

SONEVA

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FUND

A Quarterly update of Soneva Social Responsibility Initiatives

Hosts at Soneva Fushi discuss waste reduction issues in a training session conducted by Live and Learn



Educating Community on

Waste Management

Currently waste is the biggest environmental issue in the Maldives, with a huge amount clogging up landfills. It is therefore essential to educate and make the locals aware of the actions they can take to reduce the negative effects at a domestic level.

Sonevas are supporting local island communities to increase awareness and further educate the community on the principles of waste management.

The Waste Education and Awareness Program is a 12-month programme involving over 350 hosts from the two Soneva properties and nearly 700 residents of four surrounding island communities of Eydhafushi, Maalhos, Dharavandhoo and Thulhaadhoo, and Himmafushi. The programme educates locals on reduction, segregation and disposal methods, and shows how to compost household waste and effectively recycle using a variety of methods.

“We believe there are a number of ways island communities can address the issue. It is just a matter of changing attitudes towards waste and learning to actively reduce, re-use and use the disposal waste to their advantage, such as mulching or composting.

It’s going to take a while, but we are positive that partnerships like this will definitely help increase local capacity in dealing with the issue. We just hope more resorts will use Six Senses Resorts & Spas lead as an example”, says Shafeeqa, Programme Manager from Live and Learn.

Sonevas are contributing nearly US\$ 30,000.00 for this program, that include conducting Rapid Assumptions of Perceptions towards the issue in the islands, and delivering a customized program to every island.



A Live and Learn Facilitator helps participants as they identify challenges to waste reduction (Right), and participants read the Waste Tool Kit developed by Live and Learn. (Soneva Gili, Nov 20)

Live and Learn Environmental Education, is a Fiji based NGO, who implements community mobilization and capacity programmes in over a dozen countries throughout South Asia and Pacific regions. Live and Learn started working in Maldives approximately one year ago, and since then has successfully completed similar projects in numerous local islands. They are also currently working with the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water to lead a nation-wide campaign on waste awareness, as a part of the National Waste Management Policy.



Bahiyya Pre-School: Construction underway

BUILDING BAHIYYA SCHOOL

Bahiyya Pre School had operated in a 60-year old building for the last twenty years. Originally under the name of Bahiyya School, this school had produced some of the greatest stars Baa Atoll has ever seen. Last year the building raised serious concerns about the safety and learning conditions for its students and was ultimately closed down for re-construction, before being used again.

Following this decision some 200 students were mobilized to an old house with no proper ventilation and basic sanitation. Teachers were left jobless. The School received some funding for re-construction from Care Society Maldives, however it did not meet the total cost of the Project.

Soneva is donating US\$ 50,000.00 to re-construct The Bahiyya Pre School in Eydhafushi, Baa Atoll.

We recognize the need for enhancing early-education in small communities and decided to generously donate towards the completion of the project.

The school is expected to re-open in April 2008, in a two-storey state-of-the-art building with an increased capacity to meet the growing need of early education on the island and in the region. This will bring life to hopes of several families.

The building also provides a fully facilitated learning environment that is safe and appropriate for play-based learning methods; classrooms that can be converted to a function hall, an administrative block and other features that will serve for community gatherings and activities that benefit the community. The school also provides employment opportunities for a number of residents and will enhance the future of education in the region.



The school which will provide facilities to meet the growing need of education in the region is due to re-open in February 2008

The project is led by Foundation for Eydhafushi Youth Linkage (FEYLI), a community NGO who is voluntarily contracting the building. Upon completion of the building the School will be further managed by the Island Development Committee of Eydhafushi under the supervision of National Educational Authorities. The island of Eydhafushi is 76 acres in diameter and is home to more than 3000 people, and is also the capital of Baa Atoll, one of the fastest developing urban areas in the country. Soneva Resorts has actively helped in a number of small scale community projects to the community since its inception in 1996.

Folks gather as SHE begins a thalassaemia screening programme in an island



This enables individuals and families to make informed decisions on the choice of their partner or when planning for families.

Under the program infusion pumps will also be donated to Thalassaemics in less affluent families

Supporting Thalassaemia Prevention

The Sonevas proudly collaborates with Society for Health Education, Maldives, (S.H.E.) in support for their on-going Thalassaemia Prevention Program. Soneva's contribution will total upto US\$ 83,000.00 over the next three years. This Program will enable SHE to screen more than 3000 individuals across the country. They can also maintain technical capacity in their laboratories to meet the needs of Thalassaemics while offering consultations, empowering individuals to make informed decisions about their future.

The Maldives currently holds one of the highest Thalassaemia prevailing rates (18.1%) in the world. While the condition is inherited, the only prevention is by letting people know of their carrier status and ensuring they take informed decisions. The Thalassaemia screening service is provided free and screening is done for walk-in clients in the age group of 12-35 years. As majority of the clients reside in the many islands of the Maldives the lab has to mobilize the screening service to reach them. In this regard at least 5-6 screening trips per year are necessary to extend the service to all inhabited island once in every 5 years. Traveling difficulties due to weather conditions and financial constraints bring delays in the screening schedule.

With the support of this programme SHE will be able to overcome the delays in the screening services to the populations in the outer atolls, where blood samples are collected and transported to the laboratory in the capital within 24 hrs for analysis. The results are sent back to the individuals along with related information leaflets in a confidential manner.

across the country. For every child who receives regular transfusion, a pump is required, adding on to burdens of families.

Soneva Resorts has remained a close partner of SHE for many years, and of whose hosts generously donate blood for SHE, which in turn is donated for children in need.

SHE has been actively campaigning for the prevention of this disease by educating and offering screening services to the public for nearly 15 years. By mid 2007, S.H.E. has been able to offer this service to more than one-third of the total population of the country. Today there is a 50% reduction in the annual number of Thalassaemics born in Maldives, largely due to the active awareness programs conducted by S.H.E., and the accessible screening facilities offered across the country.

With the assistance of Soneva's for the next three year's, SHE hopes to make screening services accessible to all couples seeking to start new lives. S.H.E. will also extend their camping efforts and hope to reach all the islands of the country.

From shore to shore SHE goes all the way to help the Maldivian people



Thalassaemia is a group of genetic blood diseases that vary widely in severity, involving a decreased and defective production of hemoglobin. To treat this disease, a child should receive blood continually or bone marrow surgery has to be performed. SHE is the only NGO in the Maldives actively campaigning for the reduction of Thalassaemia in the Maldives. SHE has also been awarded by a number of international organizations for their work in the field.

Making

DREAMS COME TRUE



Children interacting during the socialization time at CDC

Soneva Resorts sponsors a year long program implemented by Care Society, Maldives, to improve the lives of disabled children in Maldives. The program aims to further improve the services offered by Care Development Center, a rehabilitation center for disabled children operated by Care, and to increase technical and human resource capacities to provide better services for the children at the Center.

Under this understanding with Care Society, Maldives, Soneva's will donate nearly US\$ 30,000.00 for the program for the next year. Under this program special educators and teachers will be trained to offer specialized education for children with disabilities, workshops will be conducted for island communities and families on vocational and occupational methods, and the infrastructure of the Care Development Center will be changed to offer improved facilities for children.

Care Society has been actively working in the areas of occupational health with special focus on improving lives of the disabled in this country for more than 5 years. Care Society also receives support from a number of international organizations, including Action Aid International.

Currently Care Development Center serves some 150 children. Rehabilitation support have been provided for over 150 CDW's/ PWD's in the past 6 years, and at any given time about 50 students would be provided with the service at the centre. They receive special education, including emotional, psychological and occupational therapies and provided hope for several families. Many children have gone back to their families after having successfully learnt to live with their differences in the communities.



Each year Soneva Resorts carefully allocates its Social Responsibility funds to areas that need assistance and support for local communities to enhance their lives. Soneva Resorts, under these programs has helped improve health care services for several years, which include organizing eye camps, and giving free medical consultations, and donations to the disabled via many other organizations and volunteers. Soneva Resorts also donates to individuals and organizations seeking financial support for medical reasons since its inception in 1995.