2017 IN REVIEW

ARC Newsletter

Letter from the MANAGING DIRECTOR

It is an honour to share ARC's newsletter once again. 2017 can best be summed up as a year of new beginnings – as well as of unexpected challenges.

Our newest campaign - Safety Steps - focuses on safety precautions for children in their environment. This includes a fast changing urban landscape as well as increasingly erratic global weather patterns. We feel that children can be given key tools to deal with the potential risks in their changing surrounds.

Indeed, change has been a dominant feature of this year, some of it unpredictable. At the time of writing this newsletter, our most exciting new campaign, the Childhood Heritage Project, has been put on hold. Having won the bid, ARC had already started work on developing the first children's museum in the Maldives. Located in the only surviving building of the Sultan's Palace of Malé, "Usgekolhu", the museum's aim was for children and their families to come together for cultural education, entertainment and creative play. However, the relevant authorities annulled the agreement only a few days prior to the scheduled opening date, citing changes to the plans for "Usgekolhu". We face a serious setback, which we hope can be resolved satisfactorily.

Despite the disappointment, we will ensure that we move on as best we can, always focusing on our goals with determination and trust.

As in previous years ARC continues to raise awareness on a national scale through our involvement in conferences and committees. Among the events attended was the National Conference on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in August, jointly organised by UNICEF and the Ministry of Gender and Family. ARC also attended the first Juvenile Crime Prevention Seminar in November 2017. It is this spirit of empowerment through hope and action that is reflected in the song released for our Hope campaign, "You're Not Alone". The song encourages children to seek help, assures them that they are not alone and that they can get help. We aim to deliver this message to every child who needs it.

Despite the challenges and uncertainties of this year - and no doubt in years to come - ARC aims to lead by example. We will continue to hope and we will continue to act on behalf of the children of our country to ensure their safety, security and enjoyment of life.

I wish to thank our efficient staff and dedicated volunteers for their role in making 2017 a success. Finally, along with our sincere thanks for all your support, I join the Executive Committee members, in wishing you a hopeful, peaceful 2018.

- Muruthala Moosa -

ONGOING AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS : EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN SHELTERS: CONSISTENT RECORD

- Annual Ramazan Collection for Children's Shelters, in association with CHSE and MNDF
- Annual 'Roadhaveellun' for children, hosted by Cheval Blanc Randheli
- 'Exploring Art' Programme with local artist Hassan Niyaz at Kudakudhinge Hiya
- 'Journey of Art' Programme, in partnership with Kurumba Maldives, to enhance skills and creativity of children at Kudakudhinge Hiya
- Islam and Quran classes at Kudakudhinge Hiya throughout the year
- Holiday Programme for children

EMPOWERING THE GIRL CHILD: SPREADING THE MESSAGE

- Launch of the child-friendly version on the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in Dhivehi Language, in partnership with the Embassy of the United Kingdom to the Maldives
- Interactive sessions supported by the Embassy of the United Kingdom to the Maldives, for students and parents at 3 schools in K.Atoll, 6 schools in Raa Atoll and 2 schools in Noonu Atoll for the empowerment of the girl child

PROMOTING SOCIAL VALUES: EXPANDING OUR REACH

- Interactive Sessions conducted in Male' for students at Imaduddin School, Aminiya School, Ghiyasuddin International School, and Dharumavantha School, in partnership with Club Med
- Information sessions of the RESPECT campaign for parents at Hiriya School, participated by over 350 parents, and for parents at Imaduddin School, supported by Club Med
- Information sessions for students at Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality
- Two sessions from the RESPECT Campaign, conducted for parents, and open for public participation, were held in Male'

HIGHLIGHTING HEALTH AND NUTRITION: GROWING & REVIEWING

- Launch of the 'Grand Plan of the Gunge Gloop Group' the third story book from the HEAL series, in partnership with Mauritius Commercial Bank, Novelty Printers and Publishers Pvt Ltd, and Seagull Group. Book launch events held in Male' and also supported by Island Aviation and Six Senses Spa, Kunfunadhoo and Soneva Fushi Resort at B. Eydhafushi
- Review of the Heal School Challenge in partnership with Ministry of Education and PSM
- Interactive session for students at Kangaroo Kids to promote healthy lifestyles
- Information sessions for teachers of Grades 1-3, at Aminiya School to promote healthy eating and active lifestyles for children
- Interactive session at Ghiyasuddin International School held for students of Grades 1-3
- Participation at the event held by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) on World Diabetes Day

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE: REINFORCING THE MESSAGE

- Awareness sessions at 3 schools in H.Dh Kulhudhufushi, in partnership with Ministry of Gender and Family and Island Aviation
- Awareness sessions at 7 schools throughout G.Dh Atoll, in partnership with Ministry of Gender and Family, supported by Island Aviation and DMRR2016
- Participated in the run against child abuse, at DMRR 2017
- Released the song 'You're Not Alone' to mark World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse
- Training on Children's Mental Health, Guilt & Shame following Abuse, for Case Workers at the Ministry of Gender and Family, by Ms. Caroline Hickman, Teaching Fellow at University of Bath's Department of Social and Policy Sciences

FOCUSING ON SAFETY: DELIVERING SURVIVAL

- Launched the Safety Steps Campaign on International Day of Disaster Reduction (IDDR) to focus on children's safety at home, outdoors, on the move, and in emergencies.

CONFERENCES: STAYING INVOLVED

- National Conference on the Prevention and Responding to Violence against Children, at Kurumba Maldives, by Ministry of Gender and Family and UNICEF.
- Regional Expert Group Meeting to Review the Regional Strategy on Child Sexual Abuse, Exploitation including Online Safety (CSAE&OS), in Colombo, Sri Lanka, by SAIEVAC
- Stakeholder Forum on the Implementation of CRC Concluding Observations, in Male', by HRCM.
- Civil Society Forum on the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals, in Male', by Ministry of Environment and Energy and UNDP
- First Juvenile Crime Prevention Seminar, at Bandos Island Resort, by UNICEF and Maldives Police Services.
- Training Workshop on National Strategy for Development of Statistics, Male', by National Bureau of Statistics.
- Human Rights Conference, Kurumba Maldives, by Transparency Maldives.

MEMBERSHIP ON NATIONAL COMMITTEES: ENGAGING ISSUES

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

AWARDS: ANOTHER WIN

- 44TH National Badminton Championship title in support of the HOPE campaign, and the Team's 6th consecutive win in the National Tournament.