Behavioural Change Strategy

Child Maltreatment & Abuse
Prevention in the Maldives.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The document outlines the Behavioral Change Communication Plan for Child Maltreatment and Abuse in the Maldives. The objective is to design a campaign strategy to enable the population of Maldives, to be informed, knowledgeable, and involved in developing and implementing a sustainable protective network for promoting and preventing child maltreatment & abuse.

Initially field research was conducted in an attempt to explore the strengths & weaknesses of current formal institutions and structures in place to protect children from abuse, maltreatment & neglect, as well as focus group discussion with sections of the population to acquire an understanding of current attitudes and perception towards the work of these institutions. In conjunction with Secondary research which helped us identify different theoretical models of child abuse etiology and preventions, Behavioural change plan was designed to alleviate the communication gaps that existed between the diverse array of formal & informal, public & private service providers and the population at large who are need of the service.

BACKGROUND

Children have been physically and emotionally neglected, exploited and sexually molested by adults since the beginning of civilization. It is only recently that it has been formally recognized and defined with laws mandated, internationally as well as locally. Its pathology is explored and methods of prevention and treatment are being implemented. Child abuse and neglect has received considerable attention among criminal justice, law enforcement, social work and medical and education professions internationally as well as throughout Maldives.

This is mainly due to societies beginning to shift from the notion of children belonging to their parents (with the traditional concept of parents' rights to raise their children as they see fit), to the emerging concept of children's rights as individuals. The main instrument for such an acknowledgement at an international level is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which sets out the rights that must be realized for children to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. A child is defined by the article 1 of the CRC as a "human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier."

According to the first large scale national study on the issue of physical and emotional punishment as well as sexual abuse of children in the Maldives done in collaboration with UNICEF & DGFPS of Ministry of Health & Family in 2008 (VAC Study); 47% of children have undergone at least one or both kinds of punishment in their lives. In terms of sexual abuse, 16% of school children from the study reported that they have been abused at least once in their life. The prevalence rates of girls, particularly those in Male' are twice higher than that of boys (20% vs. 11%, respectively) .

Among the efforts made by DGFPS with the support of other agencies to respond to these issues and reduce the occurrence includes the child help line, the Maldives Child Protection Data Base and working towards strengthening the current child protection services in Male' and the atolls.

In 2006, the Maldives initiated the decentralization of child and family protection services by establishing FCSCs in each of the 20 atolls, which provide services to families and children in need of protection and support within the region. Currently there are 10 purpose-built FCSCs with two separate adjacent buildings, one for administration (office) functions and services, and the other to function as shelter for designated groups of abused victims.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research conducted was in two folds; Firstly quick assessment indepth interviews were conducted to identify the strengths & weaknesses of current service provisions, with all relevant public institutions & authorities, involved in the protection and prevention of child maltreatment & abuse in the Maldives, as well as local NGOs who are currently active within the field of promotion & prevention related to the field. Secondly focus group discussion were conducted with dissection of the public to assess attitudes and perception of the current level of service provisions by the public & private institutions.

In conclusion it is evident that understanding amongst different stakeholders regarding the definition of child abuse is very varied and ambiguous. There is general agreement between authorities, which work directly with victims, and offenders that child abuse should encompass a much wider spectrum of abuse, than physical and sexual abuse, as they perceive to be the main misconception within the general public.

All stakeholders view child abuse as a very significant problem, which is manifested and has its origins within a societal, environmental and cultural context. This is generally where the similarity ends, as what constitutes as evidence and origin is very diverse amongst different stakeholders. Each individual group, institution, or public authority has their own perspective about the etiology or cause of child abuse, meaning their perspective of the consequences and method of prevention varies significantly. Hence, they are unable to establish common ground or even feel the need to utilize their specific expertise, profession, or resources in a coordinated and organized method.

Hence, although the level of involvement by different stakeholders is very high at an independent level, the lack of coordination amongst stakeholders deems their work ineffective or sometimes, even counter productive, in regards to prevention of child abuse within the community.

The fact is most evident by the perception that stakeholders lay the blame for increase in child abuse, predominantly on the public and their lack of awareness, which causes the public themselves to feel, disenchanted, confused and cynical in regards to the current approach by each independent stakeholder. Thus the lack of integration or coordination between the different stakeholder groups is reflected downstream, in regards to their relationship with the public.

The findings clearly shows stakeholders are aware of the need for better coordination, especially with DGFPS, who they feel should provide the focus and basis for an integrated approach between them, as well as between them and the public. Thus this disconnection is manifested at a micro level, within the island community, as majority of island authority and public have a very negative and dissociative relationship with the FCSCs.

While it is very clearly understood, that child abuse is a complex social issue, which holds every facet of society accountable for the cause, consequences and prevention of the problem. There is lack of clarity or empathy in regards to how the problem should be dealt with in a coordinated and cooperative manner. Institutions and stakeholders feel the main reason for lack of integration and coordination between them is due partly, because of lack of guidance and basis provided by DGFPS and FCSC within the communities. This in affect creates a situation where the targeted public receives conflicting messages, which confuses, and make them disenchanted with the prevention efforts, especially the work carried out by FCSC, who are required to provide protection for abused victims and ground level. Hence the reason, personnel in the FCSCs within

the island feels the brunt of the public anger.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE RESEARCH

The scope of the behavioral change, as understood from the research, lay not only with the general public or communities, but has to encompass and take into account all the relevant institutions that currently has a stake in the provision of services, actions, and skills required to prevent child abuse. As understood from the research, isolated & independent effort to prevent child abuse, by diverse and individual stakeholders are unable to motivate or engage the public, which renders any action, services, or dissemination of knowledge and skills, to be ineffective. Hence a communication strategy needs to be developed which acknowledge a more holistic, and multi-dimensional approach, encompassing all stakeholders and every level of child's development, within every environmental or ecological landscape they are in contact with.

The conceptual model for behavioral change (figure 1) will be used as the core structure which will form the basis, required to combine and connect varied efforts of individual stakeholders, in a method that is compassionate and responsible for an effective intervention.
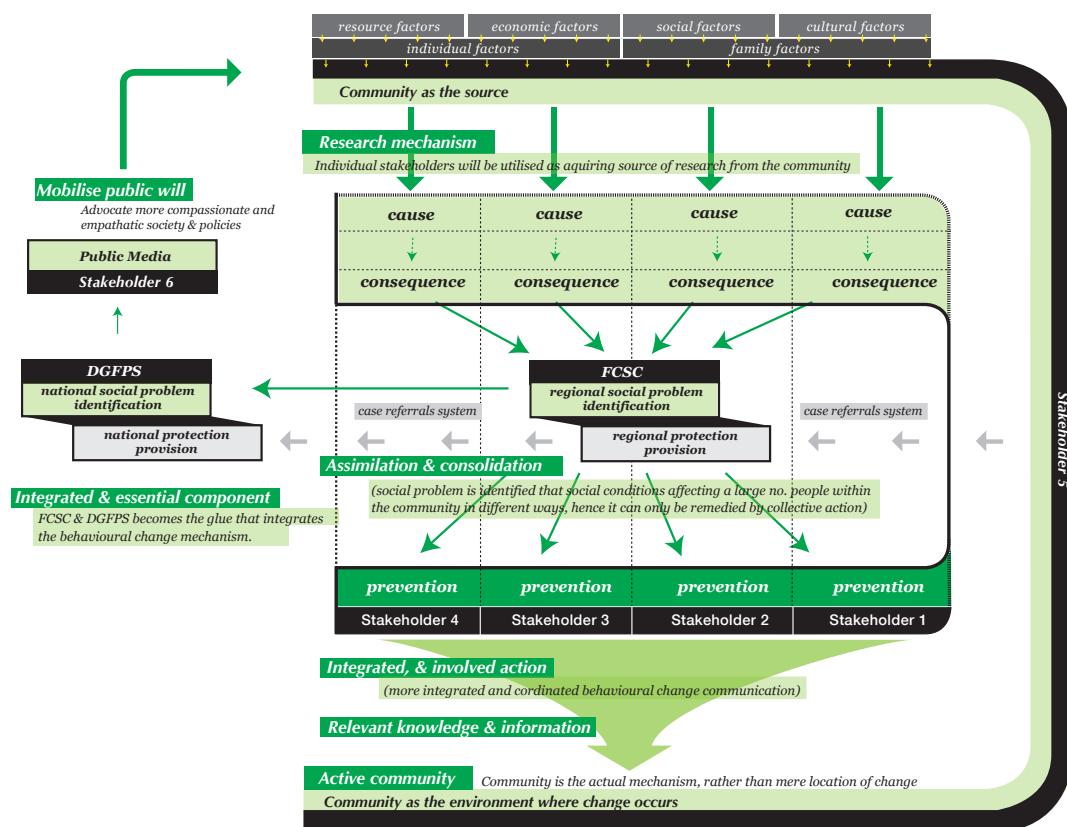

Figure 1: The conceptual model for behavioral change

Community is the source, mechanism as well as the location of change. Stakeholders are involved at every level of the process, from identification of problem through to prevention and solution in a more integrated and relevant manner. FCSC & DGFPS becomes the most essential component of integrated behavioral change process, and takes on the role of research consolidation and delivery, as well as provision of protection regionally and nationally

The behavioral change communication campaign strategy will incorporate the following actions & engagements as taken from the conceptual model developed as part of the research recommendations

- **Increase knowledge in a manner that is relevant.**

    BCC will ensure that people are given the basic information about Child abuse, child rights/ responsibilities, and preventive measure in a language or visual medium that they can understand and has relevance to their environment and requirements

- **Improve skills and sense of self-efficacy.**

    BCC programs will focus on teaching or reinforcing new skills and behaviors, which has a basis and is applicable, within their own community,

- **Stimulate community & target group/s involvement & engagement.**

    BCC will encourage community and national level discussion and partnerships, by building strategic alliances at a grassroots level. This in affect will utilize existing resources and capacity and transfer ownership of the process of behavioral change to community stakeholders.

- **Promote essential attitude change in regards to stigma & discrimination.**

    BCC will lead to appropriate attitudinal changes in regards to creating a more responsive, empathetic & compassionate community or society, who are more willing to share knowledge and information regarding issues that affect the provision of services to those who are vulnerable to and affected by child abuse.

- **Mobilize Public Will & Advocacy.**

    BCC will spur individuals and communities to demand and set the agenda for policymakers and opinion leaders toward effective approaches to reducing child abuse, within a regionally and nationally relevant and required manner, as well as highlight the importance and enable the engagement of the public at policy and advocacy level.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

LITERATURE REVIEW

The broad objective of the behavioral change is to prevent child abuse in the Maldives. Thus the objective at its core is about preventing child abuse before it occurs, although recurrence should also be considered. It is evident from the research conducted that presently the governmental funds and resources are predominantly focused at treatment level, where abuse has already occurred, i.e. after the fact, support and referral system development. There is a need to focus on identifying and preventing maltreatment before it occurs. There are numerous approaches that can be applied to stem maltreatment before it occurs, which fall into two categories:

1. Minimize identified risk factors

2. Maximize protective factors.

To clearly define and narrow down the objective it is necessary to understand and consider the multiple and overlapping risk factors which contribute to child maltreatment and abuse, and protective factors which needs to be engaged to provide a protective environment for child during different stages of his/her develop-ment. The identification of different context and targets need to consider addressing the broad range of Child abuse etiology/cause.

Considering the Child Ecosystems

To study "the child" without understanding the context is to not fully understand all of the factors that affect the child. - **Urie Bronfenbrenner**

Communication has to first and foremost acknowledge and understand the context within which the child exists. These contexts can be thought of as environments and settings that hold people, which influence and are influenced by each other. The Ecological model of human development developed by Urie Bronfen-brenner (1979) is the most comprehensive explanation of this theory, where the child is placed at the center of what can be visualized as concentric circles, with each circle representing a different context relative to proximity and relevance.
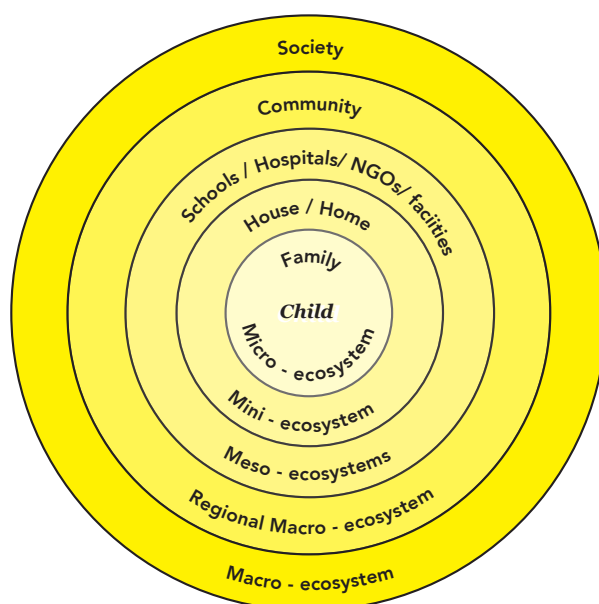

figure 2. The Ecological model of human development developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner

Child Ecosystems & Evolution of Preventive Approach

In the child abuse prevention context the ecological model of human development enable us to recognize that problems faced by child is multifaceted and requires the understanding of the interconnection an links between different levels of child's environment.

To target adequately efforts at prevention will require first a reckoning with the etiology of child abuse. This in turns cannot be understood without a formal coming to terms with the assumptions and limitation implicit in various theoretical approaches. The evolution of our understanding of child abuse etiology has dictated the preventive approaches/ theories that have come into being to solve it.

At this early point in the development of theory simple cause and effect relationships were identified. In other words, the implicit assumption in the search for etiology was that a single powerful factor could be found that would universally explain why children are abused. As several factors were identified, one by one, each gave rise to unitary theory, i.e. single factor formulation of the origins of child abuse, and each theory carried with it implications for action.

This has meant, until recently, most child abuse prevention strategies have focused on addressing child, parent and family-related factors that are associated with a greater propensity for child maltreatment, with scant attention paid to the societal and community factors that cause harm to children, or that impact on the lives of children and families (Hay & Jones 1994; Korbin & Coulton 1996; Reppucci, Woolard & Fried 1999).

As the field has developed, there has been an increasing appreciation for the variety and complexity of etiology, which has produced an approach to theory that can be described as interactive. In other words, etiology is understood not as the product of a single powerful factor, but as the consequence of interaction among several factors. The action consequence would include attention both to situation or conditions that produce stress.

	ETIOLOGY OF CHILD ABUSE THEORIES	PREVENTIVE THEORIES OF CHILD ABUSE
Micro ecosystem	**Psychodynamic Theory** Parental psychological characteristics are considered the primary determinants of child abuse, and must be understood in order for a treatment to take place	**Indicative Approach** Individual based prevention theory, focused on parents, with a view that parents who abuse their children are "ill", and require professional intervention and cure. Hence this has meant Child abuse is focused soley on Tertiary prevention; or prevention that are geared towards preventing further maltreatment, i.e. Indicative Prevention
Mini ecosysteml	**Learning Theory** Child abuse is a behaviour learned from the experience of having been or witness to abuse	**Secondary Approach** or selective prevention is focused on families at high risk of maltreatment to alleviate conditions associated with the problem. This approach is geared for before the fact, where family support activities/ education are available to individuals identified as at risk
Meso ecosystem	**Environmental Theory** Child abuse is caused by lack of access to proper protective resources as well as risk factor within the environment or at community level	**Primary Approach** Environmental theory professes the need for universal approach where the target is the community itself. Preventive intervention is geared toward changing attitudes, perceptions, which can strengthen protective factors within the community
Macro ecosystem	**Ecological Theory** Recognition of the complex, multidimensional nature of child abuse and neglect A more holistic conceptualization of cause and effect that operates at different levels (individual, family, society) and with different modes of etiology for different children and families. Conceptualisation of child maltreatment as a 'social psychological phenomenon' where maltreatment is determined by the mutual influences of the individual child or parent, family, local community, and the wider culture or society.	**Primary Approach** Targets include the general public & civil society, including public institutions which have an vested interest in the health & wellbeing of the society. Universal approach & Holistic approach where the soceity as a whole is required to participate and take responsibility for the well being of furutre generation.

Table 1. Etiology of child Abuse & development of preventive approach within the ecological context.

it is in what has come to be called ecologic theory that major strides have been made in understanding and dealing with the interrelationships among attributes of child parents, family and social setting. Child abuse is seen in this theoretical context as a symptom of disturbances in a complex ecosystem with many interacting variables.

The interaction of risk and protective factors occurs at each stage of child development and within each ecological level (that is, it is affected by a child or parent's internal characteristics, aspects of the family, and of the wider social environment) (Kirby & Fraser 1997).

The degree of influence of these ecosystems on a child changes with age, in other words, with growth and development. Fig. 3 shows this trend from fetal to the neonatal-infantile, and to early childhood and school periods.
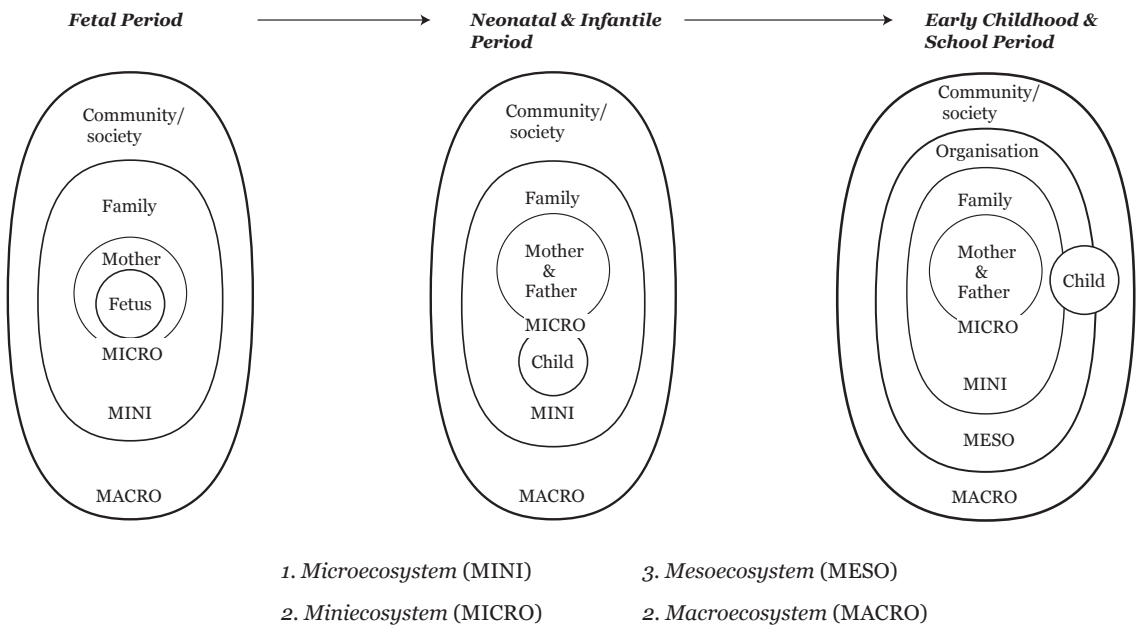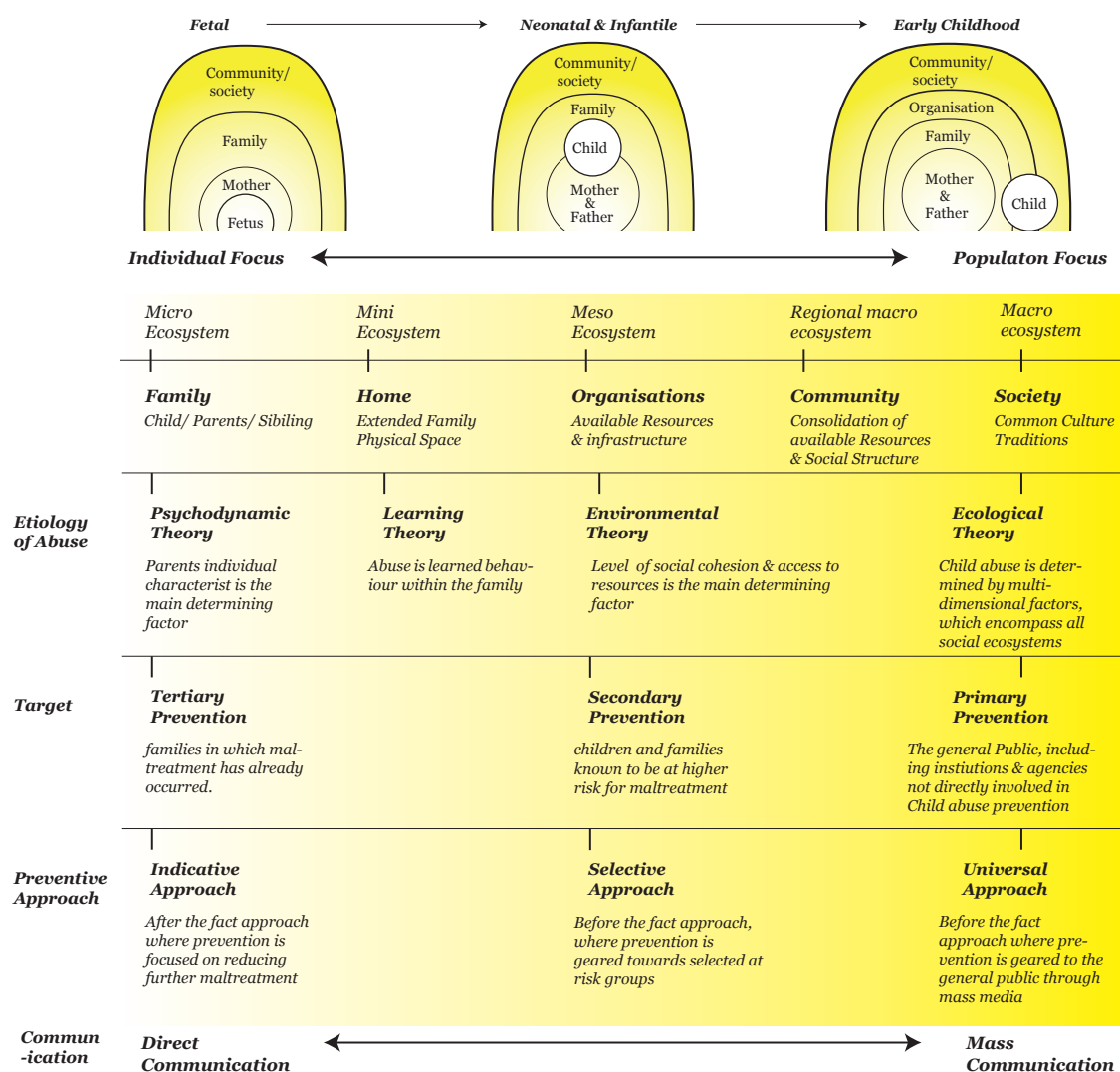

1. *Microecosystem* (MINI)   3. *Mesoecosystem* (MESO)

2. *Miniecosystem* (MICRO)   2. *Macroecosystem* (MACRO)

figure 3: The interaction between the child & different ecoystem during different stages of development

The figure shows that the prioritization and the level of interaction between the child and different ecosystems changes as he/her progress during different level of development. Hence development stages of the child have to be considered within the overall development of a communication strategy to prevent child abuse.

The developmental theory profess the need for age appropriate communication at every level, and risk and protective factors which are important within different stages of child's development.

CONCLUSION

Within the primary premise of preventing child abuse, there are 2 core approaches, which is to minimize risk and maximize resilience to child abuse. Throughout history, our understanding of the etiology of child maltreatment and abuse as evolved considerably, meaning that factors that contributes to child maltreatment and abuse and protective factors which needs to engaged to provide a protective environment has progressed considerably, from individual perspective to a much more multifaceted and broader ecological perspective. Different level of the ecosystems that a child is in contact with needs to be considered, as well as the level of contact with each of these ecosystems, at different stage of the child growth, from fetus to young adult. Preventive theory has thus evolved with our progressive understanding of the etiology of child abuse, from a single factor approach focused on the individual and family, towards a more holistic and multifaceted approach, which acknowledges the boarder social setting.

The model above summarizes different preventive approaches of minimizing risk and maximizing resilience of child maltreatment and abuse in relation to our evolving understanding of the etiology of child maltreatment and abuse. The development of the communication strategy has to acknowledge every facet of our ecosystem from the "micro" to the "macro", which contributes towards a child being maltreated and abused. This also means a more holistic preventive approach is required which utilizes multiple approaches targeting multiple target groups from the individual to the society as a whole, to enable an effective and sustainable prevention of child maltreatment and abuse in the Maldives.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Prevention typically consists of methods or activities that seek to reduce or deter specific or predictable problems, protect the current state of well-being, or promote desired outcomes or behaviors (adapted from Bloom, 1996). Within the context of maltreatment and child abuse, prevention has commonly been classified into three main levels of services; primary prevention programs, which can be directed at the general population (universal); secondary prevention programs, which are targeted to individuals or families in which maltreatment is more likely (high risk); and tertiary prevention programs, targeted toward families in which abuse has already occurred (indicated). Each of the preventive approach is classified in relation to varying degree of risk faced by the target groups. The level of risk in relation to protective factors would seem to be the most important determinate of the likelihood of the child being abused, and hence resilience through either minimizing identified risk factors or maximizing identified protective factors would stem maltreatment and abuse.
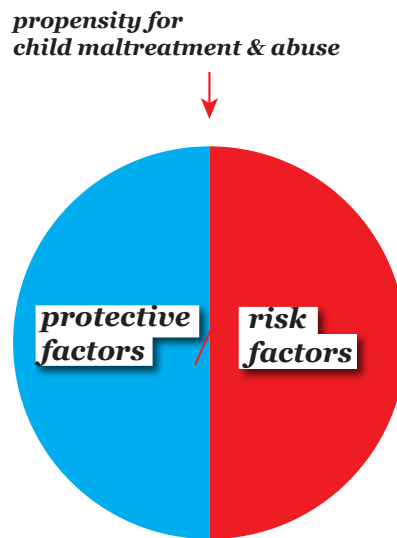
Figure 4. Model showing the relationship between risk factors & protective factors as a determinant of child abuse.

The interaction of risk and protective factors occurs at each stage of child development and within each ecological level, that is, it is affected by a child or parent's internal characteristics, aspects of the family, and of the wider social environment
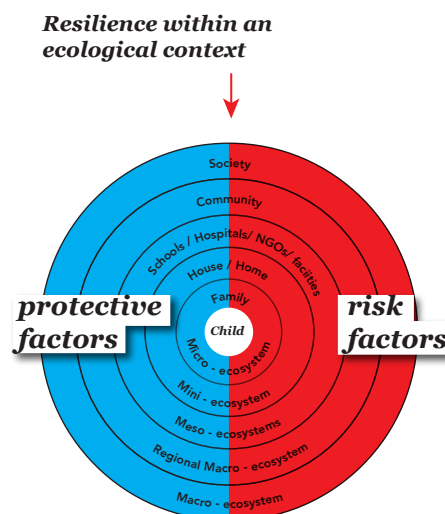
Figure 5. Model showing the interaction of risk & protective factors within different ecologcal level

The core of any prevention strategy should be, thus to increase protective factors thereby reducing risk factors. The initiative have to take a problem focused approach, where the objective is to prevent social ills, and a reduce risk, and promote a positive, life enhancing strategy, such as good interpersonal relationships, appropriate parenting and pro-child polices.

> *"The term 'child abuse prevention' may also tend to focus attention on the problems of individual parents or families, without adequate recognition of the connection between individuals' problems and the influence of the wider social context (NSW Child Protection Council 1997). Thus, any models framed around prevention without promotion may be considered to offer a somewhat restrictive means to address social ills" - (NSW Child Protection Council 1995).*

Thus a combination, highlighting the risk (negatives) as well as the capabilities (positives) within the community is important in maximizing resilience within the core objective of the communication strategy.
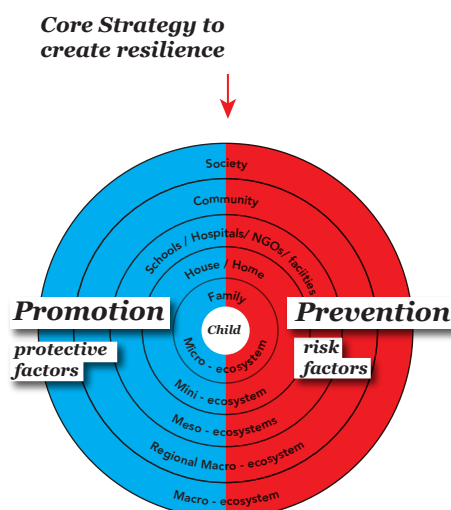

Figure 6. Model showing core strategy of creating a child abuse resilient community

Although risk factors needs to be highlighted, research has shown that majority of focus should be applied on promoting strengths and capabilities within each ecological system that child interact with, rather than focus on the problem. A focus on empowering child, and family's potential for change rather than on their problem, and attempting to engage family members in a truly cooperative venture to find solution to their issues has shown to be more effective. Thus communication strategy should predominantly focus on taking time to identify strengths and capabilities within each ecological system, build on them, and attempt to develop a true collaborative partnerships between them.

Within the context of Maldives, which has highly dispersed island population, with 200 inhabited islands, each community will have a very distinctive protective to risk ratio. As each community will have very diverse demographic profile, resource capabilities, cultural norms and etc.
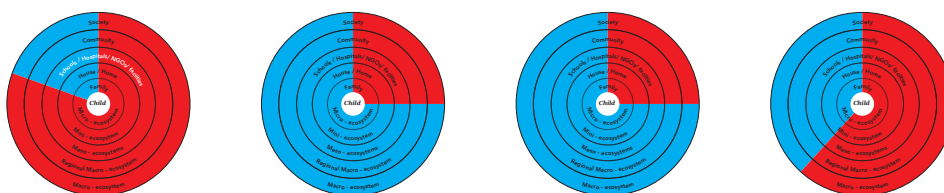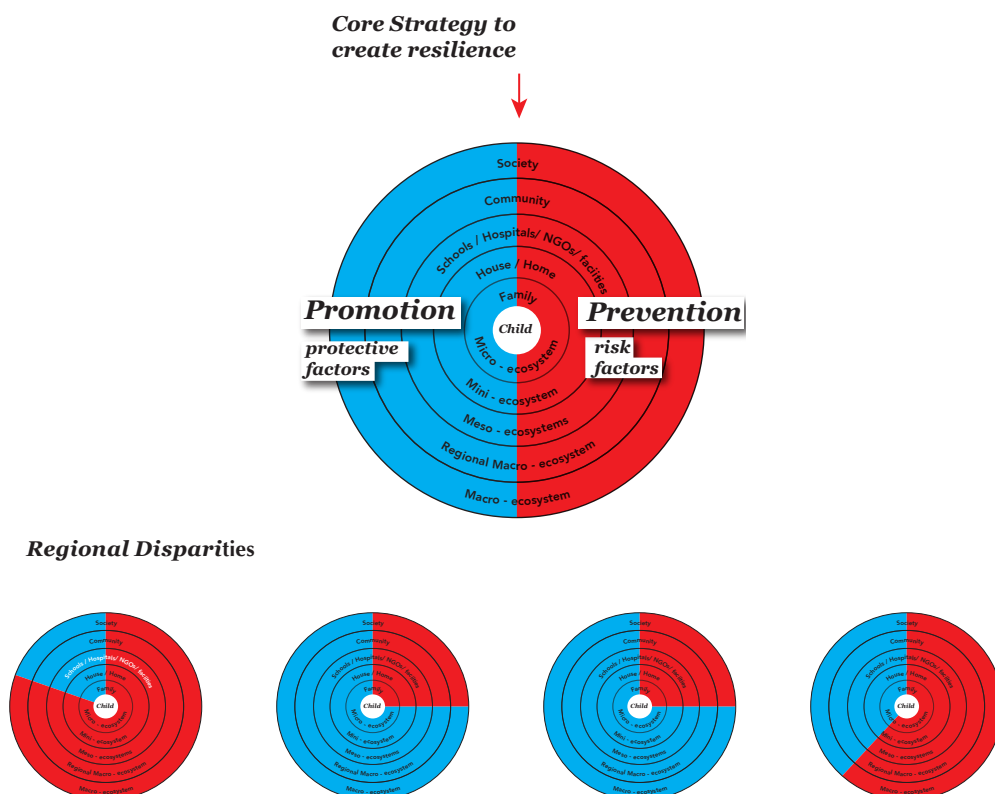

Figure 7. Model showing how ratio between protective and risk factor vary within different communities

This would mean the communication strategy has to acknowledge the diversity of risk and capabilities within an island and regional level in order for the overall strategy to work effectively in a relevant manner. A level of engagement at island level needs to be initiated to allow communities to take responsibility and hence engage communal participation to prevent child abuse, in a manner that's best suited to individual communities.

The overall objective of the communitcation campaign should be to facilitate the population of Maldives to be more informed, knowledgeable and aware of the different etiological & consequence of child maltreatment & abuse as well as the risk factors that exists within distinctive communities they inhabit, to enable them to identify & utilize resources and capacities which are accessible to them, to prevent the occurrence, individually, at family level, organizational or institutional level communal level and a national level. The way to achieve the overall objective is:

>   *"To empower, strengthen and sustain, national protective capacity and prevention of risk*
>
>   *within each ecological level of society, a child is in contact with during his/her development,*
>
>   *in order to maximize resilience to child maltreatment & abuse.*

CAMPAIGN VALUES
& CRITERIA

COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

A systematic approach to achieve the communication strategy will be developed in the form of a communication campaign. A set of campaign values and criteria, would be set to enable diverse stakeholders, target audience, and approaches to be, utilized and involved to acquire consolidation, consistency in achieving the communication strategy

Communication Campaign Values

The communication campaign will uphold certain values & principles, to enable it to maintain focus, relevance to the target audiences, and participants, within a coherent and sustainable manner. The core values will also enable the campaign to gain a distinctive selling proposition, or a distinctive identity for the campaign, to enable, engagement and sustained involvement on the part of diverse group of stakeholders who are integral in the implementation of the campaign.

- **Valuing Children**

  The campaign will seek every opportunity for collaboration & collective leadership, knowledge and materials

- **Collaborate**

  The campaign will seek every opportunity for collaboration & collective leadership, knowledge and materials with individuals, & organization that share the values and objectives of the campaign.

- **Diversity & Respect**

  Embrace & promote diversity in all aspects of the campaign, from the organizations, & stakeholders who are engaged in the implementation, to the ideas & solutions that would be developed in support of the campaign strategy.

  The campaign will provide a way in which people from different communities, cultures, ideas, beliefs, and opinions are respected.

- **Research based**

  The campaign will work towards disseminating strong targeted, messages based on sound research, that effectively explains the issues, promote solution affirms hope for prevention & change the public will, in a distinctive and relevant manner

Communication Campaign Criteria

To enable the communication strategy to be implemented in a manner that is consistent with the overall objective, certain communication criteria's or conditions are defined. These criterions will enable the all communication mediums developed as part of the communication plan to acquire a consistent identity, have relevance to the target audience & withhold the integrity of the overall campaign. All communications in relation to the campaign should encompass part of, or preferably the whole of these criterions. They hence, set the tone and identity of the overall campaign, and will guide the development and design of the commu¬nication mediums, which will become part of the communication plan.

- **Educational**

  Information presented within the medium should be designed in a manner that is comprehensible and educationally beneficial to the target public, as well as based on sound research, which has relevance to the target audience

- **Interactive or Collaborative**

  The communication mediums should facilitate active participation by target pub¬lics to interact with each other, different groups within the community, as well as the medium itself.

- **Useful & Sustainability**

  The communication medium should motivate the target publics to be highly in¬volved, and allow what is communicated to have long term and continual benefit, educationally, physically or emotionally.

- **Personal & Regional**

  What is communicated should be personally beneficial to the individual within the targeted groups and every developmental stage of the child, and it should have regionally specific relevance.
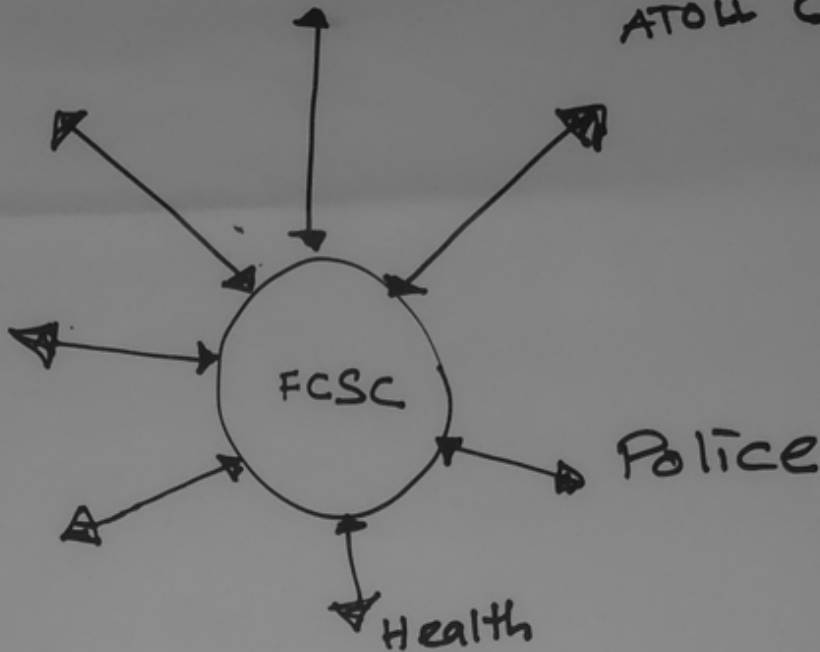
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ISLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION   ATOLL COUNCIL

NGOs

FCSC

Police

Court

Health

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COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN PLAN

COMMUNICATION PLAN

To achieve the communication strategy as outlined a communication plan is developed to coordinate and integrate the communication tools that would be developed as part of the overall campaign, in to a seamless program that would maximize the impact on the target audiences.

The communication plan will have 3 distinctive linear phases, with very specific objectives, working to¬wards creating a social and physical protective capacity infrastructure involving and integrating every ecological level within the society as whole, as well as regionally.

phase 1
Prepare the Ground

phase 2
Planting the Seed

Figure 10. figure showing the conceptual basis for the development of a communication plan

Each phase within the overall communication plan will have a very specific objective, culminating in trans-forming every level of society, to a network and integrated capacity groups, who can actively participate in the promotion and prevention of child maltreatment and abuse. Within each phase there will be distinctive components or stages, which will work towards realizing the specific objectives of the particular phase, consolidating as a whole towards achieving the communication strategy
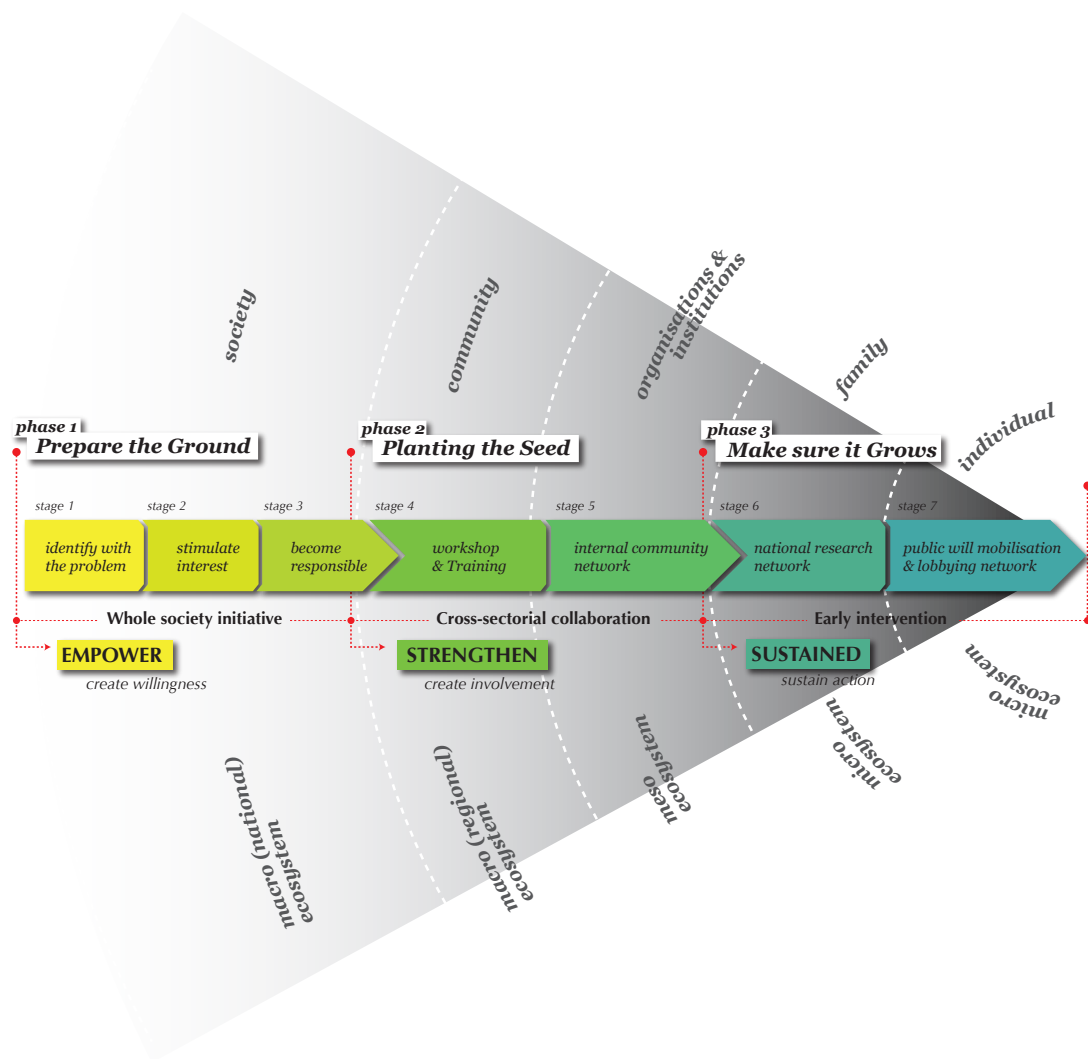
Communication Plan Model

Figure 11. The comprehensive Communication Plan model for behavioral change campaign to prevent child maltreatment & abuse.

The model shows the linear process the communication plan will follow to achieve the communication strategy.

- **Ecological perspective**

  Each phase through a process of different stages will focus on involving, particular ecological level within the society, culminating in the end towards the core, i.e. the individual.

- **Purpose orientated**

  Each phases has a very distinctive objective that would pave the way for more sustainable and relevant promotion and preventive intervention, involving every facet & ecological level of society.

- **Approach orientated**

  Each phase will have a distinctive prevention & promotion approach in relation to the segment of the ecology the phase targets.

The three phases will accomplish very distinctive objective through which the sustainable communication network conceptualized in the initial research recommendation would be accomplished.
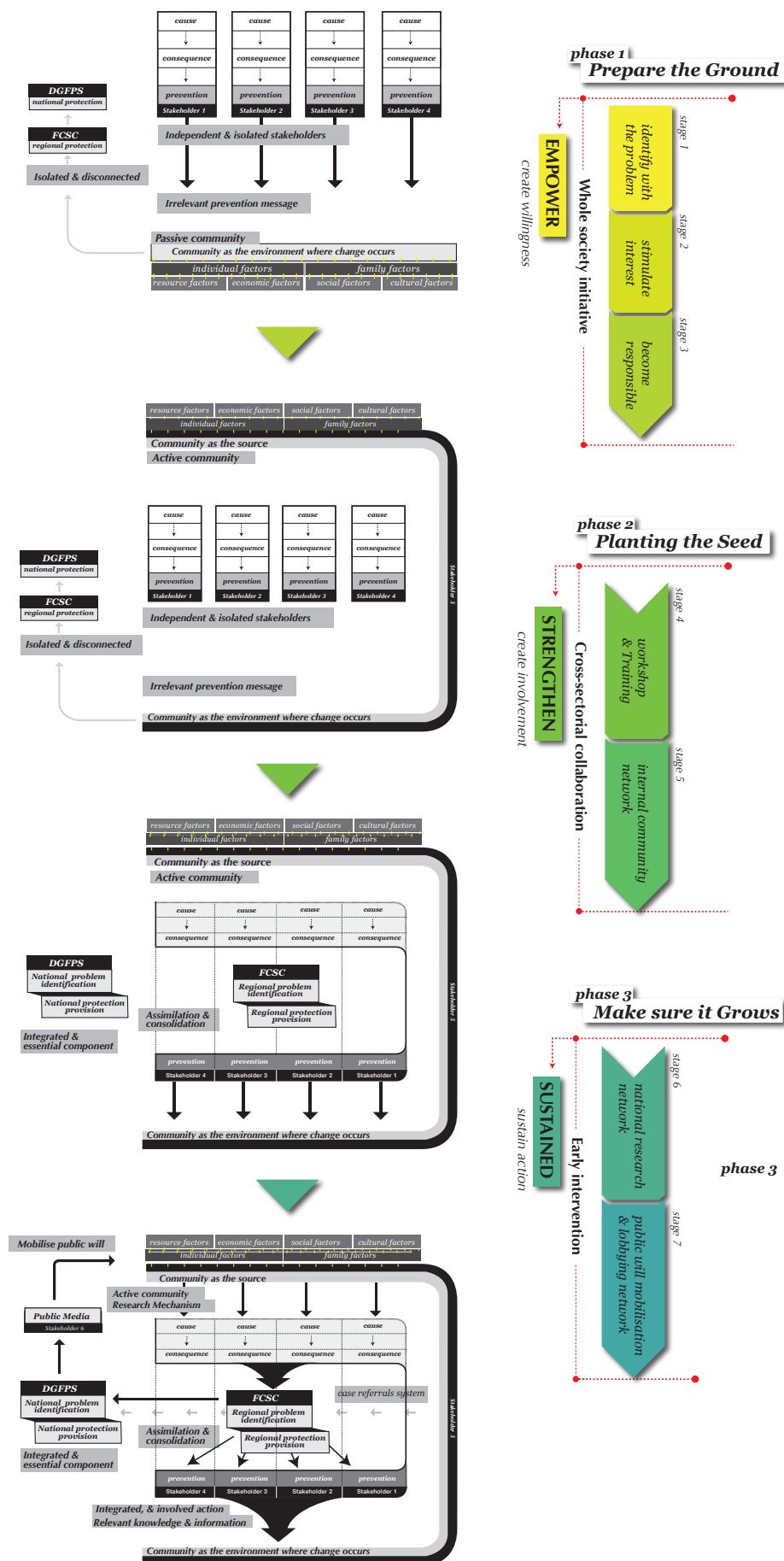
Figure 12 The Communication plan phases will achieve the development of the sustainable communication network as proposed in the research findings recommendation

Phase 1 Prepare the Ground/ Empower

The 1st Phase will be involved in preparing the ground before the seed of knowledge can be planted. The main objective being to empower the society as a whole to become responsible and actively involved in the prevention of child abuse. To enable them to understand the direct and indirect problem associated with child abuse and how it effects the wellbeing of every facet of society, not just individuals.

Outcome

Target populations feels that its is their reponsibillity as specfic communities to prevent child abuse, and are more willing to participate in preventive activities and actions, instigated in the proceeding phases.

Phase 2 Planting the Seed

The 2nd Phase will enable community groups, public & private institutions, regional wise, to share information and resources to help identify social problems and vunerabilities which cause child abuse, and develop actions, and mediums to prevent the problems. Internal community network of highly involved cross sectorial groups with very specific core competence related to prevention and promotion of child maltreatment and buse will be identified, and trained.

Outcome

The outcome of this phase to enable cross sectorial involvement in a regional level, to collaborate in any preventive & promotional measures implemented, to gain effective and efficient use of resources available and messages relevant.

Phase 3 Make sure it Grows

The 3rd phase woud enable the whole regional cross sectorial network to be sustained, by enhancing its reach nationally, and with the implementation of national research mechanism. The research mechanism will enable the regional level information and activities to be shared between regions, as well as enable regions to take advantage of national level initiatives in a more regionally specific and relevant manner.

The third phase will also allow public mobilisation to be gained, for regional and national level policy implementation, though lobbying and pressure. This will enable individual needs to be voiced and become the force to change laws and regulation to protect chilldren, regional wise as well as national wise.

Outcome

A sustainable ccommunication network to prevent child maltreatment and abuse, which is regionally specifc and based on sound research will be established.

Causes:

~~Over population - contributing factor~~ :

Values & Beliefs of individuals and the community as a whole — immoral traditions.

Lack of awareness. — child rights.
          — effects of child abuse.
          — alternative measures

Inadequacies in laws & regulations.

- Contributing factors : Congestion, economic standard, access to services, access to information, lack of adequate resources, media influence.

Consequences.

high population of disturbed individuals.
cycle of abuse — victims becoming perpetrators.
high demand for rehabilitation and treatment services.
increase in criminal activities.
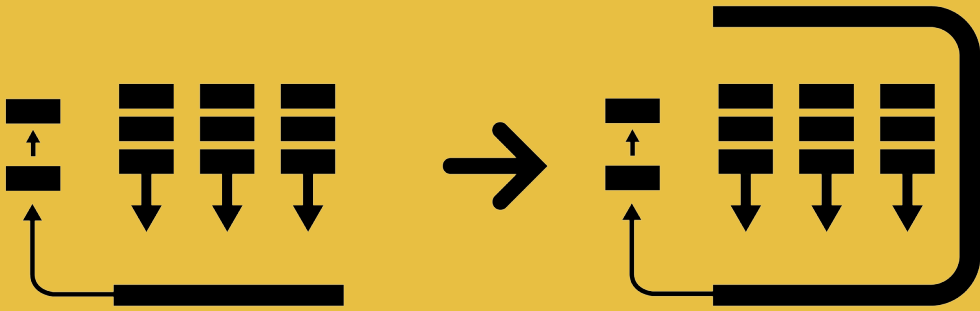labelling and stigmatization of individuals and families, communities, etc.

phase 1
Prepare the Ground

Empower

PHASE 1: *Empower*

OBJECTIVE

The main objective being to empower the society as a whole to acknowledge their responsibility as a community in regards to the existence of child abuse and its prevalence, and motivate community level involvement and willingness to participate in the the prevention of risks, and promotion of safety factors.
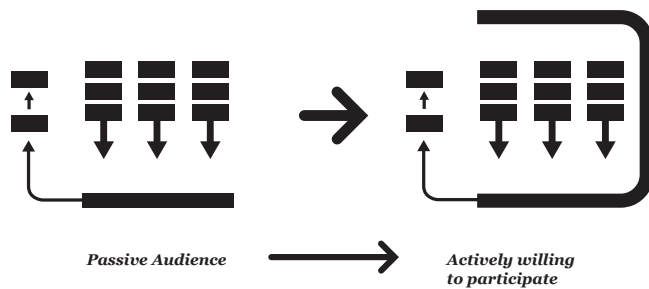

Passive Audience → *Actively willing to participate*

Figure 13: Communication plan, phase 1: Empower

For the transformation to occur, this phase will be divided in to 3 distinctive stages, each stage working towards achieving the end objective of transforming the publics into active capacities, (as shown in *figure 12*).
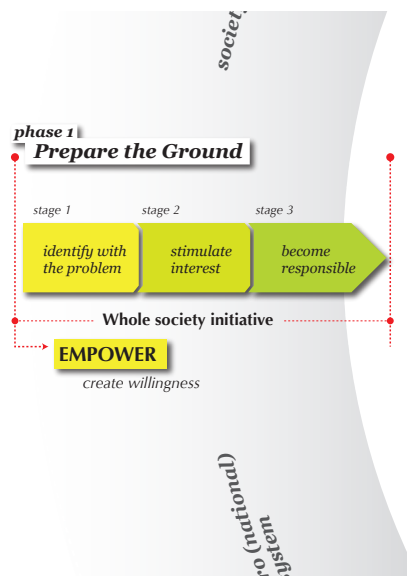

Figure 14: Communication plan, phase 1: Transformation stages
The model shows the 3 distinctive stages, which will enable the transformation.

Stage 1 involves the public identifying with the different types & causes of child maltreatment & abuse, within the Maldivian context. Stage 2 instigates and stimulates interest within the publics to enable them to understand different perspective in regards to causes and consequences of child abuse. Stage 3 involves publics taking a responsibility role within their community, by identifying their core competence and skillset in regards to prevention of risk & promotion of safety measures in regards to becoming a resilent to child abuse.

PHASE 1/ STAGE A

Identify with the problem

OBJECTIVE

The aim of stage (a) is in 4 folds, culminating generally in enabling society to put a greater emphasis on the wellbeing of the children and raise the value society place on them.

1. The importance of children to the wellbeing of society

Enable the society as a whole to understand the importance of children being nurtured in a safe and nurturing environment to enable them to reach their full potential.

2. The diversity of child abuse

Enable the larger population to acquire knowledge regarding different types of child abuse & maltreatment, as well as their cause and consequences generally to society

3. The level of prevalence in our society

Enable the larger population to have a realistic perspective of child maltreatment & abuse prevalence

Key message

" Every child deserved to be cherished, and nurtured for the wellbeing of the society".

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for the stage (a) will be the population as a whole, as the intention is enable the population to understand and empathize with the problem, so that the whole population understands, the risks of child abuse and its effects on society. Also at the initial stage of the campaign, we want to create a sense empathy in regards to the importance of protecting children, as well as enable the population to identify with the campaign at a national level.

THE APPROACH

The initial stage will utilise a universal approach to communication, which is population wide effort whereby mass communication mediums will be used to fulfill the objectives as outlined. A universal focused approach would raise the awareness of the general public, service providers, and decision-makers about the scope and problems associated with child maltreatment.

THE PRODUCT

The product developed for this particular stage, will strive to educate the general public regarding the diversity of abuse, cause & consequence which are particularly relevant to the Maldives a whole, hence enable them to understand and comprehend the risks associated with child abuse, as an individual and as a nation. All communication will be designed, incorporating the campaign identity as much as possible; to enable the public to become familiar with the visual identity as well as help them to identify the messages that will become part of the overall campaign as a coherent and consistent whole. These products will include public service announcement Radio & TV and Facts & figure Poster and Leaflets about the prevalence, as well as leaflets about different types of child abuse and its consequences.

PHASE 1/ STAGE C

Become Responsible

OBJECTIVE

The Stage (c), is the final stage of the "Empowering phase", where each formal and informal institutions or group within society will start to identify themselves as playing an integral role in the provision of protection and reduction of risk from child maltreatment and abuse.

The outcome at the end of this phase, would be that each formal and informal group within society will have an understanding of their role within the societal preventive mechanism, and become motivated to establish a normative cultural context capable of fistering collective responsibility for child maltreatment.

Key message

"*Each and everyone in a society has a integral role in protecting our children*

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target groups at the stage will be confined to specific groups and public and private institutions which exists within the island currently. These groups would include generic formal and informal groups, who already has and fulfills a very distinctive purpose within the community and represent majority of the demographics which exists in each community

THE APPROACH

The initial stage will utilise a universal approach to communication, focused on creating awareness of the general public, the role and strengths of different service providers, and decision-makers in the preventive mechanism of protecting and reducing risk of child maltreatment and abuse.

THE PRODUCT

The products would be mainstream mass media, focused on making roles and physical resources available within communities more visible, and tangible within the context of child abuse prevention. The main product for this phase would be the campaign website and Newsletter, which will become the core medium of communication for the rest of the campaign.
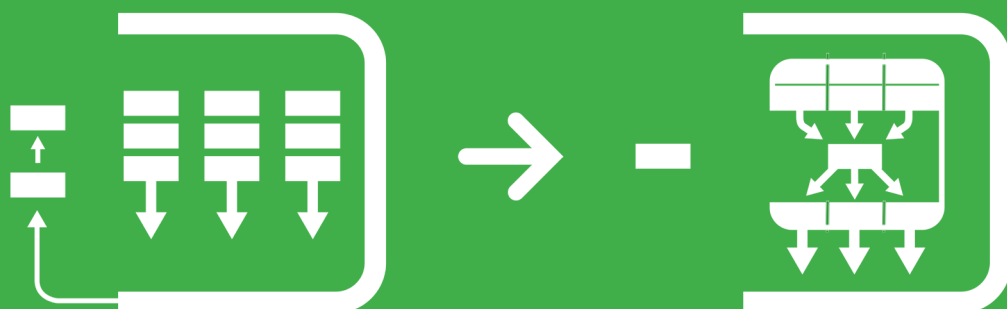
phase 2
Planting the Seed

Strengthen

PHASE 2: *Strengthen*

OBJECTIVE

To enable cross - sectorial involvement & collaboration between private & public institutions and groups at regional level, who are both directly & indirectly involved currently with children. The objective is to enable these groups to consolidate together to share information & resources to prevent risks which perpetuate child abuse & maltreatment within their community, and promotion of safety factors that are relevant, practical & realistic within the community.
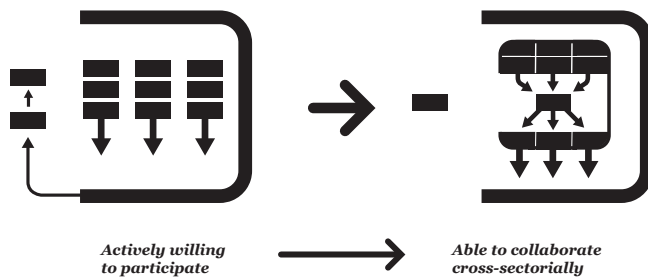

Actively willing to participate → Able to collaborate cross-sectorially

Figure 15: Communication plan, phase 2: Transformation model
The model shows transformation of the individual capacity groups into a cohesive whole, a network.

In the previous phase the capacities & roles were identified. With the phase 2, the transformation of these groups into functional entities, will take place, where the role of each group will become functional entities where the role of each group will become clear, and distinct within the prevention & promotion context, so that they work as a cohesive network to make their community resilient.
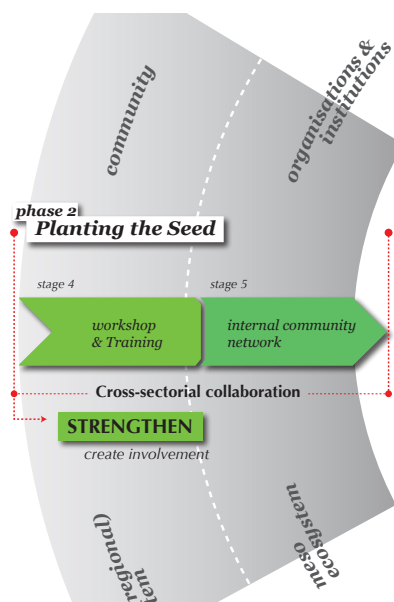

Figure 16 Communication plan, phase 2: Stages
The model shows the 2 distinctive stages, which will enable the transformation.

First stage (d) will work towards defining the roles of each specific capacity groups individually, through workshops and training conducted at regional level as well as national level. The second stage (e) will strengthen these individual groups by linking them together as a cohesive whole, working towards the a specific objective of creating a resilient community to child abuse & maltreatment

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PHASE 2/ STAGE D

Capacity Strengthening & Skill Training Workshops

OBJECTIVE

The aim of stage (d) is to conduct extensive training and programs designed for the key stakeholders identified in the previous stage to strengthen community capacity by expanding their skill base and resources which would enable them to provide collective action for child maltreatment

Specific activities & programs will be designed and implemented to sustain active participation and coordination between different independent groups, to strengthen further understanding and collaboration in their individual efforts and activities related to prevention of child maltreatment and abuse.

Key message

" Strengthen and enhance our individual capacity"

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this particular stage of phase 2, will be previously identified members who have very specific roles within the community. The programs designed will be locally based and implemented locally by the participants from each groups. The publics within each community will be encouraged to associate with existing institution and groups, in order that they get the opportunity to participate in the activities and training workshops conducted.

THE APPROACH

The initial stage will utilise selective approach to communication, where the activities related to the phase will be exclusive to specific groups within the community, which currently active in the prevention of child abuse and provision of child wellbeing. The effort will be focused predominately within specific communities and community groups and institutions.

THE **PRODUCT**

The products developed for this particular stage, be in the form of workshops, programs and activities designed to sustain their involvement during every stage of child abuse prevention within each community. These programs will initially be conducted and initiated by specialists in specific fields related to core role of each institution or community group in the prevention of child abuse and maltreatment. After which specialist trainers and leaders will be identified and specially trained within the local communities to sustain the programs and activities in the future. Each program or activity although standardised for all island communities, will enable identification and implementation of regionally specific informations and solutions required to reduce the risk of child abuse and promote protective factors, specific to their community.

The Regional Newsletter, implemented by each community will act as the main medium which would allow work done within the workshops and training to be communicated widely amongst the general public within the community as well as enable information about the different workshops and skill training activities cond

PHASE 2/ STAGE E

Internal Community Network

OBJECTIVE

The aim of stage (e) is to establish a internal community infrastructure which would enable the development of a collaborative network between different groups within each community who play an integral role the child abuse prevention mechanism. The idea is at the stage to strengthen cross-sectorial engagement to enable information and knowledge sharing between different capacity groups to develop a proactive community network to prevent child abuse at community level.

Key message

" Share your Strengths and expertise to make community more resilent"

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this particular stage of phase 2, will be previously identified members who have very specific roles within the community. The programs designed will be locally based and implemented locally by the participants from each groups. The publics within each community will be encouraged to associate with existing institution and groups, in order that they get the opportunity to participate in the activities and training workshops conducted.
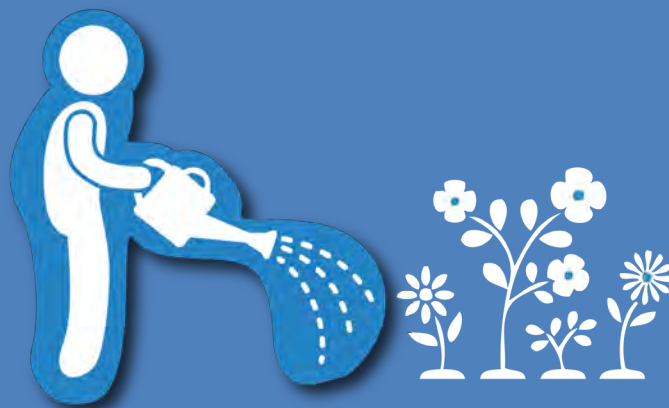
THE APPROACH

This stage will continue to utilise selective approach to communication, where the activities related to the phase will be exclusive to specific groups within the community, who are currently active in the prevention of child abuse and provision of child related services. The effort will be focused predominately within in clearly defined community level groups and institutions.
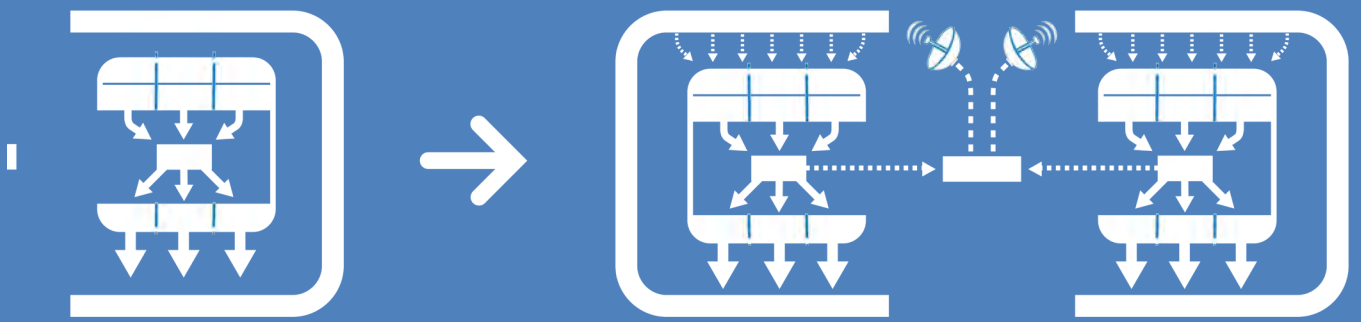
THE PRODUCT

The products developed for this particular stage, will be discussion based forums or initiatives coordinated by a representative or focal point from each defined institution or community group within the community. The product developed at this stage will strive to create a child abuse resilient community, by developing products and services that would enable the community to work as a cohesive whole in collaboration at every stage of the campaign. Most of the products within this stage will be pre-designed, and templates will be given to the FCSC (or chosen focal point institution), association in order to implement it locally.

phase 3
Make sure it Grows

Enhance

PHASE 3: *Enhance*

OBJECTIVE

To enable the whole regional cross sectorial network to be sustained, by enhancing its reach nationally, and with the implementation of national research mechanism. The research mechanism will enable the regional level information and activities to be shared nationally, as well as enable regions to take advantage of national level initiatives in a relevant & practical manner.

The third phase will also allow public mobilisation to be gained, for regional and national level policy implementation, though lobbying.
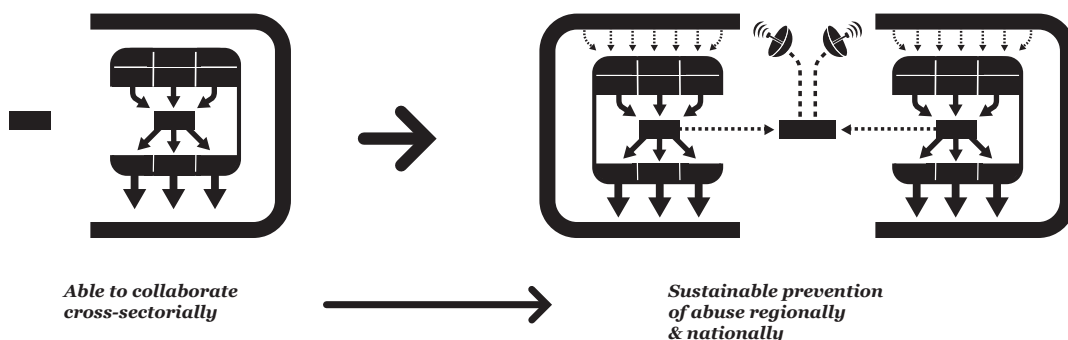

Able to collaborate cross-sectorially

Sustainable prevention of abuse regionally & nationally

Figure 17: Communication plan, phase 3: Transformation model
The model shows transformation of the individual capacity groups into a cohesive whole, a network.

In the previous phase communities internal capacities were developed to enable them to become active participants and collaborators in an effort to build an independent child abuse resilient communities. The last phase The last phase of the communication plan, is to enable these independent communities to reach outside their internal communities to build a network of communities that would be able to share and collaborate in an effort lobby and gain public support for regional and national issues related to child protection and child abuse risk prevention
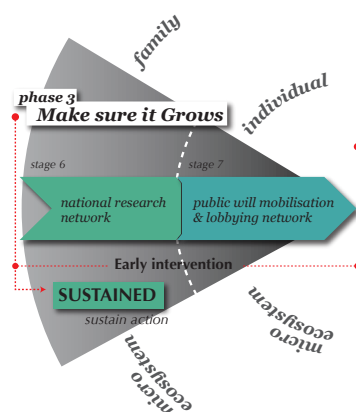

Figure 18: Communication plan, phase 2: Stages
The model shows the 2 distinctive stages, which will enable the transformation.

As shown in *Figure 38*, the transformation is from active internal community network to national networks which collaborate internally as well as nationally, to gain wider access and resources to effect change within community as well as individually.

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PHASE 3/ STAGE F

Regional Research Network

OBJECTIVE

The Stage (f), is the first stage of the final phase, which would pave the way for sustaining the mechanism of prevention implemented in the communication campaign. The objective of the 1st stage is to enable a research mechanism be implemented to enable l data and information to be continually to be sourced, regarding issues related to the cause and consequences of child abuse & maltreatment, inorder that the pre-vention mechanism allocated resources and effort in a more targeted and relevant manner.

The outcome at the end of this phase, would be that each formal and informal group within society will have an understanding of their role within the societal preventive mechanism

Key message

" *Community is the source of information and the mechanism for change.*"

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target groups at the stage will be confined to specific groups and public and private institutions which exists within the island currently. These groups would include generic formal and informal groups, who already has and fulfills a very distinctive purpose within the community and represent majority of the de-mographics which exists in each community. Certain institutions will have a greater focus on sourcing data, while others in consolidation and analysis, as well as sharing and communication..

THE PRODUCT

There would be utilisation of existing tools, as well as development of new tools to source data and informa-tion from different institutions and target groups. As intrusion of privacy is very sensitive issues in regards to child abuse and maltreatment, sourcing information voluntarily or otherwise, which are truthful or effective can be difficult. Hence existing data's, which are continually sourced by different institutions currently, can be acquired specifically for the puspose of identifying child abuse and maltreatment prevalence and cause, as well as new methods and tools to acquire new data more specifically related to the context in question.

PHASE 3/ STAGE G

Public Mobilisatinon and Public Will Network

OBJECTIVE

TheStage (g), is the final stage the campaign, where the objective is to enable children, parents, families, organisations, communities, and societies to gain lobbying power, and gain critical mass to effect change at policy level regionally and nationally.

The outcome at the end of this phase, would be a self generating mechanism which works from the bottom up to effect change at a societal as well as global level.

Key message

" Every individual in the community as the voice to effect change society"

TARGET AUDIENCE

The mediums that are being developed at regional, and community level, would be made available and given wider exposure to targets at national level, including public institutions, most importantly Parliament members, as well as relevant government institution, which has a stake in child protection and wellbeing.

THE APPROACH

The approach is a universal approach, where mainstream communication would be utilised to share information and views expressed at independent community level to a broader national level audience which would include the general population, but also national level government authorities and public institutions. This approach will empower small groups and even individuals to gain critical mass nationally, to lobby to change laws and regulations required to protect children to suite modern context continually.

THE PRODUCT

The products would be mainstream similar to media used in the initial phase "Identify with the Problem", with more concentration of mediums with national level coverage, including, Radio & Newspaper. A standard template would be developed which can be continually utilised to feature information from different community groups, and regions, in order to allow them gain national coverage.