



Low Emission Climate Resilient Development

A Programme funded by the Government of Denmark and delivered by the UN in partnership with the Government of Maldives.



Low Emission Climate
Resilient Development:
Building Resilience from the
Ground up in the Maldives

Low Emission Climate Resilient Development: Building Resilience From the Ground Up in the Maldives

An integrated approach to climate resilient local development planning as a way to mitigate the risks and to adapt to current challenges posed by climate change in the Maldives.

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Acknowledgements:

Editor: Catarina Camarinhas

Authors: Lara L Hill (main author), Ahmed Shifaz and Catarina Camarinhas

Review: Jomart Ormonbekov

Layout and design: Lara L Hill

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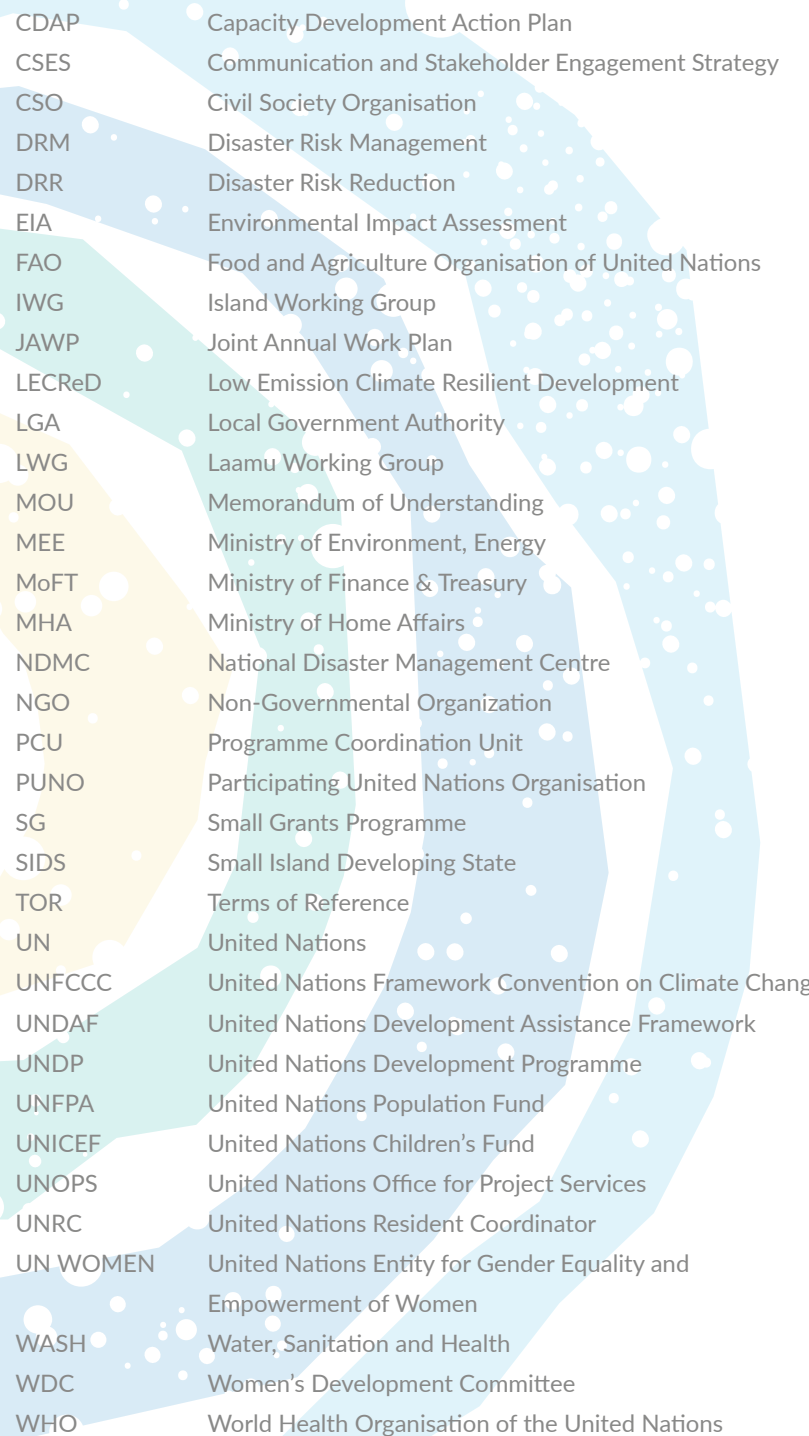


LECReD

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CDAP	Capacity Development Action Plan
CSES	Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations
IWG	Island Working Group
JAWP	Joint Annual Work Plan
LECRd	Low Emission Climate Resilient Development
LGA	Local Government Authority
LWG	Laamu Working Group
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MEE	Ministry of Environment, Energy
MoFT	Ministry of Finance & Treasury
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NDMC	National Disaster Management Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCU	Programme Coordination Unit
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organisation
SG	Small Grants Programme
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Health
WDC	Women's Development Committee
WHO	World Health Organisation of the United Nations

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Foreword



The Maldives believes that climate change is the 21st Century's greatest development and security challenge. Negative effects are already taking place in the Maldives as seen in extreme weather events such as, droughts, flooding, and storm surges. The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) assessed that urgent and immediate climate adaptation action in Maldives is required to address extensive erosion, impacts on critical infrastructure, tourism, fisheries, human health, water resources, agriculture, and food security. This multifaceted challenge will continue to gravely undermine our efforts towards sustainable development. The Maldives as a small island state is faced with enormous development challenges due to the dispersal of our population across many islands, issues of economies of scale and environmental challenges.

Climate change is a cross-cutting development issue as it affects every aspect of the Maldivian way of life and livelihoods. We are committed to pursue any and all means to ensure our nation survives and that our future generations are able lead productive lives in these islands and preserve our legacies. The people of Maldives must collectively build and strengthen our nation's resiliency to combat and adapt to climate change. This can only be done through lowering emissions, through enhanced evidence-based planning, and through stronger cooperation between local and national authorities, the community, and with the support of our local and international partners. The current government is committed to steer the nation towards a greener economy for a sustainable and prosperous future of the country.

The Low Emission Climate Resilient Development (LECRd) programme carried out in Laamu Atoll thus far has created an effective blueprint and methodology for low emission planning, development and scaling up to other atolls in Maldives. It supports the Maldives Climate Change Policy Framework (2014-2024) which prescribes strategic policies for the Government and the people of Maldives in responding to climate change. Since the inception of LECReD, we have been able to collect and learn many valuable lessons to help inform our future considerations for replication in order to ensure that safety and resiliency are achieved for all in the Maldives.



Honorable Mr Thoriq Ibrahim, Minister of Environment and Energy



“The Maldives as a small island state is faced with enormous development challenges due to the dispersal of our population across many islands, issues of economies of scale and environmental challenges. Climate change impacts exacerbate existing cultural and socio-economic vulnerabilities. These impacts threaten the security of our nation. To this end, the people of Maldives must collectively build and strengthen our nation’s resilience to combat climate change. However, we cannot do this alone; regional and global cooperation is imperative to put Maldives on a pathway to build a climate resilient economy in order to mitigate and adapt to climate change.”
(Maldives Climate Change Policy Framework, 2015)

A Message from the UN Resident Coordinator

Maldives is exceptionally vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Improving the country’s resilience against climate risks is therefore vital to achieving sustainable development, including poverty reduction, socio-economic progress, and a preservation of its natural environment and resources for future generations.

The country’s unique geography has its resident population of 402,000 dispersed over its 187 main islands. Maldives is also susceptible to other specific vulnerabilities, not limited to extreme weather events, rainfall distribution anomalies, and sea level rise. Owing to this, climate resilience remains a central priority in the development planning landscape of the Maldives.

In recent decades, the Government of Maldives, with support from partners such as the United Nations, has made important strides in addressing climate change-related impacts in the country. Still much more is needed to be done in order to promote low emission and climate resilient development, particularly given the Maldives’s fragile small island environment.

Towards this end, this ‘Lessons Learned’ review captures the experience of the UN System after two years of working together on climate change adaptation and local development, through the UN’s Low Emission Climate Resilient Development (LECRd) programme. This report provides recommendations for more efficient support in this area, specifically given the scope for replication of the initiative. The report is therefore not merely a conclusion of a comprehensive research initiative, rather the first step in a process of re-directing and building on the UN’s work on LECReD, in collaboration with recipient communities and other development partners. Our lessons from this process are drawn from the factors that have contributed to increased local ownership and implementation potential, and which have overall exponentiated the chances for a positive outcome.

These include:

- a) Understanding the processes involved in creating favorable conditions for working toward low emission and climate resilient development;
- b) Developing trust among a diverse range of partners with differing ideologies; and
- c) Meaningful engagement and involvement of communities, local and national authorities, and leaders at every stage.

We look ahead with this knowledge gained on how to build climate resilience in developing countries. Climate-resilient development requires moving beyond climate-proofing the development agenda. It should consider development and resilience in parallel. Success on this front requires a collective vision, as well as strong action. Our aim is to empower Maldivians to take the concept of low emission and climate resilient development forward towards a future that is sustainable for all people.



Ms Shoko Noda, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Maldives

LECRd: An integrated approach to climate resilient local development planning as a way to mitigate the risks and to adapt to current challenges posed by climate change in the Maldives.

Introduction: Low Emission Climate Resilient Development and the Maldives

The Republic of Maldives is highly vulnerable to climate change due to its low-lying geography and susceptibility to climate induced changes in sea level rise, rainfall fluctuations, sea surface temperature and extreme events. Due to the remoteness of the islands and the distance to other populated areas, effective and sustainable risk management strategies need to be based on the resilience and coping capacity of communities at risk.

The UN joint programme, Low Emission Climate Resilient Development (LECRd), brings together a wealth of diverse development-oriented expertise from participating UN organizations (PUNOs) to address these vulnerabilities including UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, WHO, FAO, and UNOPS.


This programme is closely linked to the existing national development planning cycle

and builds capacity of local and national partners engaged in these local processes. These partnerships provide a foundation for the longer-term sustainability of the programme and its knowledge products and their ability to be further leveraged and replicated nationally.

The programme is assisting the Laamu Atoll and its inhabited islands¹ to realize low emission and climate resilient development (LECRd). The programme seeks to mainstream LECRd issues into local level development planning and service delivery for greater community-level ownership and sustainability of programme benefits. The rationale being that lessons learned will be used to inform replication throughout the country and directly support the national agenda.

¹ Mavaah, Maamendhoo, Kunahandhoo, Hithadhoo, Gaadhoo, Fonadhoo, Gan, Mundoo, Maabaidhoo, Dhanbidhoo, Kalaidhoo and Isdhoo





Key Result Areas

Output 1: Partnership, coordination and participation platform for local LECReD planning and action is strengthened

Output 2: Data and knowledge systems established or identified to support evidence-based planning and policy development for LECReD at the local level

Output 3: Improved Local Level Planning and Management for LECReD

Output 4: Practical local experience in LECReD's interventions leads to learning and promotes replication

Building on partnerships and through a collaborative approach, the programme is working to address the particular vulnerabilities of the Maldives in facing climate change. The LECReD Programme is supporting national and local authorities to promote the organisation and coordination of actions towards adaptation, mitigation and building of resilience from the ground up.

Central to LECReD is the way it combines knowledge exchange and stakeholder participation with policy and planning. Our participatory process engages stakeholders from all sectors and builds on this collaborative approach to combine indigenous and international research in facing climate change.

Through more informed evidence-based decision making processes, local councils are being supported to protect and enhance critical infrastructure that reduces risk, as well as the safety of all schools and health facilities in Laamu Atoll. The programme is supporting councils to formulate their local development plans, initiating the process through the preparation of vulnerability and capacity assessments, education programmes and training. Immediate resilience action is promoting ecosystem resilience, water safety and security, energy security and food security, as well as public health and DRR. LECReD programme seeks to promote inclusion and address the needs of the most vulnerable population, making sure that all voices are integrated in local policy and development, including women, youth and children.

The main areas of work in LECReD Programme are:

- Partnership, coordination and participation platform
- Data and knowledge systems
- Local Level Planning and Management for LECReD
- Practical local experience

The Programme builds on the integrated efforts of seven Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs) operating in the Maldives: UNDP, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNFPA, UN WOMEN, WHO and FAO. LECReD Programme Board (PB), comprised of a wide range of stakeholders, provides policy direction and approves financial allocations. Oversight and coordination functions are carried out by the Programme Coordination Unit (PCU), the Programme Technical Committee (PTC), and the UN Technical Group (UNTG) integrating focal points from all PUNOs. The Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office serves as the Administrative Agent for the LECReD Programme Fund.

Achieving Results: A Snapshot

1 Partnership, coordination and participation for planning for LECReD

Under this output, the programme has established the institutional arrangements for LECReD governance at the local level. This has included the formation of the Laamu Working Group, a process which worked to build on current relations, bring consensus, and was inclusive of women and different sectors in community. The Laamu Climate Change Forums act as powerful platforms for reinforcing those institutional arrangements and for knowledge sharing. The next forum is in the planning stages and will feature local presenters to showcase and share innovations and LECReD processes that are working in the atoll.

There were some delays in carrying out the Programme Communications Strategy to reach the broader community, but the programme has now gained significant momentum, recognition and participation from within the broader community since late 2015.

"The Laamu Working Group is a huge success. The LWG has enabled local input in the planning process which is so important for grassroots buy-in. Our decisions at the Ministry level draws directly from local knowledge."

- Ali Shareef, Director Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Energy



Above: The first Laamu Climate Change Forum (LCCF) took place in April 2015.
Below: Island Working Group meeting 2015.



Mohamed Shiyam, President of Gan Council (right) addresses the audience during the first Laamu Climate Change Forum.

Below: Leadership retreat brought stakeholders and leaders from each island in Laamu together in November 2015.

These type of milestone events bring the stakeholder community together to discuss programme challenges, opportunities and lessons.



Below: Mr Abdulla Ziyad, Minister of State for Ministry of Environment and Energy, provides opening remarks during 2nd Laamu Climate Change Forum December 2015 .



Yoosuf Amir, Laamu Atoll Council president in attendance at the Leadership retreat November 2015.



2 Data and knowledge systems support evidence-based planning and policy

One of the key goals of LECReD is to provide the technical support needed for government counterparts and local Councils to continue utilizing and enhancing capacity and tools coming out of the programme in a sustainable way.

The creation of the Laamu Atoll development planning database is one of the most promising and tangible Outputs from LECReD programme. All government counterparts, Councils and stakeholders were involved in assembling what data is important to capture to support planning requirements and it is already housed at National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The Local Governance Authority (LGA), together with the NBS now have the framework for an electronic database for planning that can easily be replicated in other atolls. This will be vital in supporting planning needs at local and national levels. Processes, frameworks, knowledge management, guidelines, training of trainer methods, and electronic databases all have the potential to be replicated and scaled up throughout the country.

Improved capacity at the local level for working with data, holding community/multi-sector dialogues and for planning is notable. Councils have gone from paper filing systems, to fully utilizing e-database technology.



Access to data and knowledge systems is a strong pillar to promote evidence based decision making processes that have an impact on achieving island resilience and tackling climate change impacts. The LECReD programme has provided trainings to work with data and e-database technology.



To build up capacity of Council staff, UNFPA organized basic to advanced training in Microsoft Excel to strengthen skills in better management and effective use of data and to build up their expertise on data compilation and analysis. The knowledge acquired will contribute to a better planning and decision-making process at the local level.



Above: A Development Planning and Financial Planning Training of Trainers Workshop was conducted in Kaafu Atoll Thulusdhoo, and was organized by the Local Government Authority (LGA) in May 2016. It drew on the guidelines and systems developed through the LECReD programme. It was aimed at strengthening governance in the Maldives through improved local level planning and management by identifying and analyzing the local problems and finding solutions in their planning process.



With the absence of an island level data mechanism, LECReD created an opportunity for the National Statistical System to implement a data portal that will support the LGA's requirements on local planning which can be replicated to all Atolls across the country.
- Ashiyath Shazna/NBS & Aminath Latheefa/UNFPA based at NBS

A training workshop on epidemiological analysis, data for action including dissemination was conducted by WHO for health care professionals from all islands of Laamu Atoll (right). The week long training also included field work to identify and destroy vector breeding sites. The training is expected to improve structured weekly, monthly and outbreak reports from the regional hospital and to HPA.



3 Improved local level planning and management for LECReD

“Improved resilience reached through enhanced local and national capacity for planning and management as well as a change in behaviour of local stakeholders could be inferred indirectly as one of the main results of the project.”²

As a result of skills training and improved data and knowledge systems and exchange, the capacity for planning and good practices to support low emission development is already evident. It is too early to provide measured evidence on the lowering of emissions or carbon footprint resulting from LECReD interventions, but evidence shows that there has been a shift in cognition and capacity for understanding the concept of low emission development and planning. This is evident in a comparison of the first and second round of Small Grant applications, community outreach response rates, interest and attendance level in study tours and technical trainings, and the increased sophistication of Island Working Plans.

Changing conditions resulting from climate change directly impacts livelihoods, and the ability to plan better, innovate and adapt is critical. Island Councils have started building partnerships with the private sector to enhance green growth, they are leveraging new-formed relations within the atoll, are sharing innovations with each other and drawing inspiration from study tours and trainings to adapt ideas to their island-level needs.



Study tour on Good Agricultural Practices, conducted by FAO to the islands of HA. Maafahi, HDH. Hanimaadhoo and SH. Goidhoo.

“We came to learn that councils have now included LECReD-based agricultural components in their island planning. I believe LECReD has helped them better identify needs. These plans also look to partner with FAO as opposed to just asking for help. Councils are much more empowered to find their own solutions.”
- Shafia Aminath/FAO and Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture

2 Highlighted in the LECReD Mid-Term Evaluation

“The type of conversations we are having with community members since the start of the Programme has changed. For instance a Council chief was recently talking about issues they face—he mentioned how ground water quality has gone down due to less rainwater in recent years and is looking into how his community will adapt to this. He was making all the right connections about LECReD.” - Nasheeth Thoha/ARR UNDP

"It is very exciting to see how the different activities link with each other and how the sequencing benefits the local development planning process. For example, we established the Island Working Groups and Laamu Working Group at the beginning of the programme and the representatives of these bodies participated in the Multi Sector Dialogue Sessions, the Study Tours and the Laamu Climate Change Forums. The learnings and experiences from these activities were replicated by the communities through the Small Grants programme. It's a step by step approach to climate resilient development." - Aishath Azfa/UNDP



Island Councils have learned that resourceful planning and partnership is important for LECReD, but also in building social cohesion. Hithadhoo Council has successfully brought different sectors and political affiliations together in partnership in order to provide the entire island with low emission street lighting.



"Now we know how to engage the community in our decision-making. We understand better how to gather perspectives and see the assets brought by sectors. Before it was just our staff making island plans, now we understand that the community is essential in making the plan. We are just the administrator, and it's really the community who are the planners." - Ahmed Mohamed, president Hithadhoo Council (above right).

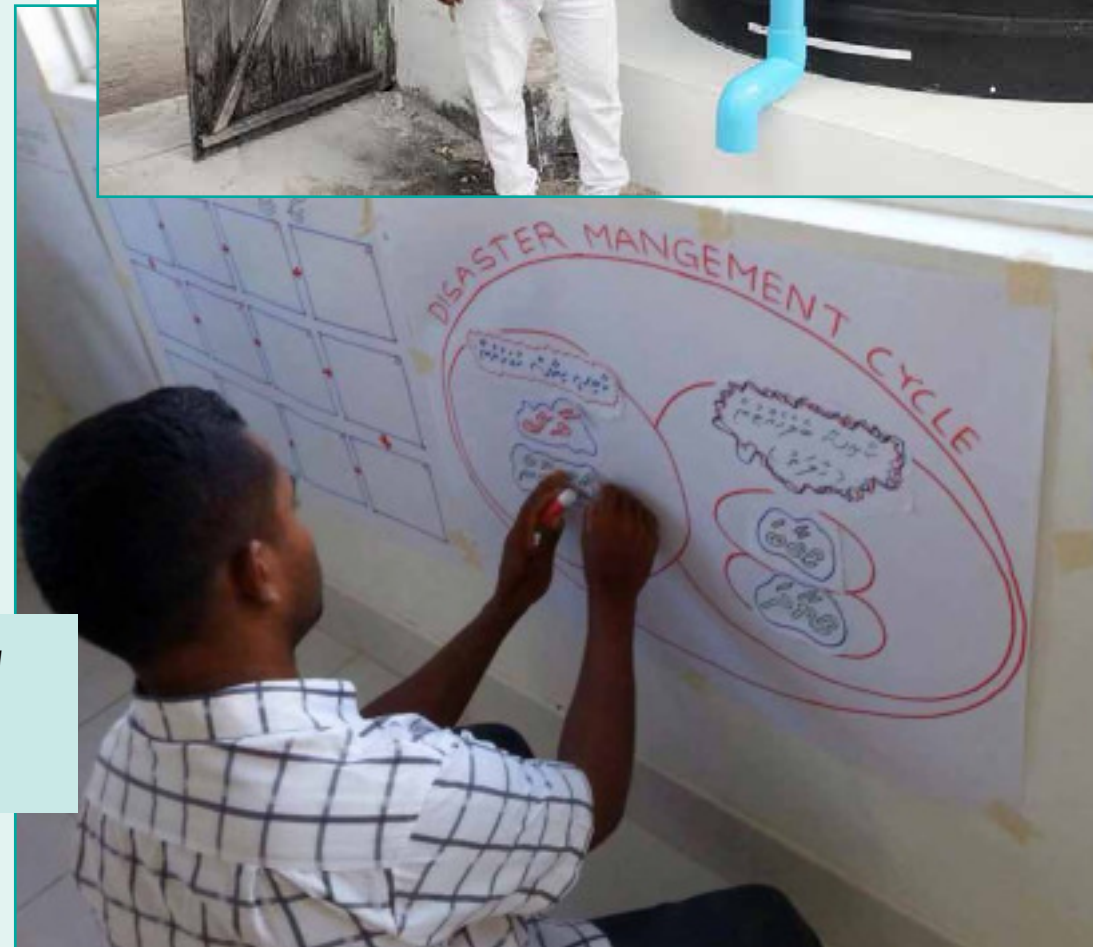
4 Practical local experience leads to learning and promotes replication

The implementation of the Small Grants programme is now in its second round. It has provided the opportunity for community-based organizations, councils and small enterprises to undertake locally led initiatives related to DRR, coastal protection, innovative low emission income generating activities and low cost behaviour changing initiatives for DRR and LECReD. The second round shows a significant increase in capacity for proposal writing, the number of applications coming from a broader range of stakeholders has doubled and the concepts are more innovative and sophisticated.

In addition to Small Grants project, a number of larger “no-regret” actions were identified as a priority for sustainable development. As a result, communities are already more climate resilient due to the rehabilitation of their community rainwater harvesting systems, through improved waste management practices, and the installation of low emission harbour lights.

Kalaidhoo was the first island to complete a Disaster Risk and Response plan in the atoll, and they have already initiated a first emergency response training in their community.

“We are very happy. Through LECReD all islands are benefiting in Laamu. The rainwater harvesting is the type of project that benefits and serves every single person living here. We are now confident that Dhanbidhoo can manage the dry period.”
- Ahmed Shakir, Island Council President





The Maamendhoo Council has hired an employee to manage the new Waste Management centre. He will ensure items are separated properly when delivered and that the site is maintained.



In preparation for the new Waste Management Centre being built through the Small Grants programme in Maamendhoo, the community created a Waste Management committee, most members are women. In just a month's time, the entire community was mobilized to separate refuse at the household level and transport it to the new site instead of throwing garbage into the sea and jungle.





Maabaidhoo School Principal, Shareefa Abdulla has been actively involved in engaging the students with LECReD and the Small Grants. The student Environmental Club has started a plant nursery and have applied for a Small Grant to scale up. They will learn about agricultural practices, the plants will provide natural cooling to the schoolyard, and money they earn from selling plants will fund activities. "If we can get these messages through the children, they will bring LECReD forward in their futures."



Factory rainwater holding tanks have loose plastic lids. To avoid contamination of drinking water, concrete lids were locally innovated and are now being produced and distributed to all of the islands within the atoll.



Students at Maabaidhoo school attended a LECReD outreach session in early 2016 and engaged in a number of experiential learning activities.

Lessons Learned



One UN: collaboration to accelerate results

The Delivering as One Joint UN formula draws on the strengths of the 7 participating UN organizations (PUNOs) to provide technical support and guidance in the overall delivery of the programme until the end of the project cycle. National counterparts will then have the tools and capacity to maintain processes and look to scale up.

Despite some challenge with coordination and managing the multi-sector/multi-stakeholder approach, results can be achieved quickly when all agencies and sectors work together toward a common goal.

More explanation on One UN in all engagement will assist with stakeholder understanding of joint PUNO goals and roles. "UNDP is already quite familiar to the community. In future the UN could improve how they deliver their workshops so people better understand the different UN agencies and their role in LECReD." - Ahmed Mohamed/Council President Hithadhoo



Above: UNDP supported workshop on Marine conservation and planning held in Gan.



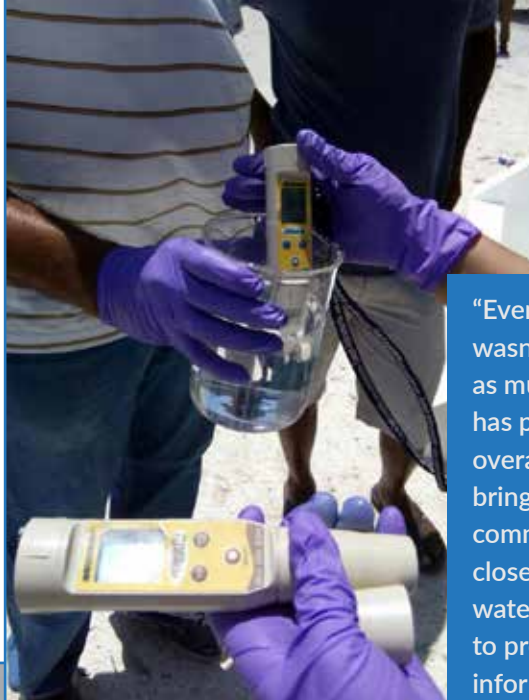
Left: UN agencies come together to support women and climate change adaptation in agriculture. UN Women is providing a manual to support gender sensitive planning for resilience, UNDP addresses women and participation in decision-making, FAO provides training on composting and safe pesticide use.

"The Small Grants concept provides good potential for ONE UN delivery. Many of the concept notes are relevant to more than one agency's specialization. We come together when we provide technical support to these projects on the ground." - Nasheeth Thoha/ARR UNDP

Far right: student dashes past the newly upgraded RWH tanks at Dhanbidhoo school.

Right: WHO Consultants conducting comprehensive water safety study for the atoll.

Below: Student in Kunahandhoo draws water from the rainwater harvesting system upgrade by UNOPS.



“Even though the One UN concept wasn’t initially recognized on the ground as much as everyone had hoped, LECReD has promoted more teamwork and unity overall. LECReD has helped a lot in bringing UN agencies together over common goals. For example, we work closely with UNOPS on issues around water. They work with the infrastructure to provide safe water and we work to inform the health side.”
-Sathu Rasheed/WHO



“For future consideration make sure to look for competitive advantages of agencies, and those with established relations with NGOs and government counterparts when creating workplans to avoid repetition, overlap, and weakness.” - Ibrahim Naseem/UNICEF

Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUNOs are often still operating on their own, in some cases with mandates crossing over. The initial Joint Workplan was complex. PUNOs capacity sometimes strained (especially for those without dedicated LECReD staff), affecting timeliness and PUNO coordination-has led to some inefficiencies. LECREd was widely perceived as a UNDP project, and there is still some beneficiary confusion about PUNO and implementor roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is effective build on synergies of expertise. I.e: FAO and UNWomen in agriculture, or FAO and WHO on health and safety over pesticide contamination. Workplan got revised and was more responsive. Much has been achieved in shorter amount of time through sharing assets and building on shared strengths. No need to 'start from scratch'. Creation of UN Technical group improved efficiencies and coordination through PCU. PCU and new communications strategy has reinforced perception of One UN- in fact, community is now identifying with the LECReD brand itself more than one PUNO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include PCU staff early in planning as a neutral body to help identify coordination and overlap to aid efficiency, refined tracking of outputs, and to help build on comparative advantages. Ensure mandatory input within UN Technical Group. Consider either having one dedicated staff for each PUNO, or a strengthened PCU, with PCU operating autonomously. Ensure stakeholder scan and communications strategy is complete before engagement with community and ensure cohesive messaging early.

Adaptive programme activities: 'learn-as-we-go'

The programme has been built on a Results Management framework, linking together each PUNO's activities into a Joint Annual Workplan (JAWP). National and local priorities have changed since the inception of the Programme concept (five years ago), to the present. The emphasis of LECReD was focused on building capacity for low emission planning at the local level. But priorities expressed have also evolved to focus on building up infrastructure to manage solid waste and water supply.

PUNOs drew lessons at completion of the initial JAWP, and to account for shifting community/national priorities, the second JAWP was adapted and revised to be more responsive. Having flexibility built-in annually, and allowing for short-term response to unforeseen circumstance, has been integral to achieving results. To learn and respond during the programme cycle helps maintain buy-in from counterparts and allows for the refinement of processes in shorter timeframes.



(above): UNDP guided Multi-sector Dialogue held in Isdhoo.



(far left): Laamu participants went on a study tour to engage with successful women-led projects in Addu.

(left): Addu study tour hosts were invited to attend the 2nd Laamu Climate Change Forum and Fair to share 'green' enterprise demonstrations.



The study tour to Addu hosted by UN Women had to be rescheduled. "Flexibility at the activity level has been very good. It has allowed us to continue implementing around unforeseen delays, like the State of Emergency that was announced late last year."
- Fathimath Zuhana/UN Women



Left: Second LCCF attendees December 2015.

There is a strong consensus among stakeholders that the timing around milestone events, like the Laamu Climate Change Forums, has been very good to date, with a good balance of time lapse in between. There is room for flexibility on timing, as long as there is enough advance notice for attendees, particularly for high level delegates.

In order to implement their tied activities on time, UNOPS had to go ahead with community dialogues before UNDP had finalized the Multi-sector Dialogue guidelines.

“Working out of activity sequence was fine in this case because UNOPS was able to share data we gathered, so agencies following us did not have to repeat some of the same questions to the community later on.”

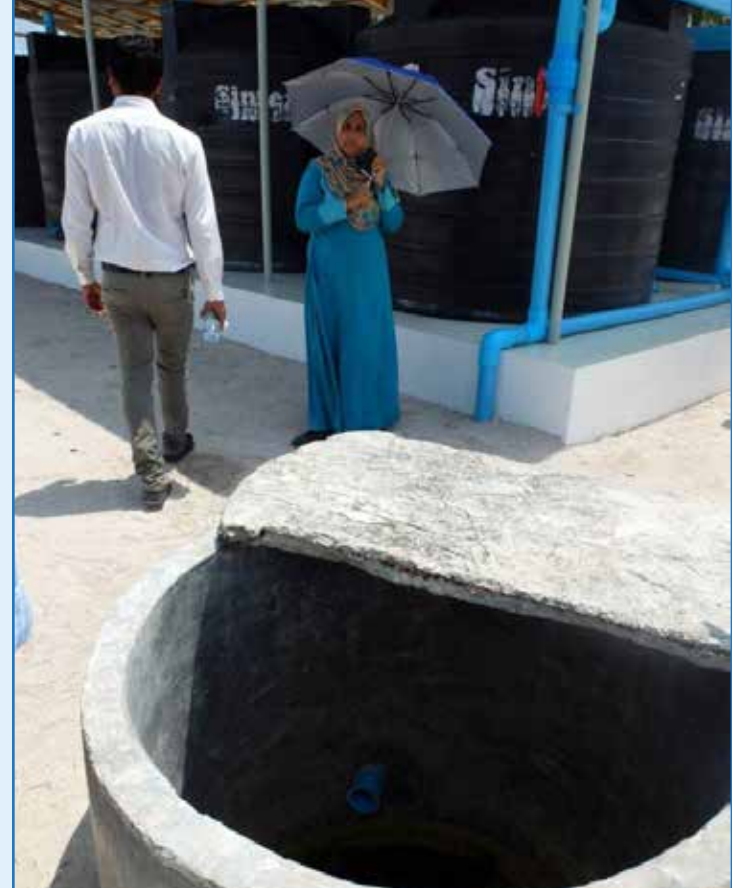
- Aminath Nawal/UNOPS

Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domino impact of delays: hiring programme staff, programme planning, activity delays, reporting, etc culminated in late delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme received 1 year extension. Delay of some activities meant that there was still budget to carry over. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure flexibility is built in to account for unforeseen delays and changing local/national/donor priorities. Recognition that some activities can change or happen out of sequence as long as Main Outputs are achieved, but:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay of specific activities hindered community awareness, and pushing some activities too early limited their full potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some early activities went ahead out of sequence which ensured programme progressed, and it provided some useful short term lessons to inform following activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify early which activities must happen in specific sequence to maximize timeline and beneficiary learning curve.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soft outputs, like shifting behavioral changes through programmatic interventions will vary in time it takes depending on context and leadership/ community dynamics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inter-atoll linkages that have been developed through activities has inspired motivation and will. Study tours and viber groups provide external collaborative motivation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many recommend that a programme this complex be given a 5-year cycle to allow for behavioral changes to occur.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators in original Joint Work plan too vague to adequately measure some desired results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through community engagement and consultation, it is more clear how indicators can be refined to better reflect context. PCU now reviewing new raw data and building more robust M&E framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that the 'learn-as-you-go' builds sequential knowledge, so allow flexibility to revisit and refine planning and measuring tools.

Presence the ground: drawing on local knowledge

Presence of PUNOs and government officials on the ground is visible through consultations, attendance at milestone events, and through the conducting of scoping, awareness activities and trainings and has proven to be valuable in building trust. The programme has also learned that PCU's full time presence has been vital in prompting Councils, Working Groups and implementing partners to remain engaged, motivated and informed. It has provided the basis for coordination and logistics support at the island level, the necessary linkages between LWG, IWGs, Councils, PUNOs and community representatives.

The participatory process of consulting community directly has yielded valuable information about what communities actually want and need, and has also provided insight into LECReD based practices, innovations, adaptations and assets that communities have naturally developed on their own. A rise in temperatures; changes in rainfall patterns, water table, and flooding, have prompted people to alter how they do things to protect their livelihoods. Some of these behaviours have been harmful (like the use of chemical pesticides or destroying seagrass), but other skills and practices can be learned from, shared, and built upon. Drawing on local expertise and input continues to deepen local ownership of the overall process toward LECReD.



"Communities were already practicing groundwater recharge techniques regardless of understanding the technical benefits, thus the programme reinforced good habits and gave evidence base for good practices." - Aminath Nawal/UNOPS



UN Resident Coordinator Ms Shoko Noda held a special meeting with Women's Development Committee members in Laamu on the side of the 2nd LCCF. This gave her an opportunity to hear women's concerns directly, and it gave the WDC confidence that their voices were being heard and taken into consideration at higher levels.

“One aspect of our work is to utilize and include local contributions—we’ve tapped into local expertise for translations, to arrange logistics, trainings, in creating data forms and identifying indicators for tracking key data...these things have been taken on as part of their work. There is a much deeper sense of ownership now, especially within the atoll Councils.” - Shaha Hashim/UNFPA



Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unequal capacity across PUNOs to have local staff in the field—staff capacity often spread across more than one agency project. Project plans by various parties in the past have not all come to fruition in these communities, so there was some skepticism at first. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCU and other PUNO presence helps foster overall awareness about LECReD to the benefit of all stakeholders. PCUs local relations has paved the way for PUNOs quick access to the community. Regular presence of both has built trust. Attendance of high level government and PUNO officials at milestone events reiterates seriousness of commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PUNOs must consider staff capacity and manage expectations at planning stages. Ensure that PCU has full time staff on the ground and engages with community early with an established outreach and communications plan in advance. Ensure that high level personnel informed well in advance to attend key events.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last minute change of PCU travel plans has placed some burden on communities ability to attend events and caused some inefficiencies vs when PCU coordination processes too rigid, it limits PUNOs ability to respond to community requests on short notice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCU’s presence in both the Malé office and in Laamu has helped identify and maximize effectiveness of many cross-over missions. Regular PUNO presence ensures that hard outputs are completed and up to standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the PCU has regulatory parameters around coordinating field travel, but build in some flexibility to allow for special circumstances.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmful practices (ie: use of pesticides) hard to break when its habitual, there is no incentive/ alternative or livelihood perceived to be at stake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical explanations through hands-on trainings have shown how good practices are sustainable and economically rewarding, people believe and behavioural changes are already visible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be very practical and hands-on in terms of providing specific/ concrete examples beneficiaries can relate to in trainings. Ensure mapping and surveying occurs very early in the project cycle so existing assets are known early and can be built on.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some practices and cultural norms present barriers to the adoption of new concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive participatory consultation has reinforced community sense of responsibility, accountability awareness and ownership. The study tours, LCCF and ToT’s allow for sharing of knowledge and practices within and across atolls/other island nation states. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People learn best by seeing practical evidence and real-world examples. Ensure that there is enough capacity to deliver hands-on training, and study tours, and that solutions to barriers on attendance are offered.

Hands-on, context-specific trainings provide reasoning and reinforcement of good practices.

“The trainings assist with explaining the rationale behind regulations. People thought the government wanted to preserve marine life to benefit tourism industry at expense of fishermen’s livelihoods.”
Above right: Riyaz Jauharee, Marine Expert

“We used to remove seagrass, now we understand that it acts as a breeding ground for fish and protects the reef. This training has really given us the push to start protecting our marine life.” Above centre: Ibrahim Shakeeb, IWG president Kunahandhoo

Sustaining how LECReD is operationalized

With numerous activities and operating partners at the island level happening simultaneously, the programme is so multifaceted that it is easy to lose site of the bigger picture. A number of key events, like the first and second Lammu Climate Change Forums (LCCF) and the LECReD retreat, were identified to act as powerful milestones to bring stakeholders back together at key times. This roadmap keeps everyone focused and aligned over the unified goals, and provides platforms for knowledge exchange and sharing lessons learned.

An integral ingredient for knowledge sharing has been the creation of the Working Groups. According to the Mid-Term Evaluation, how well the Working Groups interrelate and carry on with milestone events and ongoing exchanges are key components that will determine and secure long-term sustainability in the atoll beyond the life of the programme.

"The programme has started seeing leaders from the atoll emerge. Before, they did not have the platforms to find their vision. They are more confident and better understand the needs of their communities. They have the vision to help themselves through their own leadership." - Shafia Aminath/FAO and Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture



Above: Ahmed Faisal, President of the Laamu Working Group speaking at Leadership retreat November 2015.



The Laamu Working Group is a huge success. The LWG has enabled local input in the planning process which is so important for grassroots buy-in. Our decisions at the Ministry level draws directly from local knowledge. For replication, it is recommended that Working Groups get formed very early in the initial design and development stages of a Programme so that they can be a part of the process right from the beginning. - Ali Shareef /MEE (left)

Above: Leadership retreat attendees November 2015.

Below: Council hosting a meeting in Maamendhoo.
Bottom: Maamendhoo School.

Now that LECReD has taken root, Councils, like Maabaidhoo, are revising their IWG to ensure that members are more representative and can commit to the time needed for the role.
(right) Aminath Moosa, Maabaidhoo Council member



“This is a Middle Income Country, and many people are not aware of that. Moving forward we need to focus more on building up our human capacity. LECReD has helped so much with providing training to help us with creating development plans and other needed skills...”



“...We have worked to create good relations through the school and in our community, this is the best link for the broadest outreach. Think global - act local. Think politically in order to act socially.”
- above quotes: Ali Shifaz, Council president Maamendhoo

Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political fragility and polarization within the atoll has affected outreach and participation in some cases. It can be difficult to get people to attend trainings due to work/ family obligations or inability to travel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IWGs have been integral in outreach and mobilizing community participation, and in some cases has helped transcend political divisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where political polarity/ dominance exists, utilize broader outreach channels beyond Councils- look to politically neutral bodies like schools, PTA, private sector (enforce IWG ToRs do help ensure cross-sector representation).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local capacity was initially quite low: computer software, public speaking, working with data, planning/writing proposals, capacity for infrastructure upkeep, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training sessions have significantly increased capacity of Councils in a short time. Communities now thinking beyond infrastructure and see 'capacity' building as component of development. Island plans/proposals/ dialogues now show evidence of LECReD based considerations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve more stakeholders, like civil servants, earlier on in trainings. They will sustain this knowledge and carry on beyond Council terms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of understanding between community, Councils and implementers has lead to some confusion and misplaced expectations (ie RWH upgrades). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LCCF, community outreach/ monitoring visits, and MSDs have been strong platforms for exchange across sectors and for clarifying programme goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Milestone concept and Technical Groups are useful aspects to replicate to keep large-scale and multifaceted projects on task. They also provide more opportunities to manage expectations.

Women's participation: passage through barriers

Because the pathway toward gender equality is still lagging in Maldives, and because women's role is pivotal in low-emission development, it is critical that women's ability to participate in public and private spheres be strengthened. It is also vital that gender equality continue to be mainstreamed across programme plans and result indicators.

"This is about women and climate change, not just the division of duties. If there's a disaster, like a tsunami- all are affected, but particularly women because they are on the front line of taking care of the family. We need to ensure they are as informed and prepared as men."

- Ali Faisal, Council President Maabaidhoo



Many women are involved in agriculture to support the family's livelihood and for subsistence. The Programme has learned and identified ways to reduce barriers women may face in accessing useful trainings to enhance LECReD principles in women's agricultural practices.

Above: Shuhanna from Fonadhoo, subsistence farmer.



"There needs to be more women involved and working in the public sphere. I've seen that women are long-term thinkers and planners. They look at the bigger picture, more than short term gains, which is ultimately more effective and sustainable for the community."

- Moosa Faisal, Laamu Working Group president and Council president Mavaah.

Left: Laamu Women's Development Committee member side meeting at 2nd LCCF in Gan December 2015.



“When pesticides were introduced just about 20 years ago, they (farmers) saw immediate results with bigger yields. So because of this they fear change could affect their livelihood. But once they go through a training, they believe the threats and see the benefits. Women are very interested in the agricultural trainings. 95% of the attendees in Isdhoo (2016) were women.” - Mohamed Afeef/FAO

Above: Participants taking part in interactive marine conservation planning and training session.

Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural norms and traditional gender roles restrict women's ability to participate in decision-making both publically and privately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's Development Committees have been a good platform to engage and empower women in the public sphere, they existed before LECReD, but the programme has given them more space. Programme has provided platforms to raise awareness in the value of bringing women's voice to the table in consultation, decision-making and in planning. There is community recognition of this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use cultural awareness and build on platforms that are socially acceptable in engaging women. Manage expectations for change.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's roles in agriculture and securing water for the household make them particularly vulnerable to climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women are innovating and adapting to climate change in their practices Study tour to Addu, LCCF Fair and Gender and Climate change pilot showcased how women are impacted and provided platform for knowledge sharing. Women are attending technical trainings and information sessions. UN Women will share advocacy package featuring women's stories from Laamu atoll. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the necessary support to aid women's ability to attend information and training sessions, ie: choose appropriate time of day, bring the training to their island, offer daycare, use channels that are tied to women's current defined roles (ie: via Parent Teacher Association) Disseminate awareness-raising and success stories to educate and inspire.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial LECReD strategy identifies Gender as a cross-cutting theme, but did not fully provide framework to identify and provide evidence on where/how women are most vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A gender component is included in planned activities, and also within the monitoring for results framework. Activities and community consultations have helped identify where and how women are most vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that gender mainstreaming is always built into programme Results frameworks.

Bridging local planning with national policy, while building capacity and the knowledge base

The integrated planning approach proposed by the LECReD programme has been adopted by local and national authorities and will form the basis for island development plans and local financial plans for 2017-2021. The planning method itself is built on an ecosystems-based approach. A vital lesson has been to ensure the planning employs a participatory and inclusive approach to build trust and so that all relevant community stakeholders including, women and civil society, have a sense of inclusion in the decision-making process which enhances overall ownership for the future.

Throughout the LECReD programme lifespan, it has and will continue to generate trainings, tools, reference materials and assets to support planning, capacity building and informing the public with advocacy and information tools. The participatory process used in creating these materials promotes opportunities for sharing, replication and scaling up.



Above: some of the participants who attended training organized by UNFPA in Microsoft Excel. Trainings intended to strengthen skills for better management and effective use of data. The feedback at the end of the course was very positive with participants emphasizing the need for similar courses to improve their skills. Nearly 100 participants from 29 different institutions of Laamu Atoll made use of this opportunity.



“Standardization and digitization of data forms has streamlined the process for the atoll. It has relieved administrative burden, and now all of the standardized data can be linked to and managed by NBS and LGA. This is a huge indicator for an increase in capacity at the local and national level.”

- Shaha Hashim/UNFPA

The ecosystems-based approach was informed and reinforced by a recent study tour to Seychelles. “I came to know that Seychelles has many protected areas, including land and marine areas. They also use the ecosystem-based approach in response to climate change pressures. This approach helps in protecting and strengthening their ecosystems, and also supports sustainable livelihoods. These are important lessons for us, as we start on our local development plans.”

- Aishath Saajidha, Laamu Atoll Statistics Officer (right)



All councils expressed value for the capacity-building components of LECReD trainings for how it has enhanced their ability to write proposals, monitor, use software like Excel and interpret data: for budgeting, writing reports and planning documents for national counterparts. Hands-on training opportunities provide practical, real-world application methods.

To reduce the risk of improper handling of healthcare waste in Maldives, enforcement of a policy is extremely important. WHO has supported the Health Protection Agency to develop the Healthcare Waste Management (HCWM) Policy for the country. This was driven from prospectus to pilot medical waste management in Laamu to roll out throughout the country.



Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralized processes are still embedded in local mentality, exaggerated by political polarities that affect whether local governance serves the leading local party vs the people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database will reduce administrative burden on Council to fulfill LGA requirements, and the participatory process of developing these databases has provided sense of ownership at local level. It is increasing civic accountability and will. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider shifting more overall programme authority across ministries, ie: LGA and MEE. Or strengthen ToR for Technical Group to ensure all technical sectors across gov contribute to decision-making at national level. Enforcement of policy is critical.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges faced in managing complexity of data (privacy/staff capacity/IT support/ownership of sectorial data) Local capacity to input and interpret data was low. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEE, NBS, LGA very committed to success of database development and finding ways to maintain. They are eager to see it replicated. Council and civil servants were very eager to learn and welcomed the trainings. They see multiple benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replication will require enough capacity for implementing staff. Consider budgeting for dedicated NBS staff at HQ and one to two at the atoll level at minimum. Ensure civil servants included in all trainings from the beginning to help sustain the knowledge across Council terms. Consider language barrier. Allow proposals and reporting in Dhivehi.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delay in launch of LECReD communications strategy and website hindered community awareness building. Delay in internal knowledge management system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the LaamuInfo portal will give public access to data. Clean, accessible data will empower citizens to hold governing bodies accountable, and will foster innovation for evidence based green growth and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LaamuInfo is modeled after MaldiveInfo. This concept can easily be replicated to other atolls. Ensure programme exit strategy includes solid plan for knowledge transfer, web hosting and accessible data/resource hosting.

Communication channels and engaging the broader community

Key platforms that bring people together provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, building relationships and trust, collectively defining expectations, and to enhance capacity building. Evaluation analysis of the programme found that this has been effective in awareness-raising from the stakeholders to the community level.

Leveraging partnerships with national and local authorities, as well as through the Working Group concept will help sustain and grow community relationships and participation in LECReD. This will ultimately contribute to the resiliency of the atoll if the broadest community is reached, engaged and informed about climate change and how they can be a part of the planning process to ensure the community's resiliency.



"We didn't even know some of the other Councils before. Now we connect regularly through IWG/LWG meetings and viber."

- Shifaaz Ali, Council president Maamendhoo

"LECREd has enhanced relationships and friendships... island Councilors are now family. We didn't even know each other before. Now we know every member- in every office. Once the programme is finished, we'll likely try to keep in touch and keep doing workshops together."

- Ahmed Mohammed, Council president Hithadoo



This fisherman from Gan believes that the changes in fish numbers and location are related to the 2004 tsunami. He was not familiar with how climate change could be connected.

When the broader community has access to learning more about climate change and how their livelihoods and eco-system is affected, they may also be interested in supporting local planning and mitigation practices.



Above: A recent community outreach session provided by PCU in Isdhoo, drew nearly 90 people, most of them women. This is a much higher turnout than previous events held in this community. The invitation to attend was channeled through the Parent Teacher Association.

Above right: Over 80 students attended an information and activity session provided by PCU in Maabaidhoo. Schools across Laamu have shown interest in providing LECReD-based learning opportunities for the students.



Challenges	Opportunities	Future Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are barriers associated with information reaching the public: delay in communication strategy, political polarization, cultural norms. There is need for more partnership with local and national authorities to carry programme engagement beyond programme duration. Resulting from above: some perceived 'unfairness' between islands (ie RWH upgrades as a needs-based project). Expectations around soft vs hard Outputs were not fully managed. Multiple stakeholders acknowledge that public outreach and awareness should have come much earlier in programme cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media, like Viber groups have been instrumental for sharing and in mobilizing Councils, LWG and IWGs. Training, study tours, MSDs, LCCFs have been strong platforms to engage, build relations and exchange knowledge. Further engagement of national and local authorities will aid in transition and exit strategy. Participatory engagement platforms for sharing and planning have fostered shared responsibility on achieving Programme results. Milestone events and enhanced inter-island connections/ friendships have been adopted, rivalries and confusion on programme details reduced. Locally produced advocacy and awareness media products have strongly resonated (Ukulhas video on waste management, and a locally produced animation on climate change for youth audience.) Private sector engagement and connection with the school systems, though delayed, has multiplied partnerships for development, community awareness and buy-in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expectations can better be managed with clear information shared early through a Communications Strategy, website and public data/resource portal and branding that is prepared before any engagement with stakeholders begins. Connecting with politically neutral bodies early will help ensure equal access to information. Ensure communications resource tools are context sensitive. Utilize multiple awareness tools to share real-life stories and successes that people can relate to.

Looking to the Future

As we move forward, together we can draw on lessons learned to inform the final phase of the LECReD programme as it transitions into a process that is fully managed and carried forward by national and local authorities. Recognizing that the process of planning for and implementing low emission climate resilient practices and infrastructure is a process that requires constant reassessment and adaptation to changing needs and priorities, will empower decision-makers and community to remain mobilized and engaged. Ensuring the transfer of knowledge and capacity building opportunities continue will warrant sustaining results beyond the life of the programme.

It will be important to ensure that capacity, learning and outreach continues to grow and be fostered to pave the way for new partnerships. Innovation for LECReD and green business opportunities will thrive and multiply throughout the nation and beyond, and practical outcomes toward a more climate resilient future can be replicated and scaled up.



It is important for the Maldives to remain engaged and aligned with international priorities, like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), officially known as 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'.

The LECReD programme is now working to promote all 17 of the Global Goals by implementing the SDGs through the planning process; all island plans will be based on a thematic structure that works on SDG themes and then will be monitored according to that structure through the LaamuInfo database tool that has been developed.

