



SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

ANNUAL REPORT (OCTOBER 2008-SEPTEMBER 2009)



**AMPARA DISTRICT
AWA - PPDS**

பிரக்கும் காரணிகள்

01. தலாச்சாரம் -
 - உடை.
 - படிக்க உதவியம்
02. அரசியல்வாதிகளின் பிரிவினைகள்.
 - இனரீதியான கருத்துக்களை வரம்புநல்.
 - சிவகந்திரித் திடபங்களில் புரக்கணிப்பு.
03. சிவாஜி.
 - அரசு அலுவலகங்களில் மக்களின் சுவ இதைகளை குறித்த சிவ்வ செயலாமை. (புட சிவ்வ)
 - வாதுநாப்பு நாமலரண்களில் மக்கள் சிவ் சோகும் சிவ்வினைகள்.
 - உயர்நல்த நிருவனங்களில் உள்ள கல்விக்கான வளங்கள்.
04. கண்பாடுவாடு :- v- பிரிதீத்ப் பார்த்தல் (சிவ்வ).
05. பகிஸ்கரிப்பு :- v- வகாலைச் சம்பவங்களும் சிவ் சிவ்நல்களும்.
06. பிரதேசப் பிரிவினை :- v- சிவ்வலைகள் உகருவாதுக்கப் பட்டிருத்தல்.

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Cover Photo: SuRG is working with communities and organizations throughout the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa district. The woman in the cover photo is from the Ampara district, and participated in 1 of 3 SuRG workshops held this year for NGOs on program development and proposal design. *Photo courtesy of ARD/SuRG.*

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CONTENTS

- ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS iii**
- INTRODUCTION 1**
- I.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES 3**
 - I.1 SOCIAL EQUITY 3
 - I.1.1 Grants and Subcontracts 3
 - I.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION 5
 - I.2.1 Grants 6
 - I.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE 8
 - I.3.1 Technical Assistance and Training for Partner LAs 9
 - I.3.2 Language Training 9
 - I.3.3 Participatory Planning and Budgeting Training 10
 - I.4 OPEN DIALOGUE 11
 - I.4.1 Grants 11
 - I.5 CROSSCUTTING ACTIVITIES 12
 - I.5.1 Annual Program Statement 12
 - I.6 WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY 14
 - I.6.1 Grants 14
 - I.7 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN 14
 - I.8 LESSONS LEARNED 15
- 2.0 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION 16**

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLG	Assistant Commissioner of Local Government
APS	Annual Program Statement
BPA	Business for Peace Alliance
CaFFE	Centre for Free and Fair Elections
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEaT	Community Empowerment and Transformation
CLG	Commissioner for Local Government
CMEV	Centre for Monitoring Election Violence
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GA	Government Agent
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HRD	Human Rights Defender
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
JVP	Janatha Vimukethi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front)
LA	Local Authority
LG	Local Governance
LHP	Land, Housing and Property
LTTE	Liberation Tamil Tigers of Elam
MDF	Management Development Foundation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Muslim Peace Assembly
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Identity Card
NMA	National Muslim Assembly
OD	Open Dialogue
OLD	Official Language Department
OPED	Organization for Protecting and Ensuring Democracy
PS	<i>Pradeshya Sabha</i>
PMP	Performance Management Plan
Q	Quarter
RDA	Rural Development Authority
SLPI	Sri Lanka Press Institute
SL. Rs	Sri Lankan Rupees
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
SuRG	Supporting Regional Governance Program

TAU	The American University
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNP	United National Party
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WRDS	Women's Rural Development Society

INTRODUCTION

In March 2008, ARD, Inc. was awarded Contract No. 383-C-00-08-000501-00 to implement the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Sri Lanka Supporting Regional Governance Program (SuRG). The three-to-five year initiative was designed to build on USAID/Sri Lanka's democracy and governance efforts to address development needs resulting from the almost 30-year conflict between the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tamil Tigers of Elam (LTTE). The program supports regional governance in conflict-affected areas by focusing on four program components—social equity, local governance, community empowerment and transformation, and open dialogue—with crosscutting activities that promote governance improvements around the betterment of human and community security.

The first year of operations and programming took place in the midst of frequent and significant changes in the political and security context in geographical project areas of operation in Sri Lanka. When the program commenced, the war in the north was in full force after the GOSL officially abrogated the 2002 Ceasefire Agreement. In the east, local and provincial elections took place for the first time in decades and an ambitious government development and infrastructure program, “The Reawakening of the East,” was just getting underway. This transpired in an environment characterized by high levels of human insecurity for the majority of citizens due to regular incidences of political and communal violence, abductions and disappearances, and the presence of numerous checkpoints and other security measures which restricted movement and daily life.

In May 2009, the government defeated the LTTE, raising a number of political and security issues from the months leading up to the final defeat and beyond. The end of the military conflict brought questions about reconciliation and root causes of the conflict to the forefront of national debate. On the ground in the east, reverberations, both positive and negative, have been considerable. Checkpoints have been reduced and treatment at those which remain are significantly less heavy-handed; a longstanding fishing ban denying many of their livelihood was lifted; the number of abductions and disappearances has noticeably decreased; and people are moving about much more often and freely in the evenings (especially in town areas). There has also been an acceleration of development and infrastructure projects. However, planning and procurement for these projects often takes place in Colombo and outsiders, with little or no consultation or participation locally, implement them.

In the face of this dynamic political environment, SuRG has had to maintain a flexible approach to programming and steer a cautious yet consistent path.

This report details SuRG activities, achievements, lessons learned, and general contract implementation covering the period from in-country start up in late May 2008 to September 30, 2009.

Key achievements and highlights in this reporting period include:

- Services, technical assistance, training, or capacity building were provided to 2,314 direct beneficiaries, 38 local authorities (LA), and 80 other organizations.
- Grants and subcontracts valued at SL Rs. 72,158,149 (US \$638,568) were awarded to 13 local organizations for social equity, community empowerment and transformation, local governance, or open dialogue initiatives.

- Training was provided to 1,401 people including:
 - Proposal development training for 72 people representing 24 organizations from the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa district;
 - Personal, communication, and information training for 23 representatives of 10 local organizations;
 - Journalism training for 16 SuRG journalism scholarship recipients;
 - Human rights education for 51 people from Trincomalee district;
 - Election monitoring for 139 monitors of the Jaffna Municipal Council and Vavuniya Urban Council elections;
 - Participatory planning and budgeting for 98 elected and government officials from all 37 Pradeshya Sabhas in the Eastern Province and the Ampara Urban Council;
 - Training of trainers (ToT) for Tamil and Sinhala language training for 21 teachers from 11 local authorities in the Eastern Province;
 - Tamil and Sinhala language classes for 207 elected and government officers from 11 local authorities in the Eastern Province; and
 - Office management and proposal development training for 739 women members of 19 Women’s Rural Development Societies (WRDSs).
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed, working groups were formed and technical assistance and training on good governance and community participation were provided to 11 local authorities in the Eastern Province. Ten partner LAs have initiated participatory planning techniques.
- Women’s and youth forums were launched by Regional Muslim Peace Assemblies in Galle, Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Puttlam.
- Ninety-one concept papers from organizations based in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa district were submitted and reviewed in response to an Annual Program Statement (APS) for grants between SL. Rs. 500,000–3,500,000 and up to one year in duration.
- A workshop was conducted for senior management and technical staff from USAID/Sri Lanka, Connecting Regional Economies (CORE), and SuRG as a tool for coordinated implementation of the USAID CORE and SuRG projects.

1.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Upon arrival in country, SuRG commissioned assessments for each of the four technical program components—social equity, community empowerment and transformation, local governance, and open dialogue—to ensure the strategy and activities respond to current conditions and address the most pressing issues at the time rather than when ARD submitted its final technical proposal. Each assessment mapped and analyzed current trends and responses, and assessed challenges and opportunities for SuRG programming. The results of these assessments in conjunction with consultations with prospective partners, grantees, and technical experts formed the basis for adjusting proposed activities and Year 1 strategy and program implementation as detailed below.

1.1 SOCIAL EQUITY

The provision of stronger human rights and security protections is critical to ensuring democratic rule. It is essential for the rebuilding of the east and the establishment of a viable economy and an accountable system of local governance. Increasing these protections requires proactive responses to actual abuses as well as preventive measures to mitigate those factors that exacerbate the risk of abuses and increase vulnerabilities. The SuRG social equity component is designed to ensure a stronger, better-coordinated response to abuses that occur and to weaknesses in the responses of key institutions by:

- Expanding and improving the strategies to defend human rights and to increase the number of stakeholders active in protecting rights;
- Supporting critical Colombo-based NGOs, as well as smaller, district-based NGOs working on human rights; and
- Improving the quality and reliability of information gathered, stored, and analyzed about human rights abuses.

1.1.1 GRANTS AND SUBCONTRACTS

ARD001

Project	Analysis of the Judicial Prosecutorial System Regarding the Right to Life/Liberty in Sri Lanka
Grant Amount	Rs. 1,860,000
Dates	1 January 2009–31 December 2009

The partner is researching the judicial response to right to life and liberty from the Supreme Court during 2000-2007 as well as *habeas corpus* applications at the Court of Appeal, High Court, and Magistrate level. Findings are meant to provide a review of the legal/judicial protections available in respect to right to

life/liberty and demonstrate judicial patterns in response to the disappearance of Tamil citizens from the north/east during conflict periods as well as disappearances of Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim citizens from the south during the second insurrection of the *Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna*¹ (JVP) in the 1980s and 1990s. An interim report analyzing 53 unreported judgments of the Supreme Court in respect to the right to be free from arbitrary arrest and detention (Article 13(1) and (2)) delivered by the Court from 2000-2007 was submitted along with a further 19 reported judgments relating to right to life and liberty. In addition, 53 (reported and unreported) judgments of the Supreme Court were analyzed in respect to the constitutional right to liberty. Where *habeas corpus* is concerned, more than 182 judgments/orders were analyzed. During this period, 24 briefs/interim inquiry orders of the Provincial High Court of Jaffna were also examined. The rest of the High Courts in the north and east will be included in the Final Report which will be submitted in Q1 FY10 along with an advocacy plan for dissemination of the results.

ARD003

Project	Support for War Affected Widows and Human Rights Education in Trincomalee District
Grant Amount	Rs. 3,588,000
Dates	15 January 2009–31 December 2009

The partner is working with 30 women head of households in Trincomalee district whose husbands were killed or abducted. These women are provided with individual and group support to help rebuild their lives, and maintain their family. The partner engages in four primary activities: grief and psycho-social counseling, guidance and basic life skills training for child-rearing as a head of household, basic training and support for small income-generating activities, and raising of human rights awareness.

The partner's six-month human rights education program was inaugurated in March 2009. Two batches of 100 participants (59 males and 41 females) representing 10 government institutions, eight national NGOs, seven international NGOs (INGOs), four private companies, one religious organization, and two educational institutions enrolled and started the training program. Each participant was required to contribute a fee of SL Rs. 1,000 to attend the program. In the second semester, 51 (16 male and 35 female) participants from 38 organizations continued with the training program. Those who successfully complete the final examination will be awarded a certificate at a ceremony held on International Human Rights Day in December 2009.



The partner provided SL Rs. 45,000 to help this female head of household from the Trincomalee District buy inventory for her store. She also attends monthly meetings with other women whose husbands have been abducted or killed. With SuRG support, the partner helps these women to rebuild their lives and maintain their families.

¹ People's Liberation Front.

ARD005

Project	Support for Legal Aid Program
Grant Amount	Rs. 5,512,685
Dates	1 May 2009–30 April 2010

The partner, with the support of lawyers from its network and panels, prepares documents to file cases and makes legal submissions in the relevant court of competence. In addition to its ongoing caseload, the partner under this initiative takes up new cases in the Magistrate’s Court, High Courts, Court of Appeal, and Supreme Court. During this period, the partner filed six fundamental rights applications. Five cases were successfully closed. The partner is unable to close one case, as the petitioner was abducted before the fundamental rights application was taken up in the Supreme Court. The partner is planning a capacity-building workshop for its panel lawyers from the Eastern, Northern, and Central Provinces next quarter. The program will address current human rights issues, relevant procedural mechanisms and strategic approaches to seeking legal remedies for violations of human rights. The workshop will be facilitated by international and local human rights activists.

1.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

“This is a land of mental scars and where buildings have been rebuilt, damage remains manifest in the province’s people.”
-R. Wijewardene, “Back to Batticaloa” *The Sunday Leader*, September 27, 2009

The Community Empowerment and Transformation (CEaT) assessment commissioned by SuRG at the start of the project indicated a great need for peacebuilding and conflict mitigation programming. It also indicated a sense of distrust and weariness among communities in the east regarding such programming. After years of conflict and countless programs to alleviate tension among ethnic groups, little had been resolved and building alliances and engaging other communities often proved dangerous in an environment where power and loyalties frequently shift. The assessment stressed the need for caution and a focus on seeking out true local leaders and organizations with credibility on the ground and a genuine commitment to the goals and ends SuRG is committed to pursuing.

Accordingly, the CEaT team put a lot of emphasis into getting to know local actors and organizations and helping them to get to know SuRG. Furthermore, as will be further discussed below in Section 1.5.1, Annual Program Statement, the CEaT team led SuRG efforts to help develop the capacity of potential partners. These efforts focused primarily on potential grantees from the Eastern Province but also included work with several national organizations. CEaT provided significant technical assistance to the Business for Peace Alliance (BPA) to help them develop a proposal for working with the Chambers of Commerce in the Eastern Province. SuRG support included hosting and facilitating a meeting with representatives from the Chambers of Commerce from the Eastern Province, jointly gathering information in field visits to the Chambers in the east, and including BPA staff in SuRG proposal development training. CEaT staff are reviewing BPA’s latest proposal submission—BPA is finalizing the budget. The proposal is expected to be completed and activities initiated early next quarter.

1.2.1 GRANTS

ARD004

Project	Building Muslim Consensus
Grant Award	Rs. 12,553,250
Dates	1 March 2009–28 February 2010

The partner's efforts to build consensus among Muslims and raise issues of importance to the Muslim community include support and facilitation of regional Muslim Peace Assemblies (MPA) in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Galle, and Puttalam and the launch of a National Muslim Peace Assembly which would bring together diverse stakeholders from across the island. Since the grant was signed, 32 MPA meetings were held, membership in the MPAs was increased, and youth and women's forums were set up in each of the MPAs. At the start of the grant period, each MPA developed an action plan identifying issues of importance in their communities, and at regular meetings are developing and implementing strategies for advocacy. The issues include long-term broad policy concerns such as displacement and land ownership/use as well as targeted effort to address local and immediate needs such as concerns about the syllabus of a Teachers' Training College.

The partner had planned to launch the National Muslim Peace Assembly in April. It was felt at the time that with the war at its height and victory by the government imminent, it would be best to postpone the launch until the situation in the country was more stable and the role for such a group would be clearer. In August, the partner held a pre-launch meeting with the participation of 62 members to finalize the membership and terms of reference for the organization. A 13-person governing body was selected. They decided to change their name to the National Muslim Assembly (NMA) as it was deemed more appropriate in the post-war context. The official launch of the NMA and its strategy is scheduled for next quarter.

The partner has had difficulties implementing its full slate of proposed activities due to funding constraints. SuRG is not fully funding the regional managers as it was budgeted with the understanding that other donors would cover the remainder of their salaries. Those funds have not been secured, which has made it difficult for the partner to hire its full staff to manage field activities.

The partner, in coordination with SuRG and The American University (TAU), has developed a plan for capacity building and training to be carried out by TAU through a grant with SuRG. The plan includes training and technical assistance focused on organizational development, strategic planning, conflict transformation, and advocacy. The grant is expected to be signed and activities initiated early next quarter.

ARD006

Project	Anangu: Women with Mysterious Powers
Grant Award	Rs. 9,540,568
Dates	22 June 2009–21 May 2010

The Anangu program promotes women's participation in local development and governance and seeks to bring women together to define and advocate for their issues collectively. The partner has been providing technical assistance to 50 WRDS since January 2007. With support from SuRG, they are expanding this support to reach 110 WRDSs (approximately 20,000 women) in Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Jaffna, and Puttalam districts. To date, the partner has trained 739 women from 19 WRDSs in office management and administration, and proposal development. As a result of the training, 13 WRDSs have put in place new accounting and bookkeeping systems. They have conducted 19 gender awareness-raising sessions including discussions and film screenings covering issues about domestic violence, alcohol issues in the community,

and concerns about Muslim women’s participation in WRDS activities. These awareness-raising sessions have helped create a space for ongoing discussion on domestic violence so that the partner is now able to introduce the topic at WRDS meetings and discussions, whereas previously it was deemed too sensitive a topic. The partner also created street dramas to help raise awareness on participation in local government and municipal council elections and on early marriage. The dramas were performed 17 times and accompanied by discussion sessions on the issues raised in the drama.

WRDSs are well-established, government-sanctioned vehicles for women’s participation in local development and decision making. However, gaining support from local government officials for these activities and addressing women’s concerns is a regular challenge for the partner. Often, officials discourage WRDSs from raising issues they deem ‘sensitive.’ As Anangu will take on additional human rights issues in the coming months, this is likely to be an ongoing challenge.



The partner is helping empower approximately 20,000 women through its work with 110 WRDSs in Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Puttalam, Hatton and Jaffna.

ARD010

Project	Strengthening Housing, Land and Property Rights in Eastern Sri Lanka
Grant Award	US \$145,534
Dates	15 October 2009–31 January 2010

SuRG support for the partner is pending USAID approval of a proposal submitted in August. The grant will support the partner’s participation in the development of a National Resettlement Policy. The partner is part of a working group appointed by the Ministry of Resettlement and Disaster Relief, and will use the data and recommendations from their 2008 survey to ensure international housing standards are incorporated into this national policy. Second, the partner will train both local government officials and civil society from the Eastern Province in issues pertaining to housing, land, and property rights including domestic procedural and legal obligations related to land. Third, the partner will undertake a comprehensive land survey and map the changing patterns of land ownership in the east over the past 15-20. The partner will focus on IDPs that result from both conflict and natural disasters in the Eastern Province. While targeting local organizations and local government officials working with IDPs/returnees to strengthen their capacities to defend housing, land, and property rights, the partner will also place particular emphasis on the rights of women.

ARD023

Project	Promoting Social Engagement through Buddhist Practice
Grant Award	Rs. 5,061,000
Dates	5 October 2009 – 31 August 2010

The Promoting Social Engagement through Buddhist Practice program aims to engage and strengthen influences of Buddhism among the Buddhist clergy as an inspiration for inter-community reconciliation and coexistence. The partner has been working with Buddhist clergy since 2006 in an effort to mobilize elements

of the Buddhist community focused on peace and ethnic harmony and to engage them in dialogue and social activity around issues of peaceful coexistence, reconciliation, democracy, and good governance. With this grant, the partner will build on their earlier work to provide 100 monks and nuns from Monaragala, Ampara, and Polonnaruwa districts with capacity building and support to engage and mobilize lay people in their temples and communities around issues of interethnic and religious reconciliation. Project activities include reconciliation training, community dialogue and understanding the principles of good governance, Tamil language classes, the compilation and distribution of a monthly bulletin, and building of a network.

This grant was approved and signed at the close of the fiscal year. Activities are expected to get underway at the start of the next quarter.

1.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Although the importance of proper planning is felt by me as a local authority official in a Pradeshya Sabha that serves in a very backward area, I have not come across any highly professional resource persons until this Workshop. It reminds me of an "Oasis in the desert"

- Participant SuRG Participatory Planning and Budgeting Training, Staff Member, Damana PS

The Pradeshya Sabha and Union Council are the administrative units of government closest to individual citizens and communities. Local elections held in the Eastern Province after the government took control of the province in 2007 were—in the case of Batticaloa district—the first held in decades. Many elected and assigned to work with local authorities had no experience in local government and were unclear about their role and responsibilities. Similarly, local communities are often unclear about what they were entitled to from their local government or how to engage them. The SuRG local governance component focuses on

building the capacity of elected and government officials from Pradeshya Sabhas (PSs) for participatory local governance, emphasizing the role of local authorities, participatory processes, and transparency and accountability. The strategy was to select a group of LAs for targeted technical assistance and training in Year 1 and expand the group to a total of 25 through the life of the program.

The local government assessment commissioned at the start of the project provided SuRG with data and rankings of all LAs in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa district, based on a range of criteria. These criteria include technical capacity and potential of the LA, as well as social and political criteria such as the extent of previous donor intervention, revenue allocation, ethnic composition of the community, political leadership, community participation and conflict-related risk (situated near conflict areas, presence of armed groups other than defense forces, experience of conflict in the area). SuRG used these rankings to select the following 11 LAs for technical assistance during Year 1 of the program:

- Trincomalee: Thambalagamuwa PS, Muthur PS, Verugal PS, Seruwila PS;
- Batticaloa: Eravur Town PS, Manmunai West PS, Manmunai South-West PS, Porativupattu PS; and
- Ampara: Ampara UC, Alaiyadivembu PS, Ninthavur PS.



At the end of the fiscal year, the Chief Secretary of the Eastern Province Provincial Council and the Commissioner for Local Government requested that SuRG revise its strategy to provide broad training for all 37 PSs in Eastern Province. In an effort to respond to needs on the ground and support the GOSL, SuRG in Year 2 will continue to provide technical assistance to the 11 Year 1 LAs and expand to provide training for all 37 PSs in Eastern Province, rather than just to the original targeted 25.

1.3.1 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING FOR PARTNER LAs

Once SuRG selected its 11 year 1 LA partners, we initiated a number of activities to assess the needs and interest of participating LAs and regional local government authorities. SuRG met individually with all LA Chairmen and staff, the Commissioner of Local Government (CLG), the Assistant Commissioner of Local Government (ACLG) in each district and the Chief Secretary of the Provincial Council. SuRG conducted formal orientation workshops to introduce SuRG and plans for future collaboration and detailed training needs assessments with each of the LAs through focus group discussions with elected officials and government officers and written surveys completed by 146 elected officials, administrative staff, representatives of Rural Development Societies, and other local stakeholders. Training priorities identified from the training needs assessment include general office administration, legal and regulatory framework relevant to local authorities and government, formulation of by-laws, information technology, Sinhala and Tamil language, budgeting and financial management, leadership, and communication.

SuRG also organized training workshops on good governance and community participation for LA chairmen and their secretaries from Batticaloa and Ampara. In Trincomalee, a formal workshop was not held but technical assistance sessions were conducted to address the issues. All 11 partner LA chairmen and their secretaries attended a Community Participation and Local Government Workshop in March.

After completion of these initial workshops, SuRG signed MOUs with all 11 LAs to formalize the relationships. MOUs were signed by each LA chairman, the CLG, relevant ACLG, and the SuRG Chief of Party (COP). The MOUs outline the partnership and commitments from all parties. SuRG committed to providing technical assistance and training to help elected officials and administrative staff of local authorities better carry out their responsibilities, build general management and administrative capacity, engage local citizenry, and enhance communication and leadership skills. Each LA in turn committed to support and participate in SuRG programs and work in coordination with citizens and relevant government officials to apply the principles of SuRG technical assistance and training in their Pradeshya Sabha or Union Council.

Each of the 11 LAs has set up a working group of up to 15 members including key staff, and are assigned a SuRG coordinator. These working groups meet with SuRG representatives each month to discuss ongoing activities, plans for upcoming events, opportunities, challenges, and application of training principles and skills.

1.3.2 LANGUAGE TRAINING

Hopefully, the new program started to teach Sinhala and Tamil languages to elected representatives in the East would prove a catalyst towards the strengthening of bonds between the different communities united in a single language of brotherhood and love and provide a stepping stone to the much looked forward to unity.
-The Daily News, 26 August 2009

SuRG's training needs assessment of partner LAs indicated a strong interest among local officials for Tamil and Sinhala language training—Tamil speakers have trouble reading and responding to official circulars which are often only in Sinhala, while Sinhalese officials are unable to attend to Tamil speaking constituents. In response, SuRG in coordination with the Official Language Department (OLD) of the Ministry of

Constitutional Affairs, organized Sinhala and Tamil language training programs for elected and government officials in each of the SuRG partner LAs. Three teachers from each of the 11 LAs were selected for interviews with OLD to receive training and become certified as trainers for the language teaching. Twenty-one teachers—six to teach Tamil and 15 to teach Sinhala—participated in a four-day residential training course in Colombo organized by OLD. Ultimately, 19 teachers signed on as trainers for the SuRG language training courses.

The language training is a 108-hour OLD course taught in each of the 11 LAs in two 2-hour sessions a week. Two hundred and seven local government officials and staff are participating in the program which has been universally well received.



SuRG brought together 21 teachers from the Eastern Province to be certified by the GOSL Official Language Department for teaching Tamil and Sinhala language. Nineteen of the teachers are currently teaching Tamil or Sinhala to 207 elected officials and staff in SuRG's 11 partner LAs.

1.3.3 PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND BUDGETING TRAINING

The CLG and Chief Secretary of the Eastern Province requested SuRG organize training on medium-term participatory planning and budgeting for representatives of all 37 PSs in the province. The request was to help prepare LAs for an upcoming World Bank project that will provide significant funds for PSs in the north and east. Qualifying criteria for the World Bank funds include participatory planning and a development plan in place. After meeting with the World Bank representative in charge of this program and identifying technical trainers, SuRG agreed to host the training.

The training was conducted in two five-day residential training sessions conducted by EML Consultants and was based on the Participatory Planning and Budgeting for Local Authorities module developed under the



Ninety-eight elected officials and government staff from all 37 Pradeshya Sabhas and the Ampara Union Council received training on participatory planning and budgeting.

USAID-funded Transparent Accountable Local Governance Program. The workshops provided 98 local authority officials and their staff with the tools needed to undertake a process of planning, priority setting, and budgeting for local projects and development in cooperation with their local communities and stakeholders.

Through this training, participants became *in situ* resource people for other elected officials and officers in their PS as well as throughout their districts. For example, soon after the first workshop was completed, participants from Thambalagamuwa PS were joined by participants from Seruvila PS to initiate consultations and planning with their community on development plans.

I.4 OPEN DIALOGUE

The SuRG open dialogue component is intended to reinforce and expand space for public discourse on critical governance issues. Threats and harassment have become part of a journalist's job. As result, there are fewer and fewer outlets for real debate and fewer people willing to take the risks involved in reporting wrongdoing or expressing dissent.

The SuRG open dialogue program has as a result focused on aspiring. In addition, SuRG is supporting alternative outlets for discussion of governance issues through grants and programs in the other SuRG component activities.

I.4.1 GRANTS

ARD002

Project	Scholarship Fund for Applicants from the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa District to the SLPI Journalism Diploma Course
Grant Award	Rs. 2,538,000
Dates	2 January 2009–31 December 2009

The Journalism Diploma Programme of the Sri Lanka College of Journalism is a nine-month program that combines classroom work with practical experience at newspapers and broadcast outlets. The curriculum is designed in consultation with industry representatives



SuRG provided scholarships to 17 aspiring journalists from the Eastern Province and Monaragula district to attend the Sri Lanka College of Journalism 2009 Journalism Diploma Programme. The scholarships were awarded by the Honorable US Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Mr. Robert Blake pictured above at the program's Opening Ceremony. Also present and pictured above was USAID/Sri Lanka Mission Director Ms. Rebecca Cohn.

and supervised by the University of Kalmar in Sweden. SuRG awarded scholarships to 17 applicants from Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, and Monaragula districts.

Sixteen scholarship recipients have entered their third semester of study and are interning with national media houses including MBC Television Network, Asia Broadcasting Company, Thinakkural, and Veerakesari.

ARD025

Project	Regional Development and Local Government: The Role of the Provincial Councils
Grant Award	Rs. 8,056, 000
Dates	1 October 2009–30 September 2010

The partner held a workshop supported by SuRG to analyze the primary issues surrounding the regional governance and discuss how the partner might promote debate on implementation and inform the public about actual experiences of provincial councils and regional governance. Twenty-eight people participated in

the workshop including two Cabinet Ministers, a former Chief Minister, several former Members of Parliament, several present and former Members of Provincial Councils, members of LAs and several civil society activists.

The “Regional Development and Governance: The Role of Provincial Councils” project is based on the need identified by the partner for a better and more informed understanding of regional governance and experiences of provincial councils and provinces by both policymakers and the public at large. Project activities were designed based on discussions at the partner’s workshop.

The project will include consultations in all nine of Sri Lanka’s provinces on the experiences of provincial councils and implications of the implementation of the 13th Amendment. In addition, a booklet will be developed analyzing the same issues and experiences. This booklet will be aimed at policymakers, government officials, and politicians. It will serve as the basis for a series of newspaper supplements aimed at the general public. All publications will be made available in Sinhala, Tamil, and English.

This grant was approved and signed at the close of the fiscal year. Activities are expected to get underway early next quarter.

I.5 CROSSCUTTING ACTIVITIES

I.5.1 ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT



SuRG received 91 Concept Notes in response to an APS issued in March. Representatives from 24 organizations based in the East and Polonnaruwa were chosen to submit full proposals. Their representatives were trained in program development and proposal design using log frame analysis and the ‘Do No Harm’ framework.

SuRG issued an Annual Program Statement (APS) targeting NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs), professional or trade associations, Chambers of Commerce, trade unions, religious institutions, cooperative societies, and other civil society organizations (CSOs) with headquarters in the Eastern or North Central Provinces to implement programs that advance SuRG objectives and complement SuRG activities. Through the APS, grants of between SL Rs. 500,000 and 3,500,000 will be awarded for projects of up to one year in duration.

Ninety-one concept notes were received from the above-mentioned range of agencies and organizations. Two proposals from government organizations and one from a Colombo-based organization were deemed ineligible and not

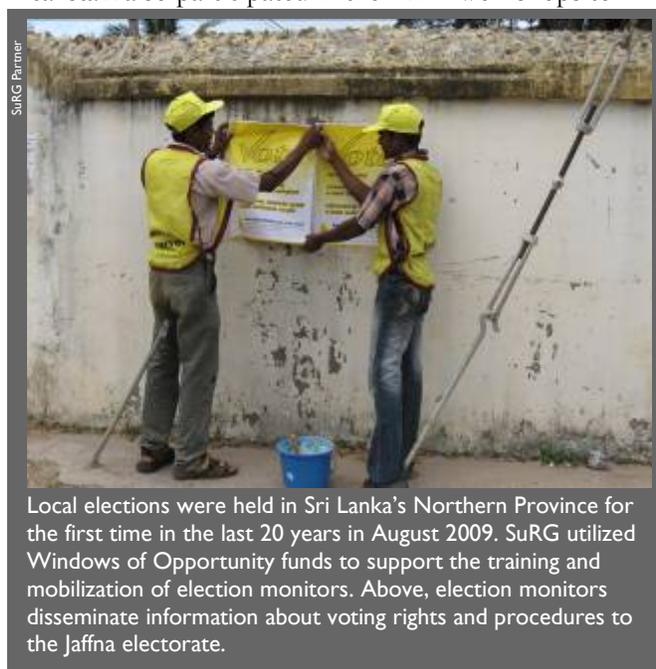
reviewed. Concepts were submitted in Tamil, Sinhala, and English, and reviewed in the language submitted. The SuRG technical review team recommended 24 concept notes be invited to submit full proposals, including seven organizations that had submitted concept notes earlier and attended a SuRG proposal development workshop.

The table below shows the number of concept papers reviewed and recommended by district.

Concept Papers Received and Recommended by District		
District	Number Received	Number Recommended
Ampara	22	6
Batticaloa	25	5
Trincomalee	29	7
Polonnaruwa	15	6
Total	91	24

Representatives from organizations that submitted concept papers recommended to proceed in the grants cycle were invited to participate in a proposal development workshop held two weeks prior to the deadline for submission of a full proposal. Three residential workshops were held, one in Sinhala and two in Tamil. One workshop was designed and delivered by SuRG staff. Two later workshops were tailor-made and delivered for SuRG by MDF South Asia. SuRG technical staff also participated in the MDF workshops to ensure that the content addressed SuRG, ARD, and USAID priorities, policies, and requirements. Workshops covered the full project cycle including problem statements, log frame analysis, developing and designing activities, monitoring and evaluation, and finance and budgeting.

Following the workshops, SuRG received 24 proposals. The proposals were submitted in the language of choice of the applicant. All Sinhala and Tamil proposals were then translated into English. SuRG senior technical staff and the COP reviewed all 24 proposals. They were reviewed in the language written by those staff who read that language and in translation by the remaining staff. All proposals from Trincomalee and Polonnaruwa were reviewed by technical staff from the Trincomalee office. All proposals from Batticaloa and Ampara were reviewed by technical staff from the Ampara office.



Local elections were held in Sri Lanka's Northern Province for the first time in the last 20 years in August 2009. SuRG utilized Windows of Opportunity funds to support the training and mobilization of election monitors. Above, election monitors disseminate information about voting rights and procedures to the Jaffna electorate.

A review committee comprised of SuRG senior technical and grants staff, the COP, and ARD's home office Grants Specialist reviewed all 24 proposals. Eleven proposals were selected to move forward in the selection process, which included pre-award risk determination and follow up visits for further information and clarification by SuRG technical staff. After those visits, nine proposals were selected for grants. SuRG technical teams have been working closely with the proposed grantees to finalize their proposals and budgets. The process required extensive technical assistance by SuRG staff and has indicated a much lower level of capacity and ability to conceptualize and articulate programming goals and implementation plans than expected. Grants to all nine organizations will be ready for approval in the coming quarter.

I.6 WINDOWS OF OPPORTUNITY

Once the war ended in May, SuRG identified documentation (including birth, marriage, and death certificates and NICs) needs as a critical area for intervention. SuRG had preliminary discussions with potential implementing partners for documentation. As of this writing, none have been able to gain access to address documentation needs.

Soon after the government's victory in the north, elections for the Jaffna Municipal Council and the Vavuniya Urban Council were scheduled for August. These were the first such elections in more than two decades and would potentially be the first step in a process of political normalization in the north. Domestic election monitors were one of few avenues for monitoring and observation of the campaign and election. SuRG provided grants to train and deploy monitors for those elections.

I.6.1 GRANTS

ARD028

Project	Campaign for Free and Fair Elections – Sri Lanka: Monitoring the Elections in Jaffna and Vavuniya
Grant Award	Rs. 2,335,650
Dates	15 July 2009–30 September 2009

The partner monitored and observed all aspects of the Jaffna Municipal and Vavuniya Urban Council elections from a procedural as well as a rights-based perspective. The partner's election monitoring and observation started prior to the start of this grant (20 June) and continued through 14 August. They provided daily updates on their website, held four press conferences and issued six press releases. The partner provided training to 90 monitors and on election day deployed 46 monitors in Jaffna and 37 in Vavuniya, covering all polling stations; as well as three monitors in Jaffna IDP camps, and four monitors at polling stations in IDP camps in Kalutara, Gampaha, Puttlam, and Annaradapura They employed special mobile monitoring vehicles in Vavuniya based on observations in the pre-election period that indicated potential tension and problems in Muslim areas.

ARD029

Project	Monitoring Violence in the Local Elections in Jaffna and Vavuniya
Grant Award	Rs. 2,560, 750
Dates	16 July 2009–30 September 2009

The partner monitored and observed the Jaffna Municipal and Vavuniya Urban Council elections, deploying 35 stationary monitors in selected polling stations in Jaffna (82%) and Vavuniya (100%) which were identified as being either critical in nature, based on reports received during the campaign period, and/or representative of the types of issues that could be encountered on polling day. Eleven stationary monitors were deployed in cluster booths set up for the Jaffna Municipal Council election in Colombo, Puttalam, Kalutara, Anuradhapura, and Gampaha. Four mobile teams were fielded on election day to assess the external environment with regard to the polls.

I.7 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

In October, SuRG submitted a comprehensive Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) as a tool for monitoring and evaluating program activities, tracking results and performance, and reporting to USAID. In addition,

SuRG has developed reporting formats for each grantee to track and report their outcomes and results. SuRG monitoring and evaluation staff provide ongoing technical assistance to all grantees to help them report accurately and appropriately on their activities. They also work closely with program staff and have led training on logical framework analysis and managing and reporting results, as part of the proposal development training described above.

1.8 LESSONS LEARNED

As noted above, the dynamic, sensitive, and restricted environment in which SuRG operates requires vigilance and pragmatic adjustment to the strategy and programming, to ensure that programming addresses current needs and issues and that the program remains focused on the achievement of agreed-upon objectives and results. It also provides a number of important lessons learned for ongoing programming as indicated below:

- **Capacity of local partners is weak.** SuRG has intentionally reached out to CSOs in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa district that are, in the main, new to SuRG programming. Our call for proposals through an APS elicited a huge response. However, in spite of providing a five-day residential training program on proposal and program development to 24 organizations, significant additional hands-on technical assistance from SuRG staff is required for these organizations to effectively conceptualize, articulate, and ultimately implement and report on meaningful programs.

Mitigation strategy: Building in more technical assistance and capacity-building activities earlier and throughout the APS proposal process and extending ongoing training and skills development for grantees.

- **Process matters.** In a fragile and volatile environment, gaining the trust needed for meaningful partnerships takes time and ongoing commitment. SuRG has worked hard in this first year listening to the concerns of local communities, organizations, and officials and getting to know key players and potential change agents and helping them to get to know and understand SuRG. This process is needed if SuRG is to build the reliable local contacts and sources of information on local dynamics on the ground necessary for effective and strategic programming.
- **Regional and local SuRG programming needs to be tied to broader national level governance initiatives.** Current trends make it imperative that SuRG engage not only at the local and regional levels but also at the national level.

Mitigation strategy: New programming at the national level is being initiated that addresses issues directly related and relevant to issues SuRG is dealing with at the local level

2.0 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

In June, USAID sent ARD a modification of Section C and F of the project contract and requested ARD submit a budget realignment to address the proposed changes in activities and operations. ARD submitted its proposed budget, suggestions for adjustments in Section C, and a candidate for Deputy COP as indicated in the modified Section F at the end of June. The modification of Sections C and F were signed on August 26, 2009.

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