SONEVA FOUNDATION

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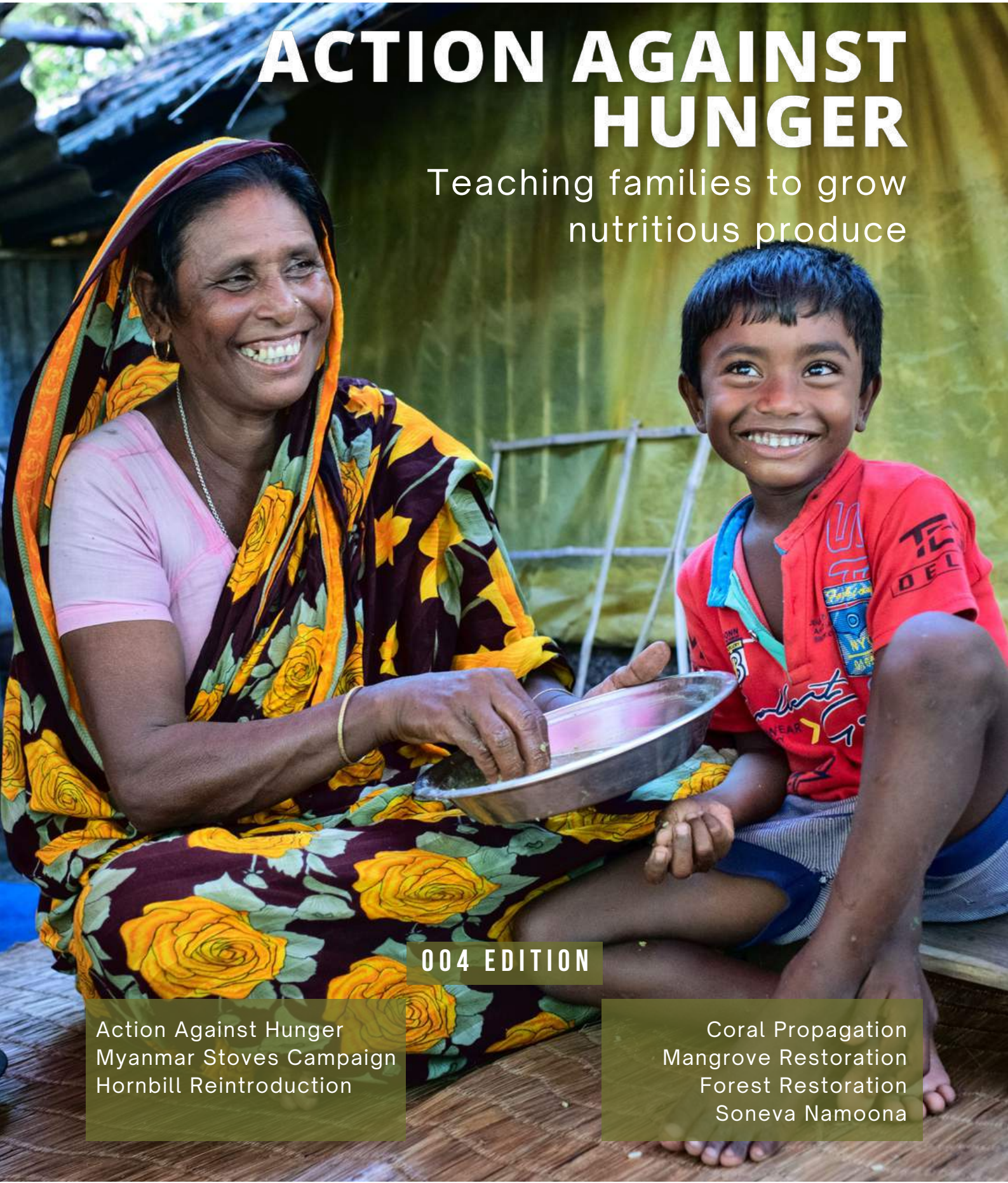

ACTION AGAINST HUNGER

Teaching families to grow nutritious produce

004 EDITION

Action Against Hunger
Myanmar Stoves Campaign
Hornbill Reintroduction

Coral Propagation
Mangrove Restoration
Forest Restoration
Soneva Namoona

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Around the world, 150 million children are missing out on meals and essential health and nutrition services. Childhood malnutrition is a potentially fatal health condition.

The Soneva Foundation works with Action Against Hunger to fight childhood hunger and malnutrition. For the past three years, our focus has been on southern Bangladesh. Here we have worked to strengthen households' capacity for climate adaptive and resilient livelihoods to tackle food insecurity and under-nutrition.

Lunch being prepared in Satkhira, Bangladesh.

Positive impact

350

households impacted

1,750

people benefitted

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

Our implementation partner, Action Against Hunger, is teaching families new skills and offering business training, as well as increasing their food production at home using new climate change-resistant farming methods. This dual action plan ensures that families can access nutritious food either from their own gardens or with their income.

In three years, we have helped 350 household improve their lives, positively impacting 1,750 people. Above you will see the overall impact of the project.

One in ten people around the world do not have enough food to eat. That is 800 million people at risk from life-threatening hunger in a world that has enough food to feed everyone.

The United Nations' second Sustainable Development Goal, Zero Hunger, is about creating a world free of hunger by 2030. Unfortunately, after declining for a decade, world hunger is on the rise again.

Why does hunger happen? There are many reasons why people experience hunger. Poverty is often a major cause of food insecurity. Conflict and violence can prevent people getting the food they need, while climate change and natural disasters can also reduce people's food supply.

43 MILLION

people in 38 countries across the globe are at risk of falling into famine or a severe hunger crisis

1 IN 10

people globally do not have enough food to eat

3.1 BILLION

people cannot afford a healthy, nutritious diet


Mahfuz waiting for his aunt to make lunch. Satkhira, Bangladesh.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition means not getting enough food or the right balance of food. 3.1 billion people can't afford a healthy, nutritious diet.

It's a big – and unnecessary – problem across the world.

Tackling malnutrition and life-threatening hunger has wide-reaching, positive consequences for improving the health of children and adults alike. A well-nourished, healthy, thriving person is good for their family, their community, and their whole economy.

Four types of malnutrition

Wasting or acute malnutrition can happen over a few weeks, mostly affecting young children who don't eat enough calories or have been sick. Children who are 'wasted' are too thin for their height and more vulnerable to disease.

Stunting or chronic malnutrition either develops over a long time or after several cases of acute malnutrition. Children who are 'stunted' are too short for their age and may be more prone to illness.

Micronutrient deficiencies happen when a diet is not nutritious enough and lacks vitamins and minerals which can cause life-threatening conditions, such as weak immune systems and low birth weight of babies.

Overnutrition is a result of consuming too many calories which are converted to fat. It affects an increasing number of children all over the world, causing a raft of medical conditions, including Type 2 diabetes and hypertension.

Climate Change

Climate change has become a major cause of rising hunger around the world.

Climate change is causing more extreme weather events like floods, wildfires and droughts, which can destroy homes and crops. What is less well-known is that climate change has become a big cause of rising hunger around the world.

Since 2008, 175 million people in some of the poorest and most fragile countries in the world have been forced to flee their homes due to climate-related disasters – a number that's growing year on year.

Countries across the world are experiencing more and more climate-related disasters. Severe drought is a leading cause of undernutrition in more than a third of countries that have seen a rise in hunger levels in the past 15 years.

Climate change is a long-term threat to food security and nutrition. By 2050, the risk of hunger and malnutrition could rise by 20 percent if we fail to reduce and prevent the adverse effects of climate change.

Shilpi has to deal with regular flooding.

Floods are common events for people living in Satkhira, Bangladesh.

50-year-old Sabuda Begum lives in Gobindapur, near the Padma River, one of the largest rivers in Bangladesh. She lives with her husband, two daughters and one son. The landscape of Sabuda's hometown is ever changing because of climate change.

Flash flooding, cyclones and erosion have made it difficult to earn a living through crop cultivation as the village is now underwater for half of the year, forcing Sabuda and her family to work in low-paid, heavy manual labour jobs.

The climate crisis is a hunger crisis

"Cyclones, floods and erosion have destroyed our home more than eleven times now. Every year we spend three months with our land underwater, and it takes another three months to dry out and get back to everyday life. We are trying our best, fighting with nature and loss," says Sabuda.

Sabuda and her husband worked long hours as day labourer digging canals or working in the field earning less than USD 3 per day combined. "Our lives were

Frequent flooding makes crop cultivation challenging.

miserable. I could not educate my children because we had no money to support them after providing food," says Sabuda.

"We had no idea how to grow vegetables or rear livestock." Sabuda Begum

"We could hardly get rice and salt during the days when we had no work. We could not grow anything in our yard because we did not have any savings. We had no idea how to grow vegetables or rear livestock. Our only way of surviving was relying on hard labour, which was also seasonal.

"Some days I only made cakes with wheat, and the whole family had to eat them. My daughter-in-law could not get enough to eat during her pregnancy. I had no idea how we could change our lives."

The project

Sabuda learned about the Soneva Foundation project when she was digging a canal in her area. She and her husband went to the training programmes, where they learned how to grow vegetables in their yard, how to fish and rear their own cattle.

"We received USD 30 to grow vegetables in our yard and USD 125 for fish farming. Over the period, we have worked from dawn to dusk. Our entire family got involved in growing vegetables and working in the pond. With our constant effort, our vegetable garden grew bigger. After keeping vegetables for our family, I sell vegetables to our neighbours," says Sabuda.

Sabuda's husband MD Mosel Uddin Begh catches fish.

Sabuda received USD 30 to set up a vegetable farm in her garden. She is now self-sufficient with nutritious vegetables.r

Benefiting the entire family

“It feels good to get fresh vegetables, and now we do not have to depend on others. My husband and I both work in our pond, vegetable garden and make a fishing net. By selling fish, we saved for buying cattle. I have chickens and a cow.

Our lives have transformed so much. Now every time my daughters visit us with my grandchildren, I serve fish from our pond and cook vegetables. My grandson Mahfuz is six years old, he is going to school now, and we can provide for his education,” says Sabuda with a big smile.

They share their experiences with other families in their village that have received support. “It feels satisfying to see how other families of my village are doing well like us and can provide for their minor children,” says Sabuda.

Sabuda reflects on her current situation: “My husband's health has improved, and I am now doing much better than before. If we had not received this support, we have no idea what we would do with our lives. Despite the hardship, we have our vegetable garden, our fishing farm, we can provide for our family. Our life has been transformed.”

"Our life has been transformed," say Sabuda while enjoying lunch with her family.

Thirty-five-year-old Shilpi Khatun is from the village of Gobindapur in Bangladesh. There, she lives with her husband and three sons. As climate change worsens, living so close to the river has meant that every year Shilpi's possessions and any hope of earning a reliable income are washed away by the rising flood waters.

"Despite frequent natural disasters, my husband and I worked very hard, but the money we received could not provide enough for a five-member family. There were days when we starved," says Shilpi.

For at least three months of the year, they stay waterlogged. That means no work or any way to earn money during the time of the flood season.

"Our neighbours cannot help us with a loan because each of us is fighting the same battle. It is a struggle to bring food to our kitchen," says Shilpi.

"There were days when we starved."
Shilpi Khatun

For at least three months of the year Shilpi and her family stay waterlogged.

Shilpi Khatun and her husband Ziarul Islam attended training to learn how to be self-sufficient.

Shilpi Khatun and Ziarul Islam proudly show their garden produce.

Shilpi Khatun can now provide healthy nutritious food for her family and sell any excess from her garden for extra income.

Hope for a better future

"When I had almost given up and thought we would never be able to do anything for our children, I came to know about the project. My husband and I attended several trainings and learned how to be self-sufficient by working on what we already have," says Shilpi.

They received a grant of USD 30 to start growing vegetables in their yard.

"We expanded our garden and grew seasonal fruits. We also planted trees, and slowly we started reaping the benefits of our hard labour. We stopped working as day labourers and started giving our time to our vegetable garden," says Shilpi.

Before, Shilpi and her husband did not have time for their kids.

"Once we started working in our garden, we have been able to spend time with our children. I help my elderly son with study, and we can feed our kids well," say Shilpi.

The importance of nutrition

"Two years ago, our youngest child fell ill because I could not feed him nutritious food. It was very hard for me because his recovery took a long time. Another time, my son Tamim wanted to have an ice cream which was five cents. I could not afford it. He cried an entire day, and I cried too," says Shilpi.

Now, Shilpi sells the excess from her garden and earns sufficient money.

"Since we started growing vegetables in our yard, farming fish, and rearing livestock, we can now provide for our children. My young children love fish, and their father brings fish from our pond

almost every day now," says Shilpi.

Getting enough nutrition is key to a healthy life.

"My children's health has improved so much, and I find I have more energy as well," says Shilpi.

Investing in future generations

Shilpi is not only able to provide healthy food for her family.

"I am pleased that our children can now go to school. None of us were able to go to school because of the extreme poverty of our own families. I feel content knowing our hard work is paying for their future," says Shilpi.

"Besides selling our fruits and vegetables, I also share our produce items with villagers. They talk about our achievements and feel happy for us. Families who received support like us are already doing much better. We have experienced transformation. Our life has changed, and we are grateful."

"I cannot imagine what we could do if we had not received this support. Now we eat well and have a good time together. I do not feel tired and deprived of happiness anymore. We feel proud."

"We want to continue working for our children for a better tomorrow."

"I am pleased that we now can afford to send our children to school," says Shilpi.

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Over 225,000 people have benefited from the Myanmar Stoves Campaign to date.

The Myanmar Stoves Campaign is a Soneva Foundation programme that distributes fuel efficient cook stoves to thousands of families. It is the first Gold Standard-certified carbon project in Myanmar.

Indoor cooking on inefficient stoves is a silent killer. Air pollution from domestic cooking is responsible for the premature deaths of over 4 million people a year worldwide, more than HIV/Aids and malaria combined.

Myanmar has one of the fastest rates of deforestation in the world, with most of the wood used for domestic cooking.

Each fuel efficient stove saves 2.5 tonnes of wood per year and reduces air pollution by 80 percent – improving the health and safety of the whole community.

The Myanmar Stoves Campaign has been successfully operating for nine years, together with our implementation partner Mercy Corps Myanmar.

11,563 stoves have been distributed this year, benefitting 55,000 people. Below you will see the overall impact of the project.

Positive impact

48,308
stoves distributed

226,078
people benefitted

253,901
GS VERs issued

USD 37 million
in social value generated

1 NO POVERTY
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
13 CLIMATE ACTION

HORNBILLS

Five oriental pied hornbills have been released in 2022.

Around 40 years ago, hornbills disappeared from Koh Kood, Thailand. It is said that hunting from migrant workers and some locals was the cause.

The Soneva Foundation is working with the Hornbill Research Foundation to reintroduce hornbills on Koh Kood in Thailand. The Hornbill is an important species for the island as it helps spread the seeds of bigger trees, which improves the biodiversity of the forest.

On May 17, 2022, we opened the enclosure to allow our first oriental pied hornbill pair to enjoy nature in the wild. Since then, we have released three more birds making it two females and three males.

So far the oriental pied hornbills are staying fairly near the enclosure. This is probably because they are not used to being in the wild. They essentially have to gradually learn their natural instincts to make it on their own.

The female's first steps outside of the enclosure.

15 LIFE ON LAND

The females have started to check out the artificial enclosures we have put out. The hope is that they make use of that during mating season between January to June. With some luck there will be some Koh Kood-born chicks.

CORAL PROPAGATION

The Maldives is an island nation with an enchanting underwater beauty. Corals play an important role in ocean biodiversity, with 25 percent of sealife living on the reef.

In collaboration with Coralive.org and the Soneva Fushi Marine Science team, Soneva Foundation has set up one of the biggest coral nurseries in the world using Mineral Accretion Technology (MAT). Located at the outer edge of the house reef, the coral nursery at Soneva Fushi comprises 432 table structures, arranged in three circular clusters.

In Q4 2022, the team completed filling the MAT table structures with coral fragments. They also out-planted 8,000 coral colonies.

Additionally, the Coral Spawning & Rearing Lab has been installed at Soneva Fushi, and will start operating in January 2023. The 28 Micro-Fragmenting tanks under construction is expected to be delivered in Q1 2023.

The yearly output of corals generated and out-planted is expected to be between 100,000 and 150,000 coral fragments.

8,000
coral colonies out-planted

20,000
coral colonies rescued

150,000
coral fragments per year

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

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1.5 million mangroves planted in Ayeyarwady, Myanmar.

Blue carbon is captured by the world's oceans, representing more than 55 percent of the carbon sequestrated by plants. Mangroves sequester up to five time more CO2 than trees in terrestrial forests.

The Soneva Foundation engaged Worldview International Foundation to restore 600 hectares of mangrove forest in Myanmar. 1.5 million mangroves have been planted.

The project will be registered under VERRA and is expected to generate 860,000 carbon credits.

Mangroves play a key role in maintaining healthy oceans, and are the only forest that grows in salt water, as a buffer between land and sea. This tree filters and cleans run-off and sediments, protects coral reefs and seagrass meadows, as well as providing the highest capacity to mitigate CO2, with permanent storage in the ground. Their ecosystem services are of the highest value for life on our blue planet.


Rhizophora mucronata species.

Positive impact

1.5 million
mangroves planted

600 hectares
to be restored

860,000 tonnes CO2
to be mitigated

1 NO POVERTY

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

SONEVA FOUNDATION

Deforestation is responsible for around 11 percent of global carbon emissions. Forests sequester or store carbon mainly in trees and soil, making them a sink. Restoring forests is an important solution to reverse climate change and improve biodiversity.

The Soneva Foundation supports projects that restore the natural forest by planting a variety of native species. We recently engaged Eden Reforestation Projects to plant 3.7 million trees in Matica Sede, Mozambique, over a period of four years – starting from January 2022.

A key component of the project is to use indigenous tree species, based on the mimbo forest type, which are planted by the local community.

To date, 893,186 trees have already been planted.

The team prepares seedlings at Matica Sede.

Positive impact

3.7 million trees
to be planted in four years

3,378 hectares
to be restored

2.4 million tons CO2
to be mitigated

1 NO POVERTY

13 CLIMATE ACTION

15 LIFE ON LAND

Soneva Namoona is working closely with the local community.

Soneva Namoona provides a blueprint for how all Maldivian islands can phase out single-use plastic, introduce recycling and inspire a new generation of ocean stewards.

Positive impact

286 tons
recyclables collected in three years

423 tons
waste removed from 11 islands in three years

564,000
plastic bottles saved in three years

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Soneva Namoona is a Maldivian NGO, funded by the Soneva Foundation, working to empower zero waste communities. It engages directly with seven islands in Baa Atoll, three in Noonu Atoll, and one in Haa Dhaalu. Furthermore, in the Noonu Atoll it has embarked on an atoll-wide project as a strategic and technical partner on waste management issues across 13 islands.

A water bottling facility – Soneva Water – in Maalhos, Baa Atoll, provides an alternative to single-use plastic bottled water to households, guesthouses and cafes. Construction of an additional water bottling facility on Kudafari in the Noonu Atoll is finished, with operations to start in Q1 2023. The water bottling plants are important initiatives to eliminate single-use plastic, accompanied by other engagements with the same purpose, such as household water-filter trials, reusable nappies and menstrual product awareness workshops and trials, as well as a recently formed, women-led second-hand resale market.

In partnership with the Ministry of Education, Soneva Namoona is currently in the second year of piloting the Fehi Madharusa (Green School) framework, an environmental education programme. Seven pilot schools are participating and co-designing the final version of the programme through their experience and feedback.

In partnership with the Maldives Swimming and Life Saving Skills Training School, Soneva Namoona launched a Shore to Open Water Series, training swimming and water rescue instructors on all Namoona islands, as well as encouraging community activities in and around the ocean.

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