



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2010 QUARTERLY REPORT



FEBRUARY 2011

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Tetra Tech ARD, Inc.

Prepared for the United States Agency for International Development, USAID Contract Number
383-C-00-08-000501-00

Tetra Tech ARD Home Office

Address:

Tetra Tech ARD, Inc.
159 Bank Street, Suite 300,
Burlington, VT 05401
Tel: 802 658-3890, Fax 802 658-4247
www.ardinc.com

Cover Photo:

Women from Muslim and Tamil communities light candles to commemorate International Human Rights Day at an Ampara.

Photo courtesy of SuRG Partner

SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2010 QUARTERLY
REPORT

FEBRUARY 2011

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

CONTENTS

- ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS I**
- INTRODUCTION 1**
- 1.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES..... 3**
 - 1.1 SOCIAL EQUITY..... 3
 - 1.1.1 Grants and Subcontracts 3
 - 1.1.2 Training 9
 - 1.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION..... 10
 - 1.2.1 Grants..... 10
 - 1.2.2 Capacity Building and Training 13
 - 1.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE..... 15
 - 1.3.1 Training and Technical Assistance 15
 - 1.3.2 Language Training 20
 - 1.4 OPEN DIALOGUE..... 20
 - 1.4.1 Grants..... 20
- 2.0 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION 23**

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLG	Assistant Commissioner of Local Government
APS	Annual Program Statement
AU	American University
CDG	Community Development Groups
CEaT	Community Empowerment and Transformation
CEB	Ceylon Electricity Board
CJ	Chief Justice
CLG	Commissioner of Local Government
COTR	Contractor's Technical Representative
CM	Community Meetings
DS	Divisional Secretary
ER	Emergency Regulations
EU	European Union
FMPC	Forum of Members of Provincial Councils
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GN	Grama Niladhari
HR	Human Rights
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
JSC	Judicial Services Commission
LA	Local Authority
LG	Local Government
LLRC	Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MLGPC	Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils
MOH	Medical Officer of Health
MPA	Muslim Peace Assembly
MSI	Management Systems International
NELSIP	North East Local Services Improvement Project
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Identity Card
OLD	Official Language Department
PC	Provincial Council
PGF	Participatory Governance Forum
PTF	Presidential Task Force
PHI	Public Health Inspector
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PS	Pradeshiya Sabha
Q	Quarter
RDA	Roads Development Authority
RDS	Rural Development Society
RISE	Reintegration and Stabilization of the East Program
Rs.	Rupees
SE	Social Equity
SLCJ	Sri Lanka College of Journalism
SSA	Social Scientists Association
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
SuRG	Supporting Regional Governance Program
TDMS	Trincomalee District Media Society
ToT	Training of Trainers
UC	Urban Council
UN	United Nations
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
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 initiative was designed to build on USAID/Sri Lanka's democracy and governance efforts to address development needs resulting from the ongoing conflict. The program supports regional governance in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa District by focusing on four program components (social equity, local governance, community empowerment and transformation, open dialogue) with crosscutting activities that reinforce governance improvements around the betterment of human and community security. After the defeat of the Tamil Tigers (LTTE) by the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) in May 2009, SuRG expanded its programming to include the Northern Province. In December 2010, USAID extended ARD's base period from February 2011 to June 2012.

This report covers the period from October 1–December 31, 2010, and details progress on contract implementation activities and management and administration. Highlights for the quarter include:

- A SuRG partner pursued 148 human rights violations cases in courts.
- A SuRG partner created a referral network, helping connect human rights victims with assistance organizations capable of helping claimants pursue redress and remedies through training for 79 human rights defenders in Jaffna, Mannar, and Vavunia.
- Another SuRG partner provided legal advice to 124 clients (from the districts of Batticaloa, Ampara, Jaffna and Nuwara Eliya) and filed six legal cases. The partner also conducted two prison visits in Vavuniya to provide legal counseling and advice to detainees.
- A SuRG partner continued its advocacy on the habeas corpus remedy and the right to liberty under Fundamental Rights jurisdiction with 38 lawyers and 10 activists from Trincomalee, Jaffna and Galle/Matara.
- Thirty-one lawyers from the Eastern Province were trained by SuRG on “Issues of Conflict Related Deaths and Disappearances.”
- Three regional partners together provided legal assistance to 107 victims of human rights violations.
- A partner in Batticaloa printed 240 illustrated leaflets on fundamental rights, gender-based violence, access to marriage laws and children's issues, and advocacy. These were distributed among schools, government offices and other public institutions in its area of activity.
- Thirty-eight students completed the first of its kind Human Rights Diploma program in Ampara.
- One hundred and nine early warning alerts were sent out through a community Early Warning System. Alerts informed citizens of important issues and events including disaster and health information, public service messages, public functions such as the LLRC meetings and cultural events.
- Six SuRG partners under the CEaT component conducted Sinhala and Tamil language training for 374 people.
- Thirty-five community-level projects in Polonnaruwa identified through partner project PRAs were included in their LA 2011 Development Plan.
- A mobile legal clinic was conducted in four villages in Polonnaruwa District through which 75 national identity cards, 75 birth certificates, and 67 land use certificates were issued.
- “Trinco Voice,” a partner newsletter, was launched with the participation of staff, media course students, and Provincial Council members. Action has been taken by the local Urban Council on issues highlighted in the newsletter.

- One-hundred forty-six local officials from 44 LAs in the Eastern Province attended workshops on Participatory Governance and on Leadership and Legislation for local government authorities.
- All 37 PSs and Ampara UC in the Eastern Province completed participatory mid-term development plans.
- Thirty-seven PSs in the eastern provinces and one in Polonnaruwa have started to use the accounting software package developed by SuRG
- Thirty-one representatives from 10 SuRG partner organizations were trained in gender, program implementation, management, and monitoring and evaluation.

1.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

1.1 SOCIAL EQUITY

The SuRG Social Equity (SE) team continued to support and monitor ongoing national partner activities. Field staff worked closely with regional partners to monitor their activities and provide ongoing technical assistance in program management and implementation. Technical assistance was also provided in group settings at the Quarterly Review Meeting (see Section 1.2.2 below for details) and at a district partner meeting.

The district partner meeting this quarter focused on access to legal aid services, referrals and networking among partners. The participants included all SuRG grantees from Trincomalee and Polonnaruwa implementing activities under all SuRG components as well as potential new grantees from Trincomalee. Representatives from national SE partners were invited to discuss their legal aid services and referral processes. A total of 22 representatives of 11 organizations participated in the meeting. Partners engaged in a lively discussion around the value of referrals to Colombo and pursuing cases in court since they so rarely provide a satisfying legal remedy. Legal assistance providers argued strongly that cases should be taken to court regardless in order to ensure proper documentation and ongoing attention to critical HR issues.

The meeting proved particularly useful for Polonnaruwa partners, as they were entirely unaware of human rights groups working in their region. National partners took the opportunity to provide contact information for their partner, which operates in Polonnaruwa. They were also able to introduce their local partner to Trincomalee participants.

The SuRG lawyers training program continued this quarter as well with a workshop for young lawyers from the east. Incorporating lessons learned from a similar SuRG workshop held for young lawyers from the north last August, the SE team conducted a workshop for 31 lawyers from the Eastern Province on “Issues of Conflict Related Deaths and Disappearances.”

1.1.1 GRANTS AND SUBCONTRACTS

In addition to monitoring and support for ongoing grants as described below, the SE team worked closely to finalize a proposal submitted and pre-selected under the APS last fiscal year. The project will build the capacity of Women Rural Development Societies (WRDSs) and its members, to provide legal documents to community members. ARD will submit these proposals to USAID for approval once its contract for SuRG is extended for long enough to implement a year-long program.

In addition, technical assistance was provided to the potential partners in Polonnaruwa and Ampara to help them further develop ideas presented in proposals submitted under the APS but not selected due to lack of capacity of the organization.

SuRG staff visited the organization in Polonnaruwa to identify needs and the best way forward for collaboration. A consultant was identified who has experience working with small community-based human rights organizations and who also has a strong understanding of the human rights challenges and the

communities in which it works. The consultant will be hired to provide technical assistance to the partner with SuRG support in an effort to help build its capacity in order to qualify for later SuRG or other donor funding for their work with women and children and on documentation. ARD submitted a request for approval to USAID for the consultant at the end of the quarter. Technical assistance is due to get underway early next quarter.

SuRG staff also worked with the group in Batticaloa to help them develop their concept on the effect of the implementation or non-implementation of Shari'a law in the two Muslim communities in Batticaloa District. The SuRG APS review panel felt the issues raised were worth pursuing but the proposal, as presented, was overly ambitious and not feasible for implementation. SuRG hoped they would take a targeted approach more in line with SuRG parameters for funding. After repeated visits and feedback from SuRG, the organization was still unable to submit a proposal that met SuRG criteria and the final proposal submitted in November was rejected.

Activities under ongoing grants are detailed below.

ARD010

The partner continued work on its "Strengthening Housing Land and Property Rights in Eastern Sri Lanka" project in spite of visa difficulties faced by the Country Director causing him to unexpectedly be asked to leave the country. In late October, after several delays, the partner received approval from the Ministry of Public Administration to carry out 12 trainings for government officials countrywide, with specific mention of districts in the north and east. Working with the support of the District Secretary (i.e. Government Agent) and other relevant local officials, the partner held its first workshop for 35 GNs in Batticaloa in December. The training focused on introducing legal concepts pertaining to land and property; improving the understanding of the participants on practical issues impeding the housing land property restitution (HLPR) process and addressing such concerns. Based on the pre-workshop needs assessment conducted last quarter, emphasis was placed on increasing participants understanding of land documentation. The two remaining workshops are scheduled to be held in the north in January and March.

The partner also conducted a two-day training on property and restitution targeting the NGO community. The workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (CHA) in the northern district of Vavuniya on 26-27 October. The 29 participants included representatives from NGOs and 3 participants from UN agencies. In the post-evaluation training, the participants indicated that their agencies would now be better able to identify housing, land and property rights (HLPR) issues and work towards addressing them, and be in a better position to advocate restitution on behalf of IDPs and returnees. The participants requested follow-up workshops specifically looking at property issues and documentation with regard to IDPs and returnees in the north.

A policy brief, developed in the previous quarters, on the right to adequate housing in the post-conflict context, was circulated to both government and nongovernmental stakeholders. The partner plans to distribute copies of the policy brief at scheduled meetings and trainings with both government and nongovernmental agencies.

The partner submitted its draft of a report on shifting land patterns in the east to SuRG in November. After careful review, ARD determined that the report did not meet the partner's obligation as set out in its grant agreement with ARD. The paper did not provide any new information and in light of recent reports on land in the east, it is unlikely much new information could be gained at this point in time. ARD rejected the research and disallowed all costs incurred on the activity.

The partner has requested a no-cost extension to complete remaining activities in the grant and include additional training workshops in the north. Once discussions are complete and details on activities finalized, ARD will grant the no-cost extension.

ARD022

The partner completed its project this quarter. Activities were spread across 62 communities and implemented with co-funding from the European Commission.

This quarter, the partner maintained its emphasis on its Community Development Group (CDG) activities to build credibility and strengthen relations at the community level. They conducted 9 *shramadana* activities with the participation of community members and project motivators. A majority of the activities targeted dengue prevention through clean-up activities in pre-schools, community centers and religious temples. In addition, the partner responded to identified community needs through the implementation of small-scale projects. Projects included provision of furniture, playground equipment and a sustainable water source to pre-schools, the provision of reading material to community libraries, and renovation of public resources such as the community center and the water well. Furthermore, the partner and its CDGs worked closely with an ethnic Tamil school in the district of Kilinochchi to carry out an emotional wellness training for 106 school students (68 females; 38 males) affected by the conflict. The CDGs also utilized group funds to improve livelihood activities such as starting up yoghurt and dried fish production, weaving of bamboo mats, poultry and cattle farming, goat rearing and home gardening, in 50 project communities in 8 districts.

The partner also continued its training for its 62 project motivators. The training, to improve motivators' capacity focused on social mobilization, documentation of human rights, and microenterprise development.

The partner this quarter provided 124 clients (from the districts of Batticaloa, Ampara, Jaffna and Nuwara Eliya) with legal advice and filed 6 legal cases. They also conducted 2 prison visits in Vavuniya to provide legal counseling and advice to detainees.

The partner worked closely with its motivators and trained them on human rights-related topics throughout the project period, which has enabled the partner to provide much required support at the grassroots level on human rights issues. The CDGs were successful on many occasions in mobilizing communities and helping them address human rights violations. They were able to address critical concerns such as the lack of documentation for returnee families; provide much-needed livelihood activities; support local works and service needs; register voters; and raise awareness on voter registration and elections. These activities helped bolster the profile of CDGs and the motivators as a legitimate voice representing the interests of the community, thus allowing them to provide much-needed legal advice and support to victims of human rights violations. The partner is continuing these activities with ongoing support from the European Commission and other funders.

ARD042

During this quarter, the partner pursued 148 (124 ongoing and 24 new) cases including fundamental rights, magistrate court cases, high court cases (including 45 *habeas corpus* claims and 1 massacre case), and appellate claims. Of the 24 new matters this period, 14 were filed in the courts, and 10 are ready for filing in the coming months. In addition, cases concluded during the reporting period reflected the release of 3 detainees, 2 indictments, 4 transfers, and 9 voluntary dismissals by the detainee.

Complementing its legal representation work, in October the partner conducted training on human rights for 79 representatives from civil society, teachers, students, religious organizations and women's groups from Jaffna, Mannar and Vavuniya districts. Besides raising awareness, the trainings have created a referral network, helping connect victims with assistance organizations capable of helping claimants pursue redress and remedies. Training participants have reported 11 missing person cases, 7 cases of arrest and detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), and several issues related to land rights.

ARD040

Building upon the research on habeas corpus and fundamental rights jurisdiction commissioned under its first SuRG grant, the partner held two-day advocacy consultations in Galle/Matara, Trincomalee, and Jaffna.

Issues addressed included non-existent or lapsed detention orders, application of habeas corpus to surrenderees, jurisdiction, and venue.

The partner's awareness-raising activities also engaged judges, although participation was subdued on account of a circular issued by the Judicial Services Council (JSC) prohibiting participation in discussions without prior approval of the JSC.

Implementation of project activities this quarter was hampered by the inclement weather in December. Consultation workshops scheduled for Batticaloa and the Central Province for January were delayed on account of flooding.

ARD041

During this period, the partner continued its Human Rights Education program activities through their Certificate Course in Human Rights and the Advanced Course in Human Rights. There are a combined 51 students, 42 Tamils and 9 Muslims, participating in the two programs. Eight sessions were conducted for the Certificate Course out of 15 planned sessions for the entire life of the project period. Seven sessions were conducted for the Advanced Studies Course out of 30 planned sessions for the entire life of the project period.

In December, the partner distributed approximately 800 copies of their pamphlet on domestic violence to USAID/SuRG-funded partner organizations, the Legal Aid Commission in Muthur and Trincomalee, and participants at the SuRG Eastern Province Lawyers' Workshop. The USAID/SuRG-funded publication was aimed at helping women from the region become aware of their rights and remedies as they pertain to domestic violence. Published in Tamil only, the pamphlet includes legal text on the subject matter and simplifies the language in order for women in villages to be able to understand the content. Two hundred copies have been sent to a partner organization in Jaffna. This publication is the first in a series of four publications.

The partner also continued to provide assistance to families with members held in welfare, detention and rehabilitation centers. The partner supported 52 beneficiaries with care packs and travel expenses on two occasions during this quarter. The partner also continued its livelihoods and psychological support program for 30 female head of households. Twelve of these households were selected during the quarter; the remaining 18 were from the previous program. The partner continued its support workshops for all 30 female head of households focusing on identifying personal crises, confidence building, and moving from dependency to inter-dependency to self-reliance. Eighteen children of these beneficiaries were provided with financial support ranging from Rs. 100 to Rs 1500 depending on the need to pay for their education.

ARD020

The partner continued its work on their "Raising Awareness of Human Rights in Vulnerable Communities of Ampara District" project.

During this quarter, 17 human rights awareness-raising sessions were conducted in 6 villages. Four hundred and twenty-one beneficiaries (139 Tamil and 282 Muslims) participated in these programs. Participants were drawn from Women's Rural Development Societies, Fisheries Societies, Rural Development Societies, Youth Clubs, and local CBOs. The sessions focused on general knowledge about fundamental and human rights, women and children's rights, legal mechanisms available to address violations, judicial



decisions on abuses of these rights and provided information on local NGOs, INGOs and other service providers working in the area that provide support to victims. The sessions addressed issues of corruption and discrimination and assisted beneficiaries to assess their own understanding of human rights, and to develop strategies to be adopted when they witness human rights violations.

Three mobile legal clinics were conducted in three villages. During the three clinics, the partner's network of lawyers and lawyers from the Legal Aid Commission, the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Human Rights Commission provided advice on 52 cases including disappearance, land disputes, civil documentation processing, fraud, matrimonial disputes and discrimination. Of these cases, 50 were initiated by females and 2 by males. The beneficiaries were made up of 32 Tamils and 20 Muslims.

The partner's Diploma in Human Rights Course, which started in July 2010, came to an end in December. Of the 45 students who registered, 38 completed the course and received graduation certificates. Seven dropped out due to relocation and the inability to travel to the classes each week. Since completing the course, 5 graduates have already conducted community awareness-raising sessions on human rights in their respective villages, discussing women and child rights, basic legal principles, spousal maintenance and domestic violence. Three journalists who participated in the course wrote articles related to women and child rights on the basis of what they learned in the course.

ARD021

The partner continued its "Raising Awareness of Human Rights amongst Vulnerable Women and Adolescents" project in Ampara District. The project builds on the partner's previous work and community savings and credit groups to identify those in need of psycho-social and legal assistance.

During this reporting period, the partner conducted 13 psycho-social group sessions at monthly meetings for 53 women identified for support in previous quarters. In addition to these group support meetings, the partner's counselor also visits each woman at her home to spend time with each individual recipient of support and her family members and to observe family interaction. This quarter, 53 of these door-to-door home visits were made.

The partner also continued to follow 26 legal cases identified through mobile clinics and referred to service providers in previous quarters. During this reporting period, 5 cases were concluded as indicated in the chart below.

During the quarter, the partner also helped 13 people who attended training in previous quarters obtain birth certificates. They also held district quarterly review meetings in each of the three project districts.

ARD017

During the reporting period, the partner continued their community peacebuilding meetings, bi-monthly meetings, early warning networking, legal advice services, Sinhala classes and the publication of leaflets with human rights-related themes.

Fifteen Community Meetings (CMs) in five sets of bordering Tamil and Muslim villages affected by the conflict are paired together for meetings. Each pair held three meetings this quarter attended in total by 574 participants. Issues raised included student dropouts, fishermen conflicts, bus scheduling, farmers' issues, and matrimonial issues.

Of great concern to participants is the current high student dropout rate. Parents from all communities are concerned about the lack of teachers for math, English and Tamil, and the financial difficulty sending their children to school entails. Particularly vulnerable are children whose fathers were killed in the war or tsunami. In response, through the CMs, educated volunteers came forward to conduct free evening classes for poor students in the remote villages. Seven teachers stepped forward benefitting 50 students (see details in box, "Community Committees Respond to Concerns about Local Schools").

Partner Community Committees Respond to Concerns about Local Schools

At community meetings (CMs) facilitated by a SuRG partner, community representatives took on the issues of children's education. The lack of qualified teachers in the schools for critical subjects such as mathematics and science was of great concern. As such, the parents in the community asked the CM to look into the matter and help find ways to improve the situation. Community elders and religious leaders also highlighted the rising number of young boys skipping school and inculcating habits of smoking and drinking among their peers.

In response, the partner worked with the relevant GN in the villages to facilitate evening classes for the students. Everyone involved agreed to the idea: the GNs provided the venue— either in the village community center or cultural hall; and pre-school teachers and under-graduates living in the villages agreed to volunteer their time each week to conduct lessons in mathematics, science and English and Tamil languages.

The first evening class was conducted on 25 October, 2010 and since, the numbers of students have visibly increased as the message spread to neighboring villages allowing parents to send their children to the classes as well. At present, 56 students from three villages are receiving lessons from 7 volunteers.

For one 10-year-old who is currently studying in grade 5, the lessons have become a welcome change. "Nobody has ever conducted additional classes like these for us. We could not even sit for the grade 5 scholarship examination this year because we were not prepared. This is the first time such evening classes are being performed in our area and now, I am looking forward to doing better in school in 2011."

In October, an awareness-raising session with CMs was held to discuss laws related to marriage. The consequences of early marriages and being without marriage certificates were the key issues for discussion. Fifteen married couples without marriage certificates were identified and with the assistance of the Grama Niladharies and the Registrar of Marriages, 11 of the couples had their marriages officially registered and certificates issued.

Overall, CMs this quarter identified 18 issues to address and resolved six; outstanding issues will be discussed further in subsequent bi-monthly meetings with stakeholders.

The partner also organizes bi-monthly meetings for representatives from all 10 project villages to interact and discuss issues which were not sorted out in the CMs. This quarter, two bi-monthly meetings were conducted with the participation of 159 people. The main issues discussed included difficulties faced by widows and their children; insufficient alimony or child care payments; educational standards of local schools; and the high dropout rate of students. A "Saraswathy Pooja" (a Hindu religious observance which takes place at a temple) was performed with participation from both Tamil and Muslim representatives. The partner also organized two plays—one on the importance of education and the other, in relation to the partner's early warning system, on rumours and the importance of verifying information.

During the reporting period, 109 SMS text messages were sent to 260 network members through the partner's early warning system. The partner's early warning network includes government officials, Grama Niladharies,

journalists, important community representatives, school principals, teachers, and Civil Security Groups. This quarter the partner reached out to the business community to expand the network. During the post-war period, fewer messages are required. The system is now more frequently used to communicate information about community meetings, government service announcements, mobile services, domestic violence and disaster information, and has proven particularly useful to get information to remote villages. For example, when the LLRC met in Valaichenai, the partner used the early warning system to inform people about the meeting. As a result, at least 22 who would not otherwise have been aware of the meeting were able to attend. In other instances, three cases of child abuse were reported resulting in the children being admitted to the hospital and the accused being handed over to the police.

The partner also published and distributed leaflets covering domestic violence and its consequences; fundamental rights; aspects of marriage law and access to advocacy. The leaflets provide information in a straightforward and simple manner with illustrations and common language so that they will be useful to

community members regardless of their education level. Two hundred forty leaflets were strategically placed in each Divisional Secretariat, and in schools, hospitals, Grama Niladhari's offices, Ministry of Health offices, police stations, post offices, WRDS and RDS offices, and throughout project communities.

Under its legal advice services component, the partner received 39 cases during mobile legal clinics including human rights violations, child abuse cases, problems with marriage documents and land disputes. Fourteen matrimonial cases were referred to a legal aid provider, 1 matrimonial matter was referred to the Mediation Board, 6 torture and missing persons cases were referred to the Human Rights Commission Batticaloa, 3 child abuse cases were referred to the probation department and police station, 12 documentation cases were referred to the DS office, two abduction and missing persons cases were referred to the police, and 1 land dispute was referred to the Mediation Board.

"I really appreciate the effort of USAID and its team here today. The knowledge that I gained in this workshop is immeasurable. In my six years of practice I took on only one case on partition, because of my poor knowledge in this subject. Fortunately, I could clear many of the questions I had regarding this law and am confident to say I am now better prepared to take on cases regarding partition. .. Similarly, I was fed up of handling disappearance cases because I could hardly help the family. But, at this workshop, I was able to learn many new things in this subject area and I realized that I can do more for the victim's family.

Attorney-at-Law, participant in SuRG Lawyers' Training

1.1.2 TRAINING

"USAID's Sri Lanka Supporting Regional Governance Program has embarked on a truly useful project. They have resolved to provide lawyers from the north and east with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with legal issues that have arisen in a post conflict scenario in the provinces of the north and east of Sri Lanka.

Retired Supreme Court Judge, Resource Person at SuRG Lawyers' Training

The second in a series of workshops for lawyers in the north and east on critical legal issues in the post-war period was conducted this quarter for 31 lawyers from the Eastern Province. The workshop on "Issues Related to Conflict Death and Disappearances" was modeled on a similar SuRG workshop held last August for lawyers from the Northern Province. The content was based on an informal assessment of training needs for lawyers in the north and east indicating a lack of access to training and resources in Tamil on the documentation of deaths, succession and the partition of land.

Participants at the workshop were nominated by the Sri Lanka Bar Association branches in each district of the east. All participants were required to have no more than 8 years of experience practicing law in the district and be engaged in the provision of legal aid or *pro bono* services to non-governmental organizations or community-based organizations. These sessions were led by a High Court judge, a retired Supreme Court judge, and a senior attorney.

The methodology for the workshop was highly interactive and built on lessons learned from the workshop held in August with lawyers from the north. Participants argued cases, went before the judge in a quasi-mock trial and engaged in a great deal of discussion, helping put presentations into context and providing a practical understanding of key issues.



Lawyers from the east review a case at SuRG's Lawyers' Training conducted in December 2010.

A similar workshop is now being planned for judges in the north and east. The SE team prepared a concept note to present to the Judicial Services Commission. The workshop is tentatively scheduled for April and will be confirmed once official approval is obtained from the JSC.

1.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

“...the highlight of the trip was the visit to the Tamil communities that SuRG’s partner is working with ... what was important was the idea shared that we were not all that different, that our blood was the same. We all seem to pray for the same things: that our children may live without fear of war and the hope of long lasting peace.”

Participant from Polonnaruwa after an exposure visit organized by SuRG Polonnaruwa-based partner to a SuRG Trincomalee-based partner

CEaT staff continued to work with partners in the East and Polonnaruwa—monitoring ongoing activities, providing technical assistance and training, and facilitating networking among partners. Local grantees, after working with SuRG for almost nine months, have shown marked improvement in their ability to implement,



A Police Officer and Director of the Human Rights Commission of Trincomalee address women’s groups at an event to celebrate the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women in November 2010.

manage and report on project activities. Community, women, peace and youth groups have begun to gain legitimacy in their communities and their activities are starting to bear fruit. These activities and general grantee progress is detailed below in Section 1.2.1.

SuRG training this quarter included work on gender and the second of two workshops for partner language trainers from seven grantee organizations providing Tamil and Sinhala classes throughout the east. At the SuRG Quarterly Review meeting, grantees worked together and by organization with SuRG staff on program and financial planning and management, M&E and reporting. The meeting, and all SuRG training activities, are designed to not only provide grantees with technical support and training but to create an ongoing and informal discussion for partner organizations working on similar issues and facing comparable challenges to exchange ideas, best

practices and lessons learned, and as appropriate, coordinate activities and responses to challenges in their communities, districts or province. Details on training activities are provided below in Section 1.2.2.

1.2.1 GRANTS

ARD005

A consultant from American University (AU) was commissioned by SuRG to assess the viability of the partner in the post-war context and make recommendations on how best to support the Muslim community’s efforts to effectively raise their concerns with national policy makers and among local and regional officials. The assessment was conducted during a visit by the consultant to Colombo, Puttalam, Ampara and Batticaloa.

During his visit, the consultant interviewed a wide array of stakeholders in the Muslim community and concluded that despite numerous challenges since their founding in 2002, the partner provides a rare and necessary space for the Muslim community and its organizations to voice their issues. It maintains strong

links to people throughout the country through their regional offices and is still the lone national-level organization capable of gathering political actors and civil society leaders. It therefore offers unique and direct access to decision makers.

The consultant recommended that donors provide support for the partner to stay operational, including support for basic administrative and programmatic salaries. He suggests that the partner should be given a medium-term commitment to allow them to evolve into their new role as an umbrella organization that combines civil society and direct access to politicians.

The consultant will use information gathered in this assessment to develop a proposal with his colleagues at American University to provide technical assistance and support for the partner.

ARD015

The partner continued work on its “Engaging People’s Fora and Local Authorities to Empower Communities” in Polonnaruwa. During the quarter, LA Standing Committees, set up last quarter with participation from members of the project People’s Forums, convinced the local authority to include 35 community-level projects out of 70 identified through project participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) in the 2011 Development Plan of the local authority. The remaining 35 projects will be addressed through standard procedures where no financial allocation is necessary.

The partner worked with a diverse set of community service providers, including Grama Niladari (GN), the Public Health Inspector (PHI) and police, encouraging them through project activities to visit the communities and address issues within their office’s scope. For example, the PHI participated in project People’s Forum discussions and helped to raise awareness on dengue and engage forum members in prevention programs.

The partner is now working with the LA and local citizens to develop the Citizen Charter specifying roles and responsibilities of local authority members, staff and the communities. The process as well as the outcome is intended to increase collaborative efforts by political stakeholders and the communities. The Citizen Charter, once finalized, will be displayed in strategic locations throughout the community.

ARD014

The partner through its “Community Empowerment and Mobilization for Muslim and Sinhalese Coexistence Project” initiated several activities during the quarter. Two PRAs were conducted and the reports of these PRAs along with six PRAs conducted in previous quarters were shared with relevant stakeholders including the Divisional Secretariat, the LA, the Provincial Department of Education and the Agrarian Services Center.

As a result, the Divisional Secretariat organized mobile clinics in four villages in the Divisional Secretariat Division to provide legal documentation. Through these mobile clinics, 75 national identity cards, 75 birth certificates and 67 land deeds were issued. The Divisional Secretariat also identified 45 families without land that they intend to provide with land for shelter. Furthermore, as a result of sharing PRA reports, the local authority rehabilitated a 200-meter road. They have also rehabilitated a school playground and handed it over to the school. The local authority is also in the process of rehabilitating a tank to provide water to farmers deprived of cultivation due to scarcity of water. The estimated budget for this project is Rs. 119,000.

In October, the partner organized an exposure visit for 61 members of seven project communities to visit a SuRG partner in Trincomalee. The partners identified each other as appropriate partners for this activity through networking discussions they held at SuRG Quarterly Grantees Review Meetings. During the exchange, participants had the opportunity to learn about the other’s program for community development and coexistence among all three communities. As a result of the exchange, Polonnaruwa participants are working with the partner to organize youth and women’s groups similar to those organized by what they saw in Trincomalee in their communities.

Sinhalese and Tamil language classes for Muslim and Sinhalese, respectively, continued throughout the quarter.

In addition to its work with SuRG, the partner has an ongoing loan program with over 2,893 members throughout the Division. In an effort to sustain its ties with the communities it is working with under their SuRG program, the partner is enrolling SuRG project participants as members. Members deposit a share for Rs. 500 which entitles them to secure loans from the partner for investment, infrastructure development, basic needs, agricultural activities, livelihood activities and other purposes. The partner has provided Rs. 130,500 in loans to 165 people in seven villages where the SuRG project is being implemented including Rs. 90,000 for three Sinhala communities and Rs. 40,500 for four Muslim communities.

ARD011

The partner continued its work with the three communities of Trincomalee through its “Promoting Peaceful Community Co-existence through Social Mobilization of Women’s and Youth Groups” project.

During monthly meetings, the women’s groups identified cases relating to domestic violence, child abuse and sexual harassment, including in this quarter, 21 domestic violence, 18 maintenance, 12 school dropout and 2 sexual harassment cases in six villages. Cases were referred to the Psycho-social Officer of the Divisional Secretariat and also to legal aid providers for intervention. Members of the Women’s Groups themselves took on the school dropout cases, speaking to parents, teachers and the school principals to enlist their support in getting the children back to school. Six of the 12 children have resumed their studies.

In order to ensure that these women’s groups function beyond the project period, the partner has helped start a savings program with 217 members from 13 of the project women’s groups. With an initial fee of Rs. 20 to 50 from each person per month, the partner plans to set up a revolving fund for livelihood activities targeting vulnerable women.

Youth groups continued to conduct their monthly meetings, bringing together Tamil and Muslim youth to discuss common issues. In this quarter, the group nominated a Muslim youth to a national Youth Parliament. Although this may seem a small activity, it is noteworthy because all Muslim and Tamil youth groups collectively nominated this person and worked together to campaign for his selection without regard for his ethnic identity.

Other youth advocacy efforts focused on unemployed youth. The Groups advocated with local government officials to include the unemployed area youth in development projects planned for 2011, such as the cleaning of a drainage system. They also requested health volunteers in the villages be considered by the Ministry of Health for nurse assistant positions.



Children participate in an activity at a sports festival in November 2010 to bring together children of all ethnic communities.

Sinhala and Tamil language classes continued this quarter. A final examination is planned early next quarter.

ARD012

The partner’s “Promoting Peaceful Co-Existence through Multi-Ethnic Community Participation” project works with all three communities in two Trincomalee divisions and focuses on youth groups and peace committees.

Youth groups conduct monthly meetings and follow-up activities identified in the action plans developed at the start of the project. For example, two Youth Groups worked together to intervene in the prevention of illicit liquor production. As a result of their advocacy, the Excise Department and the police raided local illicit liquor production establishments. Another Youth Group organized a dengue prevention program with the support of the Public Health Inspector.

One Youth Group focused its advocacy initiatives on the prevention of an unlawful transfer of a teacher due to a dispute he had with a neighbor. The teacher was, according to students and parents among the school's best. The Youth Group and students collected signatures from parents and students and sent them in a petition to the Zonal Director of Education. The Zonal Director took immediate action to prevent the transfer.

The 15 project Peace Committees continue to meet quarterly and address issues identified in their communities as priority areas of concern. Sinhala and Tamil language classes also continued this quarter. A final examination is planned early next quarter.

The partner also organized the commemoration of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and International Human Rights Day. The events included speeches, dance, drama, poem readings and songs on themes related to each day and the need to respect the rights of all people regardless of their ethnicity, sex and creed. The events were attended by members of project Peace Committees and Youth Groups, along with students and other interested members of the community.

ARD016

The partner through its "Relationship Building between Diverse Social Groups in Tamil and Muslim Communities" project initiated several activities during the quarter. The project provides opportunities for Tamil and Muslims to work together on common issues through project youth, farmer, fishermen and women's groups.

The Youth Groups held a *shramadana* activity to clean a water channel, postponed last quarter due to lack of machinery. The chairperson of the local authority supported the initiative by authorizing the use of vehicles for refuse collection and dumping. Tamil and Muslim youth (24 Tamil and 30 Muslim – 25 male and 29 female) participated in the event which was telecast nationally by the Independent Television Network and Derana Television on October 22 and 23.

The partner's coordination with the Youth Service Officer and Divisional Secretariat resulted in the donation of sports equipment worth Rs. 75,000 to the Youth Club. The partner also obtained Rs. 25,000 each for youth club sports equipment in four communities. Sinhala language classes for Muslim and Tamil youth continued to progress over the course of the reporting period. The course is providing basic writing and speaking skills to 81 students.

Women's groups and farmer and fishermen societies continued their monthly meetings at the village level and their quarterly district meetings. At these meetings, fishermen have been focusing on ensuring equipment donated to the community and other society resources are being used in an appropriate manner. The partner is working with the farmers' societies to ensure all eight are registered with the DS. Currently only four are registered. The Women's Groups are addressing priority concerns in their communities such as illicit liquor and working with the partner to secure registration.

1.2.2 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

QUARTERLY GRANTEE REVIEW

A quarterly review meeting for SuRG grantees with participation of 30 representatives from 10 partner organizations from the East and Polonnaruwa was held in early December. Participants reviewed their activities over the quarter, exploring how those activities promote project objectives and results.

Participants held a peer review session providing suggestions and feedback on each partner's progress to date. This collective reflection on achievements and challenges proved beneficial to all partner organizations as they often confront common challenges such as community mobilization, advocacy for effective community service provision, and the promotion of co-existence and tolerance among multi-ethnic communities. Strengths and challenges areas for improvement in implementation over the quarter as identified by partners include:

Strengths:

- More tangible results being achieved through project activities (*e.g., budget allocation by local authority, number of HR cases filed and resolved*).
- Increased engagement of project communities in partner activities and processes (*e.g., increased membership, initiation of savings and loan programs*).
- Increased coordination with governmental and non-governmental service providers.

Areas for Improvement:

- Challenge of providing evidence of project achievements (*e.g., how to provide evidence on trust building among communities*).
- Enhancing the quality of project results by individual partners (*e.g., the impact needs to be wider and sustainable*).
- Need for sustaining and supporting advocacy interventions.
- Sustaining project activities and success beyond the project period (*e.g., the need to continue with registration of societies and peace, youth and women's groups, savings and loan programs*).
- Need to address gender issues institutionally and incorporate gender principles in activities. (*e.g., partner staffing, gender considerations incorporated in design and implementation of activities*).
- The SuRG Monitoring and Evaluation team worked closely with partners to review and verify quarterly data.

In response to requests from partners, a half-day session on gender was conducted. The session focused on the practical application of gender concepts in project design and integration of the same in project activities.

TEACHING TAMIL OR SINHALA AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

The first in a series of Training of Trainer (ToT) workshops for grantee language teachers, a key component in numerous SuRG grants, was held in May 2010. The program in May focused on teaching methodology and course content that was appropriate for teaching in communities rather than formal educational programs.

A follow-up program was conducted in October 2010 for 16 teachers from seven grantee organizations. To prepare for the training session, the lead trainer, who also facilitated the first workshop, made a field visit to Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa and Batticaloa to observe six partner language training programs. During these visits, he observed classes, teaching methodology and student participation. He was able to discuss needs,



SuRG partner staff at the Quarterly Review meeting discuss the integration of gender in their programming.

issues and concerns with both the students and teachers. This information was incorporated into the design and facilitation of the three-day follow-up residential workshop.

The training workshop was conducted by one Tamil and one Sinhala resource person. Sixteen partner language trainers participated in the workshop which focused on course content and teaching techniques. The methodology was highly interactive and included participant teaching demonstrations. Workshop sessions included teaching skills, semantic differences in Sinhala and Tamil, syntactic differences in Sinhala and Tamil, how Sinhala and Tamil sounds change, and how to conduct language tests that effectively evaluate knowledge of the students.

1.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

“According to our staff, before the start of the SuRG program, members and people of the local authority limits were very backward in supporting procedures of good governance. But [at this moment] our staff and council members have achieved the top in the good governing process. My staff said, ‘we gained great knowledge through SuRG program workshops.’ I am very happy to say that participation of people in our council activities is high now. Moreover, all [these] achievements we could not have achieved without the support of SuRG.”

Former Chairman of Partner PS

During this reporting period, SuRG completed its planned technical training sessions for all LAs in the Eastern Province. The training series, which started in April 2010 and was implemented by EML, included the training of 121 elected officials and 309 government officers from all 43 LAs in the Eastern Province and Lankapura in Polonnaruwa.

SuRG is working with EML, training participants, the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners for Local Government and the Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils in Colombo to review the results, lessons learned and best practices of the technical training to prepare for ongoing work in the east and the north.

SuRG also continued its hands-on technical assistance to 11 partner LAs in the east focusing primarily on citizen participation and engagement and application of skills and knowledge learned in the training programs.

Details of these activities as well as progress in language training are provided below.

1.3.1 TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TRAINING

During the reporting period, EML completed its series of training for elected officials and government officers from the Eastern Province and Lankapura, Polonnaruwa with the final sessions on participatory governance for participants from Ampara and Batticaloa and two workshops for all 44 LAs on legislature and leadership. The full series included training on Office Management, Accounting, and Finance; Project Proposal Development and Project Cycle Management; Participatory Governance; and Legislature and Leadership.

Participants have already applied skills and techniques learned at the workshops. Achievements to date from the training workshops include:

- *Participatory Planning and Budgeting:* all 37 PSs in the east and Ampara UC have developed participatory mid-term development plans.
- *Project Proposal Development:* 11 LAs in the east have developed 47 project proposals for NELSIP.
- *Citizen Charters:* All 11 SuRG partner LAs are preparing a citizen charter.

- *Preparation of Office Layout:* All LAs in the east have prepared an office layout prioritizing access to citizens.
- *Accounting and Budgeting:* All 37 PSs in the east and Lankapura PS in Polonnaruwa are using accounting software developed by SuRG.
- At the request of the CLG, a database to store LA information about geography, demographics, development projects, revenue, budgets and expenditures in a uniform manner has been developed and is currently being field tested by the CLG, ACLGs and 11 SuRG partner LAs.
- Participatory Governance Forums (PGFs) set up and meeting monthly in 11 partner LAs.

Participation in Local Governance Training Series	
Function	Number
Elected Official	121
Government Officer	309
Gender	Number
Male	374
Female	56
Ethnic Community	Number
Sinhala	119
Tamil	179
Muslim	132
TOTAL	430

The training program was initially designed at the request of the Chief Secretary and the Commissioner for Local Government (CLG) to help them prepare LAs for the upcoming World Bank NELSIP program which was expected to provide significant funding to be managed directly by PSs in the north and the east. Throughout the process, SuRG and EML worked closely with regional officials, including the Chief Secretary, the CLG and the Assistant Commissioners for Local Government (ACLGs), and representatives from the MLGPC, to ensure that the training sessions addressed priority issues and responded to LA and Ministry needs. However, in spite of regular coordination and communication, participation in the workshops was at times hampered by competing demands, often at the last minute, on participants to attend meetings related to NELSIP.

A further challenge related to long-term impact of the training is the number of trainees who have been transferred out of their positions. By the end of this quarter, 33 of the 309 government officials trained by SuRG had been transferred. Most of these LAs already suffer from insufficient human resources so transferring trained staff can significantly affect proper functioning of the LA.

Finally, it is important to note that the attendance by staff and application of learning is very much dependent on Chairmen and the politics in each LA. Response to the training by Chairmen varied depending on the individual involved. Resistance to new ideas and methods, especially regarding participatory processes and citizen engagement, is a real factor in a number of participating LAs. The hands-on technical assistance provided by SuRG and EML (detailed below) with the 11 partner LAs provided a mechanism to overcome this resistance but it was a slow and careful process. In those LAs where the Chairman was not cooperative and SuRG was not providing follow-up technical assistance, it was very difficult for participants to apply some of the methods and techniques learned in the training sessions.

Participation by Function in Local Governance Workshops					
Function	Participatory Planning	Office Management, Accounting & Finance	Proposal Dev. & Project Cycle Management	Participatory Governance	Legislature & Leadership
Elected Officials					
Chairman	3	16	0	4	23
Vice Chairman	0	0	0	0	15
Member	2	7	1	4	50
Government Officers					
Secretary	13	23	17	17	0

Participation by Function in Local Governance Workshops

Function	Participatory Planning	Office Management, Accounting & Finance	Proposal Dev. & Project Cycle Management	Participatory Governance	Legislature & Leadership
Management Assistant	23	43	26	47	0
Personal Assistant	29	29	19	29	0
Technical Officer	10	6	2	2	0
Community Development Officer	11	5	3	7	0
Revenue Supervisor	2	21	1	3	0

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Ongoing technical assistance in the form of on-site follow-up training and support, formation and facilitation of monthly working group meetings and the formation and implementation of Participatory Governance Forms (PGFs) is provided to SuRG's original 11 LA partners in the east.

This quarter, follow-up to training sessions was provided to six LAs through on-site "Echo Training" at which EML and SuRG staff work directly with LA staff to apply training lessons. In Eravur Town PS, Alayadivembu PS and Muthur PS project proposals were developed for submission to NELSIP. Echo training sessions on bi-law preparation was held in Ampara UC, Ninthavur PS and Verugal PS. Ampara UC drafted a bi-law on the use of public playgrounds. Ninthavur PS drafted a bi-law on the use of their public "Beach Park" and Verugal PS drafted a bi-law on use of the local three-wheeler stand. It should be noted that bi-laws can only be finalized with approval from the Provincial Council and CLG and ACLGs. This has proven to be slow and difficult as these offices lack adequately trained staff and specialized legal officers.



PS staff in Trincomalee are trained on how to use the financial accounting package developed by SuRG for all PSs in the Eastern Province.

Working groups in each of the 11 LAs have been functioning for over a year now. They provide a forum for LA members to discuss monthly priorities, review issues raised and learned in training, practical concerns faced by staff carrying out development activities and proposal development. The issue of senior and key staff transfer to other LAs and to other government departments was raised in a number of the working groups this quarter. The issue was taken up with the CLG, who in turn raised it with the Ministry for further action.

The Participatory Governance Forums (PGFs), consist of citizen and LA representatives. Citizens are represented by village leaders, Rural Development Society presidents and leaders of local community-based organizations. LA members include the SuRG working group members, the LA Chairman, members from both the ruling and opposition parties, the LA secretary and other key staff. The meetings provide a space for community representatives to be directly involved in LA affairs and decisions. Meetings are held monthly and have become a welcome and key method for the community to raise its concerns as well as a means to ensure greater transparency and accountability on the part of the LA.

The following chart details the issues raised at PGFs this quarter.

Participatory Governance Forums: Membership And Priority Issues by Local Authority			
Local Authority	Membership		Priority Issues
	Citizen	LA	
Ampara UC	20	20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road construction – It was decided to identify bad roads for discussion in the next meeting. 2. Solid waste collection – Community representatives requested PS to demolish the road side bins constructed by UNOPS as they are leading to more garbage on roads. Request will be forwarded to UNOPS. 3. Drainage – Concern about poor drainage will be forwarded to RDA for further action. 4. Budget – Community concerns were incorporated in 2011 budget.
Alayadivembu PS	15	15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Controlling mosquito breeding in private lands – Identified landlords of private land and decided to send letters to landlords requesting they keep their lands clean. 2. Flooding – Identified flooded areas with the help of DS and carried out <i>ahramadhana</i> campaigns to clean these areas. 3. Coordination with DS – It was decided to invite DS to PGF meetings.
Ninthavur PS	22	22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordination with other government officers – The issues with regard to water supply connections forwarded to water board for further action and current poor road condition and drainage problems have been referred to RDA. Interrupted construction of buildings by DS under <i>Gama Neguma</i>¹ and <i>Maga Neguma</i>² have been forwarded to DS for further action. It was decided to consult RDA when PS constructs drainage. 2. Complaints handling - PS has taken necessary action to mitigate rain water stagnation in drainage and roads in response to a complaint by PGF. 3. Formation of library committee – The library committee was reformed and activated for the renovation and development of libraries in the PS area. 4. Solid waste collection – The issue of unauthorized dumping was discussed and follow-up actions were identified. 5. Unauthorized cattle breeding in coastal area – Decided to discuss with Coastal Conservation Department and Central Environmental Authority for follow-up action.
Manmunai West PS	15	15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Controlling mosquito breeding in private lands – Identified landlords of private land and decided to send letters to landlords requesting they keep their lands clean. Letter copied to Ministry of Health and Police. 2. Building application approval – Less building applications are received for approval. It was decided to inform CEB to hold electricity for new building until approved by the PS. 3. Solid waste collection – It was decided by the forum to schedule collection route and time and extend to needed area even though PS has no cadre for labor. 4. Budget – Community concerns were incorporated in 2011 budget.

¹ Gama Neguma (uplifting the village) is the GOSL's rural development and poverty alleviation program.

² Maga Neguma (uplifting roads) is the GOSL's nation-wide rural infrastructure program.

Participatory Governance Forums: Membership And Priority Issues by Local Authority			
Local Authority	Membership		Priority Issues
	Citizen	LA	
Eravur town PS	20	15	1. Flooding – Decided to clean drains with the help of RDS of particular village, PS labor and machines.
Manmunai South West PS	15	15	1. Controlling mosquito breeding in private lands – Identified landlords of private land and decided to send letters to landlords requesting them to keep their lands clean. 2. Solid waste collection – It was decided by the Forum to schedule collection route and time and extend to needed area. 3. Budget – Community concerns were incorporated in 2011 budget.
Poratheevupattu PS	16	16	1. Unavailability of night guard – The library at Palayativattai has no night watchman. Decided to assign a watchman according to cadre availability. 2. Condition of roads – Various complaints were made by PGF participants with regard to road conditions.
Muttur PS	17	17	1. Key areas for discussion – The rain water flow in drainages, road side earth filling and solid waste collection unscheduled. 2. Shramadana Campaigns – 12 <i>Shramadana</i> campaigns have been carried out by PGF in various locations and PS provided machines for waste collection.
Thambalagamu wa PS	15	15	1. Key areas for discussion – Renovation of existing roads and drainage. 2. Budget – Community concerns were incorporated in 2011 budget.
Suruwila PS	12	12	1. Preparation one year development plan – One year plan has been planned with the participation of community for the year of 2011. 2. Budget – Community concerns were incorporated into 2011 budget. 3. PGF members to view council meeting proceedings – The Vice Chairman suggested in PGF meeting to provide space for community representatives to witness the proceedings of council meetings.
Verugal PS	12	12	3. Key areas for discussion – The key issues discussed were renovation of existing jetties and gravelling roads. 4. Budget – PGF citizen representatives participated in 2011 budget discussions. 5. Distribution of budget – Chairman agreed to distribute copies of budget among the PGF members.

Also in this quarter, SuRG introduced an electronic accounting package available in both Sinhala and Tamil to all 37 Pradeshiya Sabhas in the Eastern Province and Lankapura PS. The accounting package will replace the manually maintained reporting system previously being used and help local authorities more systematically track and report on their finances.

The accounting package was developed in response to a request from the CLG to support the efforts of PSs to track their financial transactions and effectively and efficiently complete their final accounts. The software was built on a basic system created for Ambagamuwa Ginigathhena PS in Nuwara Eliya. The developer worked with EML and SuRG to develop the user friendly electronic package in both Sinhala and Tamil to meet

“[t]his enables us to start preparing our final accounts which always got delayed because we did not have a proper system in place. I can guarantee this time around, our final account will be submitted on time without the usual delays. This is indeed a milestone in the financial management of our local authorities.”

Chief Management Assistant of SuRG

the needs of the PSs and the MLPCG. By using the new system, PS staff members are able to significantly reduce the time spent tracking transactions and cash inflows on a daily basis.

The package was introduced to PS staff throughout the Eastern Province and in Lankapura at workshops held in Ampara, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Lankapura. Hands-on training was provided in Tamil and Sinhalese and included practical sessions to review the step-by-step guidelines provided with the package. The participants were also trained to train other staff members in their respective local authorities.

1.3.2 LANGUAGE TRAINING

SuRG Tamil and Sinhala language classes for local government officials in 27 PSs of the Eastern Province were completed during last quarter in all PSs except Morawewa and Addalaichenai. The remaining classes that are ongoing will be completed early next quarter. Preparation for post-evaluation examination for all 27 LAs is in progress and the examination is scheduled for next quarter.

1.4 OPEN DIALOGUE

“The course on journalism has been like rain that pours down on a man lost and wandering in the desert, searching desperately for a sip of water.”

Student from partner Diploma in Media course

The Open Dialogue component consists of work with media and civil society. Under this component, SuRG has targeted aspiring journalists by providing scholarships to youth from the north, east and conflict-affected areas to attend the SLCJ Journalism Diploma Programme in Colombo. SuRG also supports scholarships for female youth to attend a partner organized Diploma in Media course for Advance Level graduates in Trincomalee District.

In support of civil society, SuRG signed two new grants to design and implement an electronic M&E system, with technical assistance from MSI M&E experts who will monitor the progress and effectiveness of the partner’s projects in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. This new system is intended to enhance the partner’s ability to communicate and analyze results, challenges and impact of its work with the conflict affected communities in the north and east.

1.4.1 GRANTS

ARD031

Twenty-two scholarship recipients for the 2010 Journalism Diploma Programme at the Sri Lanka College of Journalism completed their final internships, class work and examinations this quarter. Graduation will be held next quarter.

The partner has recruited 60 students to follow the 2011 Journalism Diploma Program which will commence on January 6, 2011. Twenty candidates from 27 applicants from the north, east and hill country estate sector have qualified for 2011 SuRG scholarships. SuRG is currently reviewing the partner’s proposal for the 2011 scholarship program. Once the details are final and the proposal is approved by USAID, the grant will be awarded.

ARD025

Last quarter the partner completed its “Regional Development and Governance: The Role of Provincial Councils” project. SuRG agreed to host a two-day lessons learned workshop with the partner and the Forum of Members of Provincial Councils. Although the workshop was scheduled for October 2010, the event had

to be postponed as ARD could not incur additional unobligated expenses until USAID was able to obligate more funds to the SuRG contract. The workshop has been rescheduled for next quarter.

ARD013

The partner continued its “Strengthening Media in Trincomalee District” project.

Fifteen aspiring women journalists from all three ethnic communities in the Trincomalee District continued the Diploma in Media course and in this quarter, designed and published their own newspaper “*SEITHI*”³ in Tamil and “*THINETHA*”⁴ in Sinhala. The paper includes articles about the Trincomalee District written and edited by the trainees under the supervision of the Director of Institute of Journalism in Trincomalee. The articles deal with educational and transportation facilities available in the district, and the human-elephant conflict and their impact on communities. The newspaper also contain political and sports news and details about historical places in the district.

This training course was also an opportunity for Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim women to interact with each other and to learn Tamil or Sinhala. The trainees organized a *Sarasvathi Pooja*, a Hindu religious rite invoking the blessings of Goddess Sarasvathi on the students to effectively carry out their studies at the Institute of Journalism. This was an event observed for the first time by the non-Hindu trainees of the course. The trainees appreciated the opportunity to learn about other cultural and religious practices.

The launch of the partner’s “Trinco Voice” newsletter was held on November 15, 2010 with the participation of the Trincomalee District Media Society (TDMS) members, SuRG staff, students, and Provincial Council members. At the event, the students collected 25 community issues to be posted on the forthcoming Trinco Voice website. Issues highlighted in the newsletter have drawn the attention of concerned authorities. For instance, an article on the malfunctioning of the Trincomalee Clock tower was published in the October newsletter prompting the Urban Council of Trincomalee to repair the clock and color wash the clock tower.

The partner also continued its IT and language training for TDMS members and Diploma in Media course students. In December, the partner conducted a photo and video editing training for 21 members of TDMS and 7 Diploma in Media students.

ARD043 / ARD044

SuRG awarded a grants to enhance a national partner’s Monitoring and Evaluation capabilities, particularly with regard to the management of donor-funded projects in the north and east. A second grant was awarded to an IT organization in order to build a corresponding electronic M&E database for the national partner. SuRG is also supporting this effort with a team of two consultants from MSI to provide technical assistance throughout the grant period.

“As a Sinhala Buddhist from Kanthale, I have never seen a Hindu religious ritual. But through the program, I was able to experience a very significant and important event to invoke blessings on us and this was a great opportunity for me to learn about Hindu religious practices for the first time.”

Diploma in Media Student

“As a Muslim we don’t normally visit the other religious festivals or religious places. But since the Pooja was conducted at the school, I received the opportunity to experience a Hindu event. This motivated me to learn about religions of non-Muslims. What we should do in the future is to host similar events on all other religions as well.”

Diploma in Media Student

³ News.

⁴ Third Eye.

The national partner received its first technical assistance visit from the MSI consultants November 8-19. The consultants began to develop/refine results frameworks or logframes and indicators for donor-funded projects that the partner is implementing in the north; and develop initial plans for an M&E database to serve as a management and reporting tool for the organization.

The IT partner began its work developing specifications for the M&E database during the MSI consultants' visit in November. They all met on three occasions to develop the concept for the M&E database. The IT partner then reviewed the project frameworks and indicator lists provided by MSI consultants and used this input to begin developing specifications for the database and has indicated they expect the specifications will be completed by the end of January 2011.

The national partner has maintained close contact with the MSI consultants since the end of the first technical assistance visit, holding Skype calls with MSI almost every week to review progress and discuss new challenges as they arise, along with new projects that have been awarded and possibilities for additional donor funding. The national partner will also arrange for the new M&E Officer to be in regular contact with MSI as part of his orientation and training. A second MSI technical assistance visit is planned for February.

2.0 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

The original end date of ARD's SuRG contract was February 28, 2010. USAID had informed ARD unofficially in the previous quarter that the contract would be extended and a budget realignment forthcoming. ARD was instructed by the COTR to hold off on developing and submitting its 2011 work plan until the details of the contract modification and budget realignment were finalized. As such, a tentative work plan was developed based on USAID priorities as indicated to ARD and ongoing programming. Although the work plan has not yet been submitted, work planned for in the quarter has proceeded in close consultation with the COTR.

On October 22, 2010, USAID sent a modification of Section C and request for budget realignment to ARD. After receiving questions from ARD, USAID asked ARD to postpone submission of the realignment until further notice. On December 22, 2010, USAID extended the base period of the SuRG contract until June 2012 and directed ARD to award grants to two U.S.-based organizations. This will require ARD to revise planned programming to ensure sufficient previously planned programming funds are available for the grant.

In August of 2010, ARD informed USAID that 77 percent of funds obligated by USAID for the SuRG contract had been spent. At the start of the quarter, ARD had not yet received an additional obligation and was unable to incur any new expenses or funding obligations until further funds were secured, so as to ensure funds would be available for ongoing costs and outstanding commitments. This resulted in the postponement of a partner Lessons Learned Workshop scheduled for early October. An increase in obligation was received on October 19 and activities resumed as planned. The October workshop was rescheduled for January.

U.S. Agency for International Development/Sri Lanka

44, Galle Road, Colombo 3

Sri Lanka

Tel: +9411-249-8000

Fax: +9411-247-2850

www.usaid.gov