.
- The capacity of at least 30 island-based organisations (NGOs, IDCs, IWDCs) has been strengthened through the experience of implementing

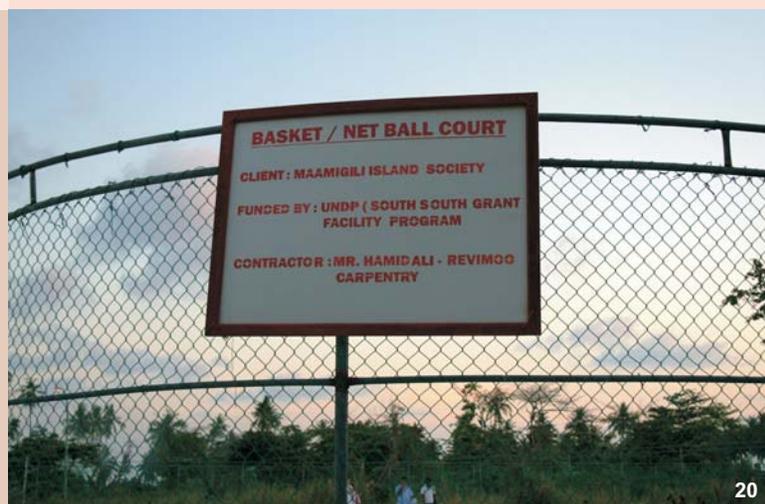
projects awarded under the programme.

- Representatives of five CBOs/NGOs that successfully implemented their SSGF small-grant projects were provided the opportunity to participate in an experience-sharing workshop organized by SSGF in Colombo during September 2007.

## Impact

- The tsunami response concentrated on sector-based (fisheries, agriculture, etc.) assistance in livelihood restoration. The SSGF programme provided flexibility for communities to address a wide range of areas for development following the impact of the tsunami. This included restoration of a cyber-café and its services, repairing of women's social centres where pre-schools are run, providing farmers access to agriculture inputs through fertiliser shops and loan schemes, etc.

- One of the project's successes can be seen by the enhanced role that the scheme gave to CBOs/NGOs to participate in the tsunami recovery process. Most agencies channelled their assistance through IDCs and IWDCs, as they were part of the administrative units of the government on each island. However, through repeated negotiations with the government it was agreed that the small-grants scheme would target and prioritise assistance to island-based CBOs/NGOs that were independent from the local government units. As a result, the role and status of these organizations was significantly improved within their communities, and the new recognition they received within and outside the community opened avenues to mobilise resources to implement new projects. This empowerment of CBOs/NGOs motivated them to participate and contribute to long-term community development activities in their respective islands and atolls.



# PROFILE: LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

*In addition to the specific components of the project, additional activities were carried out to implement and improve the performance of the livelihood components. These included capacity building, provision of micro-credit, and support to decentralisation.*

## Capacity Building

Training in project proposal development, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation was completed in 86 islands during 2005. On average, eight people (four from the Island Development Committee, two from the Island Women's Development Committee, and two from NGOs) were trained on each island by private training groups. Evidence of the positive impact of this training was clear when a request for grant funding proposals issued in December 2005 was followed by the submission of a large number of well-crafted proposals. Interviews with participants during the evaluation process also showed a positive response in terms of their improved capacity to mobilise resources for their community development work. Many also used their new-found skills to mobilise grants from UNDP as well as from other donors.

A business skills training programme was also completed for livelihood activity beneficiaries in four atolls Dhaalu, Lhaviyani, Thaa, and Laamu conducted by the Women's Entrepreneurs Council (WEC). Components included life skills, business skills, and entrepreneurship skills all of which were found to be useful by the participants, especially with regard to financial management of their income-generation activities, networking, pricing, and marketing.

## Micro-Credit

Before the tsunami, under the UNDP regular poverty reduction programme, micro-credit was administered in five atolls. Each Atoll Development Committee (ADC) managed an Atoll Development Fund (ADF), from which disbursements were made according to eligibility criteria set by the ADC. Following the tsunami, the Livelihoods Project injected additional resources into each ADF. More than 500 direct beneficiaries received micro-credit loans under the special tsunami fund within the existing micro-credit program. Among the activities funded were small enterprises, family businesses, fish processing, trade, handicraft, shops, and cafés.



The Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) set the interest rate at 6 percent with a repayment period of 10 years, and the repayment rate has been high. After the immediate relief phase, a review was undertaken of the Livelihoods Project's micro-credit component, which recommended that further disbursement of funds be immediately ceased. Among the reasons for this recommendation were weak targeting, unclear eligibility and selection criteria, and lack of loan appraisal management capacity. The review indicated that any further disbursement would only increase the problems inherent in the poor design of the project. In addition, a Finance Act was enacted in 2006 that clearly states that all micro-finance schemes should be regulated by the Maldives Monetary Authority. The ADB, World Bank, and other donors therefore directed their micro-finance projects through the Bank of Maldives. UNDP discontinued the scheme during the recovery phase of the Livelihoods Project.

The primary objective of injecting cash into affected communities without simply giving away money was achieved. The secondary objective of rebuilding livelihoods through supporting income generation was also achieved. The UNDP micro-credit programme proved more successful than those schemes that disbursed cash directly to affected families. Repayment of loans is pooled in the Atoll Development Fund and disbursed as new loans for livelihoods development activities to the communities by the Atoll Development Committees. The funds are also retained within the communities, which are empowered to pressure the loan beneficiaries for regular repayments.

### Decentralisation

Administrative decentralization is a key priority identified by the government in the current National Development Plan. To ensure a decentralised participatory approach in the Livelihoods Project, project activities were designed in close consultation with the community to address their specific needs and requirements. UNDP project activities were also implemented on the ground in partnership with island-based CBOs, mainly IDCs and IWDCs, as well as island-based NGOs. It was hoped that this would result in enhanced community capacity for recovery, longer term planning, and sustainable development.

UNDP also supported the Island Development Plan training that was conducted between January and February 2006 for the islands of Raa Atoll. The training provided a means to organize the islanders' development activities, build their capacity to

conduct these activities, and ensure that all activities were aimed at their long-term vision. The training was further designed to facilitate the movement of the IDPs of all the islands into one island, a process known as the Atoll Development Plan (ADP). The workshop, conducted in cooperation with the relevant ministries, was held in Raa Atoll Ungoofaaru with three participants from each island. As a result, Raa Atoll Development Committee members were able to inform key government ministries and decision-makers of their priorities for government budget allocations through the Atoll Development Plan. These Atoll and Island Development Plans give the islands a means to ensure that their development activities are aimed at the long-term vision and that development is addressed through a bottom-up approach.

In addition, UNDP provided technical support to the Ministry of Atolls Development (MoAD), which holds the government's official mandate for local governance and decentralisation through a National Seminar on Compilation of Regulations for Atoll and Island Councils in 2006 and through the provision of a Decentralization Specialist/Advisor. The UNDP advisor assisted MoAD in providing guidance to four teams from the Ministry working on decentralization: i.) policy and programming, ii.) legislation and elections, iii.) capacity building, and iv.) management information systems. The inputs from the national decentralisation workshop and policy papers produced by the decentralisation advisor contributed to the debate on local governance in the Majlis (parliament), which resulted in the current Local Governance Act of the Constitution, ratified in August 2008. It is expected that the Local Governance Bill will be enacted in 2009, as a result of which elected island and atoll councils will replace the current, units (the heads of which have been appointed by the president) by mid-2009.



## A Woodworker's Dream

When Ibrahim Abdul Hakeem, also known as Ibbe', migrated to Hinnavaru Island from neighbouring Olhuvelifushi, he brought with him little more than the clothes on his back, and big dreams. A young and aspiring carpenter, Ibbe's foray into the world of woodwork began after his resettlement, where he concentrated on fine-tuning his talents by focusing on the use of wood as an art medium. Ibbe' affirms that transforming pieces of wood into appreciated art works fulfils him. Operating a small and modest workshop catering to the carpentry needs of the Hinnavaru community, with intermittent orders from other islands in the atoll, Ibbe' largely relies on prospects for carpentry work in nearby resorts, which he is occasionally offered. Lately, his expectations have mounted with new resorts being built across the atoll.

When Ibbe', by now an accomplished woodcarver seeking opportunities to create a distinct niche and diversify his product range, heard about the handicrafts training workshop to be conducted with support from UNDP in nearby Naifaru Island, he was understandably excited. It involved training in areas such as pyrography and lacquering techniques he could apply to his current work. Designed as grass-roots community development programmes that inculcate self-confidence and self-reliance, such UNDP-assisted programs endorse local solutions to local problems, building ownership and capacity in island communities across the country.

"I searched all meaningful avenues to cultivate my top skill wood carving," explained Ibbe'. "So I've wanted to learn the technique of lacquering for some time now, but there have been no opportunities. I am grateful to all those who helped organize this workshop. The techniques learnt here can be directly applied to the work I do, especially on the resorts since they are very concerned about visual appeal," he adds. Pointing out that carpentry work on the island provided neither regular work nor a steady income, Ibbe' outlines his goal to continue producing handicrafts along with his carpentry work. He affirms that in instances where there is little carpentry work, as often happens, he will be able to devote more time to creating handicrafts for the tourist market. "In fact, both handicraft-making and carpentry work will go along quite well together. It will be a good source

# PROFILE: HANDICRAFTS PILOT PROJECT

of alternative income," states a beaming Ibbe'.

Ibbe' feels that taking introductory and advanced classes in different handicraft elements is extremely important. He tells how his instructor helped him understand the process better and elevated his knowledge. "This is why participating in workshops is such a sensible idea for both men and women to interact, share



knowledge, and then walk away a stronger woodworker," Ibbe' grins.

The booming tourism industry facilitates the movement towards a thriving handicrafts industry in the Maldives. Now, new partnerships need to be built with the resorts and other tourist businesses so that the products of these young and talented Maldivian artisans can be successfully marketed.

Given that the demand for local handicrafts that fit varying budgets will only increase as tourism expands, there has been much debate about the viability of the handicrafts industry as one that could offer attractive remuneration to people with the requisite skills. Maldivian handicrafts have traditionally been expensive largely due to inefficient and time-consuming methods of production that made use of traditional tools and, hence, appealed only to those willing to pay a premium for such locally made goods. As a result, currently a large number of the souvenirs that tourists take back from the Maldives are in fact cheap imports from South East Asia. Over the past few years, however, a local NGO, the Creative Arts and Crafts Training Centre (CACTC), has been addressing the need to revive the local handicrafts industry through training youth to use modern tools and equipment for wood turning and wood carving, lacquer work, pyrography (wood-burning), and other creative craftwork, which has increased efficiency and cost effectiveness. Despite these efforts, however, there is still a dearth of local people skilled in making handicrafts.

Given this fact, UNDP incorporated an Alternative Livelihoods component as a pilot initiative in its Livelihoods Project. Lhaviyani Atoll in the North-Central region of the Maldives was identified for the pilot project on handicrafts to promote income generation and a working partnership with the local tourist resorts. Community consultations were completed in 2006 on all four islands of the atoll to identify the community's issues and needs with regard to the local handicrafts industry. The project was then designed to consist of a main handicrafts centre in the atoll with additional production outlets that would provide access to modern tools and equipments, as well as a comprehensive training programme conducted in association with CACTC. The training includes lathe/lacquer work, handicrafts/jewellery making, pyrography, and shell crafts making. An exhibition was held at the end of each training programme.

Although the project was initiated in Lhaviyani Atoll as a pilot activity, support has been extended to other atolls where UNDP Livelihood Projects have funded similar handicrafts trainings or projects. The extension of partnership to a wide range of islands will enable the formation of a handicraft network that can lobby for change at the national level to protect and promote the local crafts industry.

#### Result

- Handicrafts centres established with access to modern machinery/tools on three islands of Lhaviyani Atoll. The centres are now operational.
- Training programme completed for 48 candidates from the atoll, and the trainees now provide further training programmes at the centres on their respective islands. They are also able to earn income from handicrafts making.
- Marketing study/strategy compiled, identifying challenges and gaps in marketing authentic Maldivian products in the tourist market primarily to resorts and in the capital.
- Marketing campaign launched, including a campaign logo, promotional materials, and an online catalogue ([www.handicrafts.mv](http://www.handicrafts.mv)). Marketing workshops targeting handicraft-makers and NGOs involved in handicraft project were held for Lhaviyani Atoll (three islands), Dhaalu Kudahuvadho, Thaa Hirilandho, Laamu Fonadhoo, and Laamu Gan (Thundi ward). Also, advertisements have been placed in the *Air Taxi Inflight* magazine and the *2009 Maldives Visitors Guide* promoting the concept of authentic Maldivian product.

#### Impact

- The handicrafts pilot project has resulted in an increased awareness among communities and the tourist sector regarding the potential of local handicrafts, which is a significant achievement given that handicrafts-making has not been a viable livelihood activity in the Maldives since the 1970s. Following the establishment of handicrafts centres in Lhaviyani Atoll, UNDP received proposals from many islands to support similar handicraft projects.
- A business plan has been established to support the handicraft centres in order to ensure their sustainability of operation. The centres charge commission on products made and marketed at the centre to cover costs of operation.
- The findings of the marketing study are used to advocate for policy development on the promotion of local handicrafts-making and the protection of the industry against imports.



# PROFILE: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



### Coordination with National Authorities

Although UNDP was directly executing the tsunami recovery programme, all activities were implemented in close coordination with the Government of Maldives. UNDP's Tsunami Recovery Programme, including the Livelihoods Project, was in line with the National Reconstruction and Recovery Plan developed by the government in March 2005, which identified the impact and needs of each tsunami-affected island. Within the Livelihoods Project, each component was implemented through a focal ministry. Agriculture and fisheries components were implemented through MoFAMR, women's livelihoods through MoGF, and waste management through MoEEW. The ministries identified priority islands and assisted with verification of beneficiaries for UNDP's intervention, in addition to supporting coordination and participation at many levels. UNDP/government cooperation was essential in preventing duplication of assistance by different donors, in accessing critical information on tsunami recovery, and in the mobilisation of communities to deliver assistance.

### “Building Back Better”

The UN's tsunami recovery efforts fitted well with the theme of “building back better,” coined by former President Bill Clinton, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery. As described above, recovery was aimed not simply at returning the country to its pre-tsunami state, but at improving the status of affected communities beyond what existed prior to the disaster. Similarly, many of the activities implemented under the Livelihoods Project aimed beyond merely restoring to actually bettering livelihoods. Furthermore, they entailed the building of infrastructure or capacity that did not exist before, and they seized the opportunity to engage in value-addition and/or the development of new skills as pilot projects.

### Assessment of Beneficiaries

Given that the relief phase concentrated on replacement of assets lost or damaged in the tsunami for farmers, fishermen, fish processors, and women engaged in home-based income generation, emphasis was placed on intensive verification of beneficiary assessments and identification. While lists were received through initial identification undertaken by the government through island offices, UNDP ensured that the beneficiary lists were complete, that they included only eligible members, that no one was overlooked, and that a beneficiary had not been listed for more than one activity. For example, for the women's livelihoods component, the original lists did not include all affected women,

whereas some women not engaged in any income generation were included. UNDP personnel visited the islands to verify the beneficiaries and ensure that there were no inadvertent oversights or duplication. Most women excluded from the original lists were IDPs, and a second phase of assistance was designed to address their needs. Although time consuming, the process of validating beneficiaries was essential to ensure that the assistance program was comprehensive and fair.

### Community Mobilisation

Although there was much pressure to deliver services quickly in the post-tsunami period, UNDP's strategy emphasised community mobilisation and a participatory approach in delivering recovery assistance. In addressing issues of agriculture, community consultations were held on each target island, including farmers, representatives of the local IDC, IWDC, and NGOs, community centre members, and the general public. Through these consultations, issues and problems were identified, and activities were designed to address them. Training programmes were developed with nurseries and demonstration plots to improve the knowledge of farmers and home gardeners, while sales centres were designed on islands that lacked regular and/or inexpensive access to agriculture inputs (tools, fertilizers, etc.).

In terms of waste management, plans were drawn from a three-day consultation workshop on each of the 16 target islands, whereby the most pressing waste management issues and solutions were identified and prioritised. This planning process also helped to establish the best means of managing the identified solutions. Participants included selected members from key sectors of the island community and volunteers. Community mobilisation and a participatory approach helped to develop targeted assistance to each island specific to the needs of the local community, improved community participation in the execution of the project, and helped the community to take ownership of the project, which in turn improved its sustainability.



### Involvement of CBOs and NGOs

UNDP's strategy also involved delivering assistance through island-based organisations such as the IDCs, IWDCs, and NGOs. For all agriculture and waste management projects, a grant agreement was developed and signed with the local IDC. With UNDP's support and guidance, each IDC managed its own grant disbursing funds, organising activities, monitoring progress, and reporting to UNDP. Similarly, to distribute assets and cash to women during the relief phase, grant agreements were signed with IWDCs, which then managed the fund and distributed monies to beneficiaries as per lists developed with UNDP and MGF, reporting to UNDP. The SSGF small-grants scheme opened the door for NGOs as well as IDCs and IWDCs to undertake needed assessments by themselves, and then to develop and submit proposals to UNDP for grant assistance. The grantees planned and managed the project from initiation to completion.

The skills training for women was also undertaken through a similar approach, whereby 15 IWDCs were awarded grants by UNDP to implement skills training programmes that they identified for their community. The involvement of island-based organisations, particularly NGOs, increased their role and participation in the tsunami recovery process on a wider scale, improved their capacity in project management, improved their status and visibility in the community, enabled efficient communication and monitoring, and established the means by which these organisations could sustain recovery activities even after completion of a given project.

### Human Resources

Given the lack of available human resources capacity and technical backstopping, the Livelihoods Unit used various strategies to bridge these gaps. As such, a number of international staff was successfully mobilised, including a gender specialist, a fisheries specialist, and a monitoring and evaluation specialist from 2005 to 2006. An agriculture specialist was stationed in the Unit throughout the project period, and three UNVs provided agricultural extension services on 14 project islands and helped to build capacity within the MoFAMR. Another strategy used by UNDP to overcome the human resource limitations was to contract third parties to implement planned activities. For example, Focus Education Centre (FEC) was contracted to implement the Cash-for-Work programme, including its training component. Although this ensured efficient delivery, in many cases it led to communication barriers between UNDP and the beneficiary community. The lack of human resource capacity also led UNDP to take the

innovative measure of recruiting 12 high-school graduates, training them, and placing them in the field for three months to gain practical experience before bringing them back to work with the Livelihoods Project centrally. Although these Junior Field Officers did not remain with UNDP, having left for higher studies, their role in delivering the Livelihoods Project activities was significant, as most of them managed island-level projects with minimal oversight by their supervisors.

### Joint Programming

The use of joint programming to avoid duplication and better coordinate relief and recovery efforts was also a successful strategy adopted by the Livelihoods Project. For example, since FAO was the technically specialised agency in agriculture and had already finalised its procurement process for the agricultural kits, UNDP signed a joint project with FAO to implement the agriculture relief phase. In order for FAO to procure the additional agricultural kits, a transfer of funds (\$700,000) from UNDP to FAO was formalised. FAO gave visibility to UNDP in all agricultural relief activities, and the collaboration between the two agencies became a good example to other UN agencies of modes of sharing and efficiently acting in the field to better reach beneficiaries.

The UNDP/Care Society Post-Tsunami Sustainable Agriculture Programme in L Dhan'bidhoo was another such example. Care Society, a national NGO, was committed to a two-year Tsunami Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Project on several islands, including L Dhan'bidhoo. In the meantime, UNDP had secured funds from the Australian International Refugee Fund for a programme aimed at restoring shelter and rebuilding livelihoods of tsunami affected households in L Dhan'bidhoo. Given that Care Society was already implementing a livelihood programme on the same island with wide community participation, UNDP expressed interest for a jand sales centre in Mathimaradhoo; and UNDP contributed to the recruitment of a consultant for the island to provide training on pest management, cooperative formation, and to facilitate management of the overall project.



joint programme that would enhance the impact and sustainability of the intervention by both parties and avoid duplication. Care Society provided seeds, saplings, fertilizers, and tools to Dhan'bidhoo farmers, as well as training and follow-up support. A gap in assistance remained as agricultural inputs were not available on the island on a regular basis and had to be purchased from Male'. In response, the joint programme developed a small-scale nursery and sales centre from which farmers could buy the necessary inputs. UNDP also implemented a joint agricultural project in L Gan (Mathimaradhoo) with the French Red Cross and Care Society. The project involves the development of a nursery, demonstration plot, and sales centre in Mathimaradhoo; and UNDP contributed to the recruitment of a consultant for the island to provide training on pest management, cooperative formation, and to facilitate management of the overall project.

#### Resource Mobilisation

The project could not have been implemented successfully if not for the resource mobilization strategy, which was given high priority by the Livelihoods Unit. Immediately after the tsunami, the United Nations responded with a UN Flash Appeal – an emergency funding mechanism designed to address such extraordinary disasters through ad hoc government contributions. However, it was soon apparent that additional funding would be necessary, and UNDP sought further assistance through Adopt-An-Island, a unique initiative that matched donor support directly to a specific project and/or to specific islands. More specifically, resource mobilization efforts made by the Livelihoods Unit in coordination with the UNDP External Relations Unit included developing proposals, participating in donor briefings, facilitating donor visits, and assisting in the preparation of briefing and communication material on a regular basis.

#### Gender

The UNDP Livelihoods Project has promoted gender equality in various manners. At the start of the relief phase, women's livelihoods were somewhat neglected, being part of the informal sector. In collaboration with the Ministry of Gender and Family, UNDP responded to the demands from the community to address the livelihoods of women, which resulted in equal visibility given to sectors dominated by men and women. The Island Development Committees, which took the lead in coordinating tsunami assistance to the islands, and the local NGOs are often dominated by men. UNDP's Women's Livelihood Project was implemented with the Island Women's

Development Committees to ensure their equal participation in the recovery process. The IWDCs were also involved in community consultations regarding all the livelihood project activities. However, in future more consideration should be given to scheduling consultations involving women at times that do not interrupt their daily activities, such as taking children to school.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

The projects were mainly monitored by the Tsunami Recovery Team and the Livelihoods Team using the annual work plans, which outline the targets and timeframe of each activity. The Livelihoods Team followed up by telephone and by visiting project sites, meeting with beneficiaries and implementing partners, and by obtaining regular updates and progress reports on all activities. Implementing partners such as government ministries and NGOs were also consulted to monitor progress of relevant activities. Field reports, progress reports, and a database of beneficiaries and project information were regularly compiled and or updated for effective monitoring. Evaluations were performed by the Livelihoods Team through an annual mid-term review in 2006 and 2007, and by the European Union in 2007 and 2008. Feedback from these evaluations included increasing monitoring/supervision visits to project sites, addressing sustainability issues of projects, documenting lessons learned, and extending activities beyond the tsunami programme to become regular/long-term projects.



# PRIMARY CHALLENGES



## Geography

A major challenge that faced the Livelihoods Project was the fact that it was implemented on 106 islands scattered throughout 19 atolls. This meant that transport (of materials, etc.) and travel proved to be expensive, time consuming, and difficult. Given that the project involved a participatory approach to implementing activities, frequent visits had to be made as early as the design stage to undertake community consultations and planning. The frequent monitoring of projects also inflated project costs, and UNDP often relied on progress reports provided by island-level project implementers. However, actual progress when evaluated directly by the Livelihoods Unit sometimes differed from the assessments provided by the project implementers. Therefore, in future additional consideration should be given to the selection of project locations, and adequate funds need to be set aside for intensive monitoring of projects. Special emphasis should also be given to monitoring projects with special problems and those that would benefit from the presence of an on-site field officer, at least for a short period.

## Construction Boom

Major delays were caused in infrastructure projects, particularly in the construction of fish markets and waste management centres, due to the country's construction boom following the tsunami. Bidding processes were constantly delayed as not enough bids were received for evaluation as a result of too few contractors interested in projects similar to the relatively small scale of the fish markets. The boom also resulted in a rapid rise in the price of construction materials and the constant shortage of materials in the marketplace. Budgets for many infrastructure projects funded under the SSGF small-grants scheme had to be revised to accommodate these cost increases. Constant communication, frequent monitoring and following up, and site-based supervisors proved essential to overcoming the delays facing infrastructure projects.

## Land

The identification of appropriate land and the obtaining of approvals from the relevant government authorities proved to be a time consuming process that delayed many project activities. For example, land identified for the construction of waste management centres required initial approval from the MoEEW before they were submitted to the Ministry of Atolls Development and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. Similarly, for many SSGF-funded projects, land registration proved to be a long process to such an extent that during Phase II it was stipulated that the necessary land must be available to the NGO and that it must be so stated in the proposal (with consent by authorities) to obtain a grant. The compensation for the loss of trees due to the clearing of land for construction is normally provided by the government. This also took prolonged negotiations with the government; and because many waste management projects were on hold due to a lack of agreement on tree compensation, UNDP allowed these islands to advance funds for tree compensation from the project itself.



### Capacity of Implementing Partners

UNDP closely coordinated all recovery activities with the relevant line ministries and island-level CBOs and NGOs. However, progress also depended on the capacity and commitment of these organisations (particularly those at the island level) to implement the proposed activities. For example, in Th Hirilandhoo an active and energetic NGO (Hirilandhoo Zuvaanunge Jamiyyaa) with strong links to the island authorities has managed to implement a highly successful handicrafts training project, which opened the door to a new means of livelihood for the community. On the other hand, the IWDC in Laamu Gan (Thundi ward), tried to implement the same type of project but failed because the IWDC was weak and overly reliant on the Island Office to take the initiative. Many NGOs that implemented SSGF projects operated on a voluntary basis, and members had limited time to devote to the projects due to the time taken by their regular employment. To address these issues, UNDP conducted training programmes in project management for CBO and NGO members, which enhanced their skills in the submission of proposals and the implementation of activities. UNDP also played a significant role in facilitating negotiations between island authorities and CBOs/NGOs to create an enabling environment for organisations to implement their planned activities. UNDP also made efforts to strengthen the capacity of ministries to better coordinate and direct project-related activities, such as through the placement of UNVs (agriculturalists) at the MoFAMR. It is important that future projects take into account the capacity of implementing partners and select efficient organisations for project implementation.

### Procurement

The complexity of the procurement process hindered speedy progress on project activities. For one thing, the Livelihoods Unit lacked technical expertise in procurement, especially when both national and international tendering was involved. In the case of the new fish markets, because the contract values were small UNDP did was unable to solicit the required three bids of reasonable quality, and so the contracts had to be re-tendered in some cases more than once. This slowed not only the specific activity, but affected succeeding and parallel activities.

With regard to the agriculture component, it was noted that the quotations received were often significantly higher than the market price, and there were also limited suppliers of agriculture inputs in the local market. In order to overcome this problem, UNDP Livelihoods Unit tried to devolve agricultural

procurement to the community level. It allowed the CBO/NGO implementing the project to obtain three quotations and, after reviewing these quotations centrally, UNDP released funds directly to the organization to undertake procurement. However, even at the island-level CBOs/NGOs had difficulty in preparing procurement lists, which required technical knowledge, leading to delays in project implementation.

### Timeframe

The Government of the Maldives and UNDP agreed that the Livelihoods Project was an opportunity to identify and work on more medium and longer-term needs of the island communities, and this fitted well with the UN commitment to a “building back better” strategy. Thus, UNDP focussed on the building of infrastructure that may not have existed before the tsunami, such as fish markets and waste management centres, as well as the introduction of innovative technologies in agriculture. These activities proved to be ambitious given the fixed timeframe for recovery activities and the increased pressure to deliver results by donors. To ensure the sustainability and continuity of these activities and to assess their long-term impact, some of the activities have been integrated into UNDP's regular poverty-reduction portfolio.



## Case Study:

### Social Centre in Shaviyani Maroshi

Project	Social Centre in Shaviyani Maroshi
Location	Maroshi, Shaviyani Atoll
Beneficiaries	Residents of Maroshi
Project Title	Establishment of a Social Centre
Partner	Naadil Mutthahidheen (NGO)
Implementing Period	December 2005 - December 2006
Budget	\$56,126 (\$23,529 SSGF contribution and \$32,597 NGO contribution)
Primary Organisation	Naadhil Mutthahidheen
Project Contacts	Mohamed Abdul Rahman, President
Mailing Address	Naadhil Muthahidheen, Maroshi, Shaviyani Atoll, Maldives

Located in Shaviyani Atoll with an area of 26.72 hectares, Maroshi is 690 metres in length and 600 metres in width, at a distance of 229.65 kilometres from Male'. The population is 838 (423 women and 415 men), and core economic activities include tourism-related work, fishing, and thatch weaving. Social services include one privately owned school (grades 1-10) and a government owned health post.

In response to the opening of UNDP's SSGF grants programme to CBOs and NGOs, Naadhilmuthahidheen, an NGO in Maroshi, proposed a project to establish a social centre to enable the island community to hold gatherings and meetings. The centre would also address current difficulties posed in carrying out awareness programmes and capacity-building training/workshops on the island. The project was proposed following a survey of some 200 people, which showed broad community support.

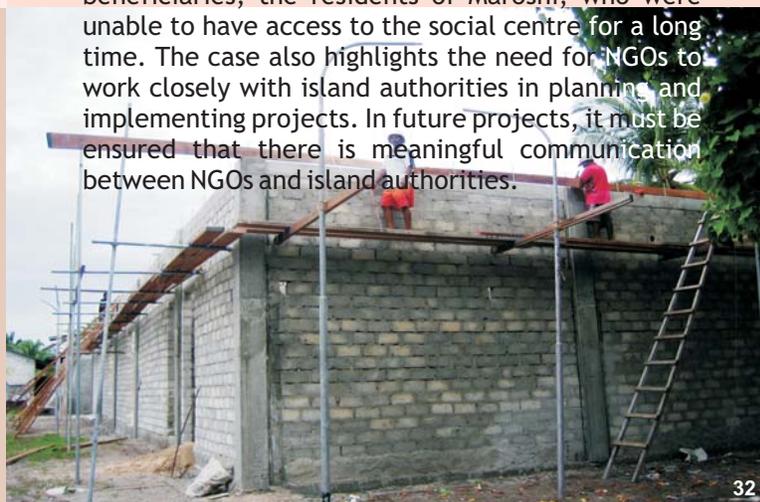
Project activities included the identification of a suitable site and the clearing of land, community consultation, advertisement for construction, purchase of building material, and the construction process. The project was monitored by a five-member committee, consisting of representatives of the NGO and the Island Development Committee. A supervisor was assigned to oversee the project implementation and to submit weekly reports to the committee to assess progress.

The initial plan and understanding between the Island Office and the NGO was to register the site under the name of the NGO and then to transfer registration at the time of handing it over to the IDC. This was agreed to by the Atoll Chief as well. The NGO desired such an arrangement as they wanted to have

a formal opening and handing over ceremony, given that this was one of their major project undertakings. However, a dispute arose when the NGO accidentally discovered that the social centre was registered, in mid-project, to the Island Office by the Ministry of Atolls Development following some communications made by the Atoll Office. The issue was not about ownership but about making such an arrangement without any form of communication with the NGO. Nevertheless, following two field visits and several meetings and phone calls by the UNDP Livelihoods Unit with the NGO, Island Office, and Atoll Chief, the NGO finally agreed to complete the project under the current registration situation. The completed facility consists of an office space, a room for rent, and a public hall.

#### Lessons Learnt

Land ownership has been an issue in getting many Livelihoods Projects implemented on time. NGOs do not own land, and it is easier for the Island Office to identify and procure the necessary land for a given project. These delays affected the project beneficiaries, the residents of Maroshi, who were unable to have access to the social centre for a long time. The case also highlights the need for NGOs to work closely with island authorities in planning and implementing projects. In future projects, it must be ensured that there is meaningful communication between NGOs and island authorities.



# LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICES

## Interlinking Project Activities

Many project activities would not have been as effective had other activities not preceded them exemplifying how different activities build upon one another. One important example was the ability of NGOs and IWDCs to write grant proposals and to succeed in attaining grants for skills trainings under the women's livelihoods component and small grants funded through SSGF. These groups had benefited from project management training supported by UNDP many months earlier, including the formulation of grant proposals. Similarly, the implementation of hydroponics and autopot irrigation techniques to strengthen agriculture proved to be effective when these islands demonstrated their potential during the implementation of extension services.

In addition, partnerships have been established through study tours to successful handicraft project sites by those that have not been able to implement the activity successfully. In Laamu Gan (Thundi ward), for example, handicrafts training was delayed due to the unavailability of an instructor. However, the island's partnership with the Hirilandhoo Zuvaanunge Jamiyyaa helped them to get an instructor who had been trained through the SSGF-funded handicrafts programme in Hirilandhoo. Handicrafts training programmes have also been complemented by a joint marketing campaign to overcome challenges facing the production of authentic local handicrafts.



### Communication

Project implementation was more progressive on islands that had the benefit of UN volunteers, local supervisors, or field officers based on the island. This helped to overcome communication gaps and to improve the monitoring of projects. Evidence can be drawn from Kudahuvadhoo and Kaashidhoo, where UNV agriculturalists were based and where agriculture projects are well ahead of all other islands. Similarly, it was realised that in order to monitor construction work for fish markets, it was important to have a site engineer or to appoint a local resident who had expertise in construction-related work. However, it was not possible to have a UNDP presence on all project islands and, therefore, the UNDP Livelihoods Unit undertook close monitoring of projects through telephone and by regular site visits.

### Transfer of Knowledge

The lack of local expertise in numerous specialized fields is a commonly acknowledged problem in the Maldives. As such, it is not surprising that no local procurement, construction, waste management, marketing, engineering, or social mobilization experts were based in the Livelihoods Unit throughout the project period. Overall, support was sought from either outside the organization or by contracting international expertise. This was an expensive and short-term solution. The ability of local staff to learn from international staff depended on the individual working styles of both groups. It is therefore important that the transfer of knowledge becomes formalised through a prepared plan (for example, inclusion of activities such as training workshops for local staff by international staff), and such requirements should be stated in the Terms of Reference of all future international contracts.

### Coordination with Government

The close coordination and good working relationship that UNDP maintained with the focal ministries of the Government of Maldives was crucial to implementing the tsunami recovery programme. Support from the government was indispensable in terms of receiving data and information, identifying national priorities in recovery and development, coordinating with island and atoll offices, and coordinating donor assistance in a manner that avoided duplication of support. For the women's livelihoods component, the Ministry of Gender and Family was part of the evaluation team that selected successful projects from proposals received from IWDCs to undertake skills training. Since the Ministry had frequent interaction with the IWDCs, it was able to give valuable insights into the ability of the various IWDCs to undertake their proposed activities. Its involvement also facilitated the opening of bank accounts, necessary for project implementation, by three IWDCs that previously did not have an account.

### Community Mobilisation and Contribution

Getting the community to contribute in cash or kind (i.e., through labour or materials) to project activities increases the effectiveness and impact of the activities and better the chances of the community continuing the activities after the project ends. In many instances little or no contribution was sought from beneficiaries, and this has decreased the future potential of these activities, at the same time limiting the extent to which the project's funds could be stretched across the country.



### Community Management of Infrastructure Facilities

While the Livelihoods Project involved provision of productive infrastructure to the communities to recover from the impact of the tsunami and to “build back better,” it was also important that these infrastructure facilities, such as fish markets and waste management centres, were handed over to a local organisation for management upon construction, and that there be a continuous mechanism (such as user fees) to support the management of these facilities in future. For example, the sensitising of households on the responsibility to pay for the provision of garbage collection, for the maintenance of the waste centres, and for removing waste from the island should have been carried out regularly from the very beginning of the waste management project. Communities are not accustomed to paying for such services, and considerable awareness-raising is required before any user charges can be levied or collected. Similarly in the case of fish markets, their operation and management will be sustainable only through user fees, especially in the case of one-storey fish markets that do not have a shop or café that produces rental income. Further, the introduction of user fees should be accompanied by an efficient collection system. Islands such as Naifaru, which has introduced user fees at its fish market, are experiencing payment rates of only 40 percent.

### Business Orientation to Livelihood Activities and Cooperatives

It has been found that the sustainability of the livelihood activities of island communities also depends on their business orientation and expansion. Farmers, tailors, fish processors, and so on need to be more aware of their incomes and expenditures, sales records, and production plans in order for them to expand their activities. Although UNDP did undertake business skills training on selected islands, it is important that the beneficiaries receive continuous support in business development now and in future. It is equally important that organisations promoting livelihoods through various initiatives should apply proper business practices, notably the NGOs managing handicrafts centres, the IDC managing agriculture nurseries, and the

IWDCs supporting women's income generation. Professional financial management, salaried staff, or at least members with authority to undertake various business duties were important for a local organisation to manage and support livelihood initiatives, such as agriculture.

UNDP also explored the potential for community-based agricultural and fisheries cooperatives in the Maldives to undertake the role of business development in community livelihoods. The study noted that a history of top-down paternalism and patronage had created a situation whereby island dwellers relied on government to resolve all their issues and problems, and that this attitude would take time to change. The study also mentioned the recently adopted Cooperatives Societies Act 2007, and noted that (a) it did not allow for commercial activities, and (b) allowed the government to appoint one third of the management committee members of any registered cooperative. Hence, the act is inimical to the development of cooperatives. The study concluded that there is potential for such service cooperatives among farmers' groups that engage in the provision of inputs (fertilisers, pesticides, etc.) and the marketing of their agricultural outputs. However, such groups would have to ensure that production was stable and reliable for lucrative markets, such as resorts; and the size of the groups and magnitude of production would be important determinants in their bargaining power. On the other hand, the study found that there was little, if any, potential for the formation of groups engaged in collective agricultural production (e.g., farming collectives). The study came to a similar conclusion regarding the fisheries sector as well.



### Public Private Partnerships

Resorts are increasingly playing a major role in the livelihoods of island communities, and this trend is expected to increase over the next few years. For example, given that the production of fruit and vegetables has been increasing since the tsunami, the potential for resorts to procure these goods from nearby islands is growing ever greater, so long as the products are of good quality and regularly available. In addition, an increasing number of resorts are assisting islands to transport waste from their communities both to make the islands more beautiful for visiting tourists and out of a sense of corporate responsibility. In the case of Lhaviyani Atoll, tourist excursions to the islands and the selling of handicraft products at the resorts are increasing the market for locally made handicrafts. For all these reasons, strong linkages with the tourist resorts need to be built into any future strategies for livelihoods development, and the active collaboration of resorts - as part of their corporate social responsibility - needs to be sought.



# WAY FORWARD



The Livelihoods Project has supported a wide range of activities implemented through the UNDP Tsunami Recovery Programme from 2005 to 2008. Immediate needs of the communities to restore their livelihoods in agriculture, fisheries, and home-based women's activities were met through the replacement of tools and other inputs that were damaged or lost in the disaster. Livelihoods of these affected communities have been further strengthened through the introduction of improved techniques of production, value-addition methods, establishment of productive infrastructure, and the facilitation of partnerships and networks. In agriculture, extension methodologies have resulted in the improved production and food security of 14 target communities, while access to better quality fish and fish products increased through community fish markets and hygienic fish handling and processing training on five fisheries islands. Similarly, 16 communities were able to address their waste management issues. In addition, the home-based workers of 15 islands especially women earning income from the informal sector received material assistance and skills trainings. Income generation from alternative sources, such as handicrafts, has also been explored, providing opportunities for communities to expand their participation in the tourism sector. The SSGF small-grants programme was also significant in strengthening the role of island-based NGOs in the tsunami recovery process while reviving livelihood activities and community infrastructure on affected islands.

These results have been achieved by overcoming a number of implementation challenges during the post-tsunami period. Notable among these was the national construction boom, which followed the tsunami as a result of the huge demand for construction activities throughout the country. The shortage of contractors, the rise in price of construction materials, and the limited supply of such materials all hindered progress in the implementation of fish markets and waste management projects. In addition, the country's diffuse geography hindered effective monitoring of project sites and contributed to inflated budgets as a result of travel and transport costs. Finally, while considerable emphasis was placed upon coordinating activities with government ministries and island-based organizations, their capacity and experience in project management also posed delays in some cases. It should be noted, however, that the tsunami experience has improved the capacity of many organizations, and they are now able to seek and mobilize resources from a variety of agencies to implement development projects.



Significant lessons can also be drawn from the process of implementing the nationwide livelihoods restoration project following the tsunami. It has been found that effective communication and monitoring can be established on islands especially those facing various impediments to progress through the basing of local supervisors or technical experts. Maintaining coordination with several government ministries for each component of the Livelihoods Project also improved the availability of information, and it assisted in addressing national priorities and helped to avoid duplication of donor assistance, etc. Similarly, it is also important to mobilize community contributions, whether financial or in kind, to increase community commitment and ownership of the project. Further, it is important to empower community management of infrastructure facilities by local organizations, such as NGOs or cooperatives, to ensure their long-term sustainability. Sustainable management of these structures can be addressed through the introduction of user-fees, which most communities are not familiar with and apparently are not quite ready for. Assistance in livelihood activities should also be directed towards a more business-like orientation and the establishment of partnerships with the private sector, such as the tourism, to ensure their sustainability and development.

The lessons learnt from the Livelihoods Project have been incorporated into UNDP's new Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) 2008-2010, which integrates the components of agriculture, handicrafts, and women's livelihoods. Value-addition to production in agriculture, local handicrafts production and promotion, business orientation to livelihood activities, and training and facilitating market linkages through partnerships with resorts are all part of the main strategies of the new projects. It is believed that these projects will build upon the assistance provided in the aftermath of the tsunami, and will strengthen the livelihoods of vulnerable communities for the long term.

Although the full impact of the Livelihoods Project cannot yet be determined, it is possible to conclude that the project has significantly addressed the needs of affected communities following the tsunami disaster. Under UN's "building back better" theme, the project has also been able to engage communities in livelihood development on a larger scale than that which existed prior to the 2004 disaster, with potential for further expansion and diversification. The results and achievements of the project are truly significant given the scale, timeframe, and challenges by which it was implemented. The lessons learnt from the project are also vital for UNDP, for the government of the Maldives, and for donor agencies in directing and delivering future assistance in the area of poverty reduction and economic empowerment.



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