

make a difference for a child

ARC NEWSLETTER: 2016 IN REVIEW

ARC commenced 2016 with the ongoing intention of making a greater difference to the lives of children in the Maldives, with a special focus on vulnerable groups, including children with disabilities and children living in shelters. ARC's comprehensive report, the **"Situation of Children Living in Shelters"**, was prepared based on the close working relationship ARC has built over the years, with Kudakudhinge Hiya, Amaan Hiya, Fiyavathi and ETCC, as well as a field visit to the Home for Persons with Special Needs in K. Guraidhoo to assess the conditions for children living there. ARC shared this report with relevant government authorities and the Human Rights Commission of Maldives. The ensuing 2nd Stakeholder Conference on Children Living in Shelters, also shed light on the challenges faced by the shelters and most importantly, discussed practical solutions to improve the conditions therein. During the year ARC also visited Dh. Vaanee to observe the Government's Ummeedh Programme that focuses on rehabilitation and reintegration of children in conflict with the law back into society.



Similarly, the Stakeholder Conference on Children with Disabilities, by the Child Advocacy Network of Disability Organizations (CAN DO), a network established by ARC, was the first of its kind held in the Maldives. The five key themes for this Conference were **"Access to Education," "Early Intervention and Health," "Social Protection," "Physical Accessibility" and "Equality and Non-Discrimination"**.

Another highlight of the past year for ARC was the commencement of a new project – the Children's Heritage Museum. This project stems from the belief that cultural and historical awareness among children strengthens their social values as well as their sense of identity and belonging. Once the site for this project is conveyed to ARC, we envisage creating a multifaceted space for children and their families to come together for the purpose of cultural education and creative play and learning.

ARC's partnership with Corporate Ambassadors and other local and international partners and donors has helped us expand our **outreach** nationwide. In 2016, ARC's awareness sessions at schools reached a record total of **11,392** children, **2565** parents and **409** teachers across **9 Atolls** and **35 Islands**. Our campaigns focused on highlighting health and nutrition, preventing child abuse, empowering the girl child, promoting internet safety and reinforcing social values.

It is ARC's firm belief that building more informed communities is the key to help change our children's lives for the better and to strive for a society where every child has the support they need to be healthy, stay safe and enjoy and achieve.

Happy 2017!

Zeena Zahid
Executive Director (Acting)

ONGOING AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Empowering Communities

HEAL Campaign:

Highlighting Health and Nutrition



- Launched the HEAL School Challenge, in partnership with Ministry of Education and Public Service Media (PSM)
- Televised the HEAL Cooking show for children, during Ramazan, in partnership with PSM and Seagull Group
- Conducted awareness sessions for students, parents and teachers in Baa Atoll, in partnership with Soneva Fushi
- Expanded the HEAL Campaign outreach to include preschool children and adolescent girls
- Organized workshops and awareness sessions for students, parents and teachers in Male' region, Haa Alif, Kaafu Atoll and Addu City

SURF SMART Campaign:

Promoting Internet Safety



- Carried out awareness sessions for students and parents in the Atolls Haa Alif, Baa, Meemu and in Fuvamulah and Addu City
- Conducted awareness sessions for parents in Meemu Atoll, in partnership with Dhiraagu
- Developed information brochures for parents

SHELTER SUPPORT PROGRAMME (SSP):

Continuing Efforts



- "Early Childhood Play and Development" programme, with Kurumba Maldives
- Annual "Roadhaveellun" and Annual Ramazan Collection
- Islam and Quran tuition classes
- Sports programme for children in Fiyavathi, in partnership with Beach Club Maldives

GRACE Campaign:

Empowering the girl child



In partnership with the British High Commission:

- Carried out awareness sessions for students in Male' and Fuvamulah City, and for students and parents in the Atolls Haa Alif, Haa Dhaalu, Kaafu, Raa and Addu City
- Organized workshops for students to mark the International Day of the Girl Child
- Developed the GRACE Campaign website and brochures for parents

In partnership with UNICEF:

- Conducted awareness sessions for students of CHSE

HOPE Campaign:

Preventing Child Abuse



- Conducted awareness sessions on all the islands of Meemu Atoll, for students, parents and teachers in partnership with Team from Mars Football Club and Police
- Conducted awareness sessions for students in Male' region and in the Atolls Haa Alif, Baa and Addu City
- Participated in the run against child abuse, in Dhiraagu Maldives Road Race 2016

RESPECT Campaign:

Reinforcing Social values



- Organized awareness sessions for students, parents and teachers in Male' schools and the Atolls Baa, Kaafu and Addu City
- Launched team-building sessions for members of the Maldives Badminton and Swimming Associations

Conferences

Exchanging knowledge and experience



- ARC's 2nd Stakeholder Conference on Children in Shelters, in partnership with UNICEF Maldives
- Stakeholder Conference on Children with Disabilities, by CAN DO, in partnership with the Embassy of People's Republic of China
- Conference on "Improving Standard of Care for Alternative Child and Youth Care: Systems, Policies and Practices" organized by Udayan Care, India
- South Asia Regional Conference on Human Rights, organized by Kandy Human Rights Centre, Sri Lanka
- Strengthening Children's Participation at SAARC Level held by South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) in Sri Lanka

Stakeholder Committees

Combining Forces

- Foster Care Panel
- Anti-trafficking Steering Committee against Human Trafficking
- Chair, National Action Coordination Group on Violence Against Children (NACG)
- National Advisory Board for the Promotion and Protection of Breastfeeding
- Steering Committee on National Human Rights Action Plan

Awards

Achieving Recognition

- National Health Award 2016
- 43rd National Badminton Championship, in support of the HOPE Campaign



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