



Greetings!

It is once again with great pleasure that I enclose an update on ARC's progress on our fourth anniversary. It has been quite a challenge to encapsulate the breadth of ground covered in 2013: we have highlighted the main developments and achievements.

This year's work focused on the significant expansion of two of our awareness campaigns, HEAL and H.O.P.E., on health and nutrition and child abuse prevention, respectively. We also carried out a considerable amount of planning and preparation ahead of next year, in order to extend our focus to much needed areas of advocacy and outreach, on national and international levels.

We also hope that our newly launched Corporate Ambassadorship Programme would provide crucial funding needed to accelerate this process of steady expansion. This would give the country's economic sector a chance to donate and participate in changing the lives of the most vulnerable segment of our society. At ARC, we work with the simple and humble belief that making a difference, even in the life of a single child, is a powerful impetus for positive transformation.

We could not look back on this year's notable achievements, or look forward to the broadening of horizons to come, without recognizing the tireless efforts and support of our volunteers and sponsors alike. Thank you all - and here's hoping that 2014 will be another rewarding year!

Zenysha Shaheed Zaki
Co-founder and Executive Director



Photography by: Thifu

Advocating the Rights of Children (ARC) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization registered in the Maldives in December 2009.

2013: THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

Work with Children's Shelters



Programmes for children at Kudakudhinge Hiya Home

- Inspirational Talks Programme, where successful community members who have overcome difficult backgrounds, share their stories with the children, to transmit the importance of perseverance, work ethic, goal setting and resilience.
- Sports programmes: Badminton and Zumba classes and annual holiday programme which included fun and educational holiday camps, Swimming Programme, Yoga, and Carrom Camps
- Educational Programmes: daily Islam and Quran classes and English Reading Programme

Programmes for Care Workers at Kudakudhinge Hiya Home

- Early Childcare Play/Environment Needs Workshop
- Staff Development Workshop
- Yoga camp
- Early Childcare Training
- Parental Effectiveness Training

Special Mention

Congratulations to a boy from Kudakudhinge Hiya Home who won the championship in his age group in the Maldives Inter School Badminton Tournament in March 2013. He was introduced to the sport and has been training under ARC's Badminton Programme, since 2011.

Ramazan Collection 2013: We appreciate the much wider support received from the public, in donating greatly needed items to children's shelters (Kudakudhinge Hiya, Amaan Hiya and Education and Training Centre for Children). We are particularly happy to note that many children were also involved in sending gifts and worked as volunteers to help sort out and pack boxes to the different shelters.



Photography by: Mauroof Khaleel (Maapu)

Ongoing Awareness Campaigns: A year of steady expansion



HEAL (Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles) Campaign

- The second HEAL Festival for children held in May, provided children with simple tools to help eat better and get more active through fun and educational games.
- The HEAL storybook 'The Colourful Companionship of Casey Cabbage', published in May has proven to be a great success. In April, the book, approved by the Ministry of Education and Health Promotion Board of Singapore, was launched in three schools in Singapore. The book also won Europe's Gourmand Award 2013 for Best Children's Book in the Maldives and Best Charity and Fundraising Books in Asia, and has been selected to compete for the Best in the World Awards in 2014.
- A children's TV cookery programme was aired in collaboration with TVM in July. The four weekly episodes provided simple, healthy food and drinks that children could prepare at home.
- From September to November, ARC in collaboration with UNICEF conducted awareness sessions at schools, produced TV and Radio clips, billboards, brochures for parents, flyers for children and a resource guide for preschool teachers, to help put children on track to healthy eating and active lifestyles from early childhood. An animated sing along song and posters were also delivered to all 222 primary schools across the country.

HOPE Campaign against Child Abuse



- Our Child Abuse Prevention Campaign from 2010 was re-launched as H.O.P.E (Heal, Outreach, Prevent and Empower) in May 2013, with a campaign specific website (www.arc.org.mv/hope).
- For the third consecutive year, ARC was a social partner for the Dhiraagu Maldives Road Race in June, dedicated to the prevention of child abuse, which provided a platform to raise awareness and funds for the HOPE Campaign.
- In June, ARC joined an International Coalition, which supports the early ratification of the Optional Protocol (OP3 CRC) on the Rights of the Child, where children or their representatives can approach the UN directly, if their rights are not being protected by the State and local remedies are insufficient.
- ARC in collaboration with Sun FM Radio Station broadcasted a special month-long programme during July 2013, to raise awareness on child abuse prevention.
- Congratulations to the ARC team at the National Badminton Tournament, who won the championship in November for the second year running, and helped promote the message that protecting children from abuse is everybody's job!
- Throughout the year, flyers, billboards, TV and Radio clips and social media was used as a platform to promote the "4 R's in Rising Against Child Abuse" (Raise awareness, Recognize signs, Report abuse and Reach out).

Other Highlights

- In May, in collaboration with UNICEF, ARC undertook consultations with children in two regions of the country, to generate a children's voice on Maldives-specific challenges and opportunities, in relation to the UN's post-2015 Development Agenda.
- From October to December, ARC conducted a study to understand the work of the key NGO players that have a mandate to improve the welfare of children, with a view to improve coordination among civil society and help strengthen the child protection system in the country.
- In December, ARC organized a panel discussion to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with representatives from disability related NGOs and the Ministry of Health and Gender. Among issues discussed included early detection and intervention, education and health, lack of trained professionals and other challenges faced by children with disabilities.
- ARC continued as a member of the Foster Care Panel of Maldives and was also selected for the newly established National Anti-Trafficking Steering Committee against Human Trafficking.

Awards of Appreciation

ARC greatly appreciates the awards received in 2013, in recognition of our work, from:

- Ministry of Gender, Family and Human Rights
- Kudakudhinge Hiya Childrens Home
- Human Rights Commission of the Maldives

Every child has the right to be treated equally and fairly and have their rights respected



Photography by: Ahmed Zahid