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SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

OCTOBER 2010-SEPTEMBER 2011 | ANNUAL REPORT



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Cover Photo:

Young students participate in afternoon classes organized by SuRG partner to address the lack of qualified teachers in community schools

Photo courtesy of SuRG partner

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLG	Assistant Commissioner of Local Government
AG	Attorney General
APS	Annual Program Statement
AU-PDI	American University – Peacebuilding and Development Institute
CBO	Community Based Organization
CC	Crosscutting
CDG	Community Development Group
CEaT	Community Empowerment and Transformation
CLG	Commissioner of Local Government
COP	Chief of Party
CORE	Connecting Regional Economies Program
COTR	Contractor’s Technical Representative
CM	Crisis Modifier
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation
CM	Community Meeting
DCHA	Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DG	Democracy and Governance
DS	Divisional Secretary
EG	Economic Growth
ER	Emergency Regulations
EWS	Early Warning System
FOD	Friends of Disappeared
FR	Fundamental Rights
FY	Fiscal Year
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GN	<i>Grama Niladbari</i>
HDCC	Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce
HLRP	Housing Land Restitution and Property
HLP	Housing Land and Property
HR	Human Rights
HRC	Human Rights Commission
HRD	Human Rights Defender
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INFORM	Information Monitor
INGO	International NGO
IT	Information Technology
JI	Judges’ Institute

KCP	Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, Inc.
LA	Local Authority
LAC	Legal Aid Commission
LAPP	Land Administration/Protection of Property Program
LG	Local Government
LKR	Sri Lankan Rupee
LLB	Bachelor of Laws
LLM	Master of Laws
LST	Law and Society Trust
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSI	Management Systems International
MLGPC	Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils
NECCDEP	North East Coastal Community Development Project
NEHRP	North East Housing and Reconstruction Programme
NELSIP	North East Local Services Improvement Project
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIC	National Identity Card
OD	Open Dialogue
ODU	Organizational Development Unit
OIC	Officer in Charge
OLD	Official Language Department
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives
PC	President's Counsel
PGF	Participatory Governance Forum
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PS	<i>Pradeshya Sabha</i>
PTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
PTF	Presidential Task Force
Q	Quarter
R2L	Right to Life
RDO	Rural Development Officer
RDS	Rural Development Society
RISEN	Reintegration and Stabilization of the East and North Program
RLF	Revolving Loan Fund
Rs.	Rupees
SC	Supreme Court
SE	Social Equity
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SLCJ	Sri Lanka College of Journalism
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
SuRG	Supporting Regional Governance Program
T.A.	Technical Assistance
TDMS	Trincomalee District Media Society
ToT	Training of Trainers

UC	Urban Council
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNOHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UPFA	United People's Freedom Alliance
WIN	Women In Need
WRDS	Women's Rural Development Society
YA TV	Young Asia Television

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 then ongoing conflict. The program was intended to support regional governance in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa District by focusing on four program components (social equity, local governance, community empowerment and transformation, and open dialogue) with crosscutting activities that reinforce governance improvements around the betterment of human and community security. After the defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (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 the contract base period from February 2011 to June 2012. In February 2011, USAID requested Tetra Tech ARD to submit a budget modification to exercise option year funding and extend the contract to February 2013. A modification to Section C of the contract and the budget was signed in July 2011. The modification to Section C reflects changes in the operating environment in Sri Lanka and USAID programming priorities. It also stipulated that Tetra Tech ARD award grants to the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, the American University, Women in Need and the Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce. Option year funds increased the total budget to \$13,920,762 and the contract end date was extended until February 28, 2013.

For SuRG, political dynamics in the country this year meant that grantees and their activities were more closely monitored, partners and stakeholders more cautious and SuRG continued to seek opportunities to work with the government where possible and objectives overlapped. In this manner, SuRG maintained vigorous programming – concluding a number of activities started up early on in the program, planning for and initiating new activities that will go through the extended contract, awarding new or follow-up grants to 10 Sri Lankan organizations valued at Rs. 52,552,613 and to 2 U.S.-based organizations worth \$737,197 and taking a careful look at results and impact to date to ensure that lessons learned and best practices are incorporated into plans and ongoing and new activities.

As grants issued under last year's Annual Program Statement (APS) came to an end this year and were being considered for follow-up funding, SuRG staff conducted in-depth end-of-grant reviews on these and other regional grants. These reviews revealed the extent to which SuRG has reached out to the vulnerable and voiceless and provided support and funding where little exists. These reviews also revealed the extent to which these small regionally based organizations still need support to manage their organizations and design, implement and monitor activities. A review of training for lawyers in the north six months after the training ended provided insights into pressing legal issues and concerns and into methodology which informed upcoming training of both lawyers and judges in the north and east. An in-depth assessment of support to widowed mothers conducted by an international consultant reviewed the circumstances, challenges and needs of this vulnerable population and responses as well as provided recommendations for further support. Assessments of local government technical training and on-site technical assistance indicated a general increase in professionalism in participating LAs over the course of the SuRG program and a significant increase in community engagement in SuRG partner LAs through Participatory Governance Forums.

Findings from all of these reviews and assessments were fed back into ongoing programs and also proved particularly helpful in the design of new grants, training and technical support activities that will be implemented over the course of the next fiscal year.

This report covers the period from October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011, and details these activities, as well as ongoing contract implementation and management. Highlights over the year include:

- A SuRG partner published and disseminated *Habeas Corpus in Sri Lanka; Theory and Practice of the Great Writ in Extraordinary Times*, in January, 2011. The partner’s advocacy initiative was also successful in bringing about the inclusion of habeas corpus jurisprudence into the LLB and LLM curricula. Further, the idea of its inclusion into the Sri Lankan Law College syllabus has also recently been met with positive feedback.
- SuRG partners provided legal aid to 272 persons. They undertook (including appeals) 200 cases. One partner took on 54 new cases including 8 Fundamental Rights cases at the Supreme Court in Colombo and concluded 8 cases over the course of the year.
- Twenty-eight participants in Trincomalee and 38 participants in Ampara successfully completed their human rights education courses and received diplomas.
- A SuRG partner conducted 10 mobile legal aid clinics and 166 persons obtained services; another conducted 6 legal aid clinics, and provided 291 persons with legal advice; a third conducted a mobile legal clinic at which they issued 67 land certificates, 75 national identity cards and 75 birth certificates.
- A partner provided family members of 93 detainees with bus or train fare and care packages of essential items to enable them to visit detainees.
- Livelihood support was provided to 90 female-headed households by two partners.
- A partner provided 53 women with access to counseling services; 34 of these women identified as having suffered trauma and mental instability were later provided with 6, half-day sessions with a psychiatrist.
- WIN provided psychological counseling and support services, and legal advice and court representation for a total of 570 clients in the Jaffna and Puttalam districts. WIN staff also responded to 4,431 calls on their crisis hotline between July and September 2011.
- SuRG conducted training on post-war legal issues for lawyers and judges from the Northern and Eastern Provinces:
 - In collaboration with the Judicial Service Commission and the Judges Institute, 26 Magistrates and District Court judges from the north and east, including those newly appointed in former LTTE controlled areas, participated in the training on civil law matters including partition of land, testamentary action and succession, coupled with a session on judicial ethics;
 - Thirty-one lawyers from the east attended a workshop on legal issues growing out of undocumented deaths due to the conflict;
 - Thirty-one northern lawyers participated in a workshop to address land issues in a post-war environment; and
 - A SuRG partner conducted a three-day workshop for 45 lawyers.

- When the Eastern Province was ravaged by severe rains and flooding in December 2010 and January 2011, SuRG partners and CBOs mobilized to support their communities. This, in addition to providing much-needed assistance and relief, showed the commitment of these groups and the relevance of them to their communities. It is also an important indicator of sustainability. Activities by SuRG grantees and partners included:
 - One partner renovated six roads damaged by the recent floods at six *shramadanas*;
 - Partner community groups provided support to 53 Muslim and 19 Sinhala households affected by flooding through the disbursement of 72 loans valued at LKR 1,145,842 for cultivation and self-employment;
 - Three flood-affected villages received quick relief as a result of messages distributed by a partner’s early warning system; and
 - Partner youth groups secured funds for livelihood assistance for flood-affected families.
- SuRG funded partners and CBOs built ties across diverse communities throughout the east and Polonnaruwa. Examples include:
 - Muslim and Sinhala traders held a trade exhibition in Polonnaruwa District. It was the first time members of the two communities exhibited their products together. The partner also successfully advocated to secure space for these Muslim traders in the Sinhala-dominated weekly market;
 - Tamil and Muslim women and youth groups organized by a partner in Batticaloa together identified and took action against illicit liquor producers in their communities;
 - Peace Committees set up by a partner in 15 villages in Trincomalee District came together to resolve 11 community-level conflicts;
 - Members of all three communities working with a partner in Trincomalee hosted 44 Muslim and Sinhala community members working with a partner in Polonnaruwa;
 - Tamil and Muslim members of partner youth groups in Trincomalee District came together to nominate a Muslim youth to a National Youth Parliament; and
 - Six SuRG grantees provided Tamil and Sinhala language training to 395 community members, youth and women.
- Community, youth and women’s groups in the east and Polonnaruwa were organized and empowered to reach out to their local authorities and service providers and to address priority issues in their villages and regions. For example:
 - One Local Authority 2011 Development Plan in Polonnaruwa District included 35 community-level projects prioritized by Participatory Rural Appraisals done by community groups organized by a SuRG partner;
 - A Local Authority in Polonnaruwa District included citizen participation, as required in the Local Authority Act, on all four Standing Committees for the first time anywhere in the district;

- Thirteen women’s groups formed by a partner established a revolving fund worth LKR 110,370 to provide loans to vulnerable war-affected women for starting income-generating activities;
 - A partner registered 11 of its 15 youth groups with the Divisional Secretariat;
 - WRDSs working with a SuRG partner in Batticaloa District obtained a government contract worth Rs. 250,000 to renovate a local mosque; and
 - HDCC approved 11 business plans for loans from disadvantaged women in Hambantota District who participated in their “Generate your Business Idea” training program.
- EML completed a five-module technical training series for 430 local government officials and elected members, and SuRG and EML wound down technical assistance for 11 partner local authorities in the east. Results include:
 - Participatory Governance Forums formed in 11 local authorities (LAs) with participation from elected members, government officers and citizens providing a sustainable mechanism through which citizens can take an active part in local authority planning and decision making;
 - Participatory plans were completed in all 37 *Pradeshhiya Sabhas* (PSs) in the east; all 37 PSs qualified for NELSIP funding;
 - Partner PSs submitted 62 proposals to NELSIP; 34 projects valued at Rs. 381,760,456 were approved;
 - A financial software package for PSs was developed and delivered to all 37 PSs in the east and Lankapura PS in Polonnaruwa;
 - Bylaws were drafted by 9 partner local authorities; and
 - Two hundred sixty-nine government officers passed the Level III Tamil or Sinhala language exam; 289 officers from 28 LAs started Level II classes.
 - Twenty-two SuRG scholarship recipients from the Northern and Eastern Provinces and Monaragula received their diploma from the Sri Lanka College of Journalism 2010 Journalism Diploma Programme. Twenty more students from the north, the east and the estate sector were awarded scholarships to attend the 2011 program.
 - A partner completed the first journalism diploma training course for aspiring female journalists. Thirteen Advanced Level graduates from throughout Trincomalee, where there are currently no practicing female journalists, completed the course.

I.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

I.1 SOCIAL EQUITY

As the international community continues to apply pressure on the Sri Lankan government regarding its human rights record and accountability processes, SuRG and its social equity (SE) partners have maintained a flexible approach towards project implementation, and have adapted strategies such as holding small, private meetings in place of hosting larger public advocacy sessions, as and when necessary. In addition, partners in the field are especially careful about obtaining all necessary government approvals prior to implementation, and whenever appropriate, inviting local officials to participate in meetings and events. Such adjustments coupled with continuous monitoring of the political and security climate have allowed SuRG to implement a full range of social equity activities.

As detailed below, activities this fiscal year centered primarily around grants to local and national organizations and a series of training programs targeting the legal fraternity in the north and east.

Highlights of SE activities this fiscal year include:

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- SuRG conducted training on post-war legal issues for lawyers and judges from the Northern and Eastern Provinces:
 - In collaboration with the Judicial Service Commission and the Judges Institute, 26 Magistrates and District Court judges, including those newly appointed in former LTTE controlled areas, participated in the training on civil law matters including partition of land, testamentary action and succession, coupled with a session on judicial ethics;
 - Thirty-one lawyers from the east attended a workshop on legal issues growing out of undocumented deaths due to the conflict;
 - Thirty-one northern lawyers participated in a workshop to address land issues in a post-war environment; and
 - An SE partner conducted a three-day workshop for 45 lawyers.

- Two partners provided legal aid to 272 persons. They undertook (including appeals) 200 cases. The partner took on 54 new cases, including 8 Fundamental Rights cases at the Supreme Court in Colombo and concluded 8 cases over the course of the year.
- Twenty-eight participants in Trincomalee and 38 participants in Ampara successfully completed their human rights education courses and received diplomas.
- A partner conducted 10 mobile legal aid clinics and 166 persons obtained services; another conducted 6 legal aid clinics, and provided 291 persons with legal advice.
- A SuRG partner provided family members of 93 detainees with bus or train fare and care packages of essential items to enable them to visit detainees.
- Livelihood support was provided to 90 female-headed households by two partners.
- An SE partner provided 53 women with access to counseling services; 34 of these women identified as having suffered trauma and mental instability were later provided with 6, half-day sessions with a psychiatrist.
- WIN provided psychological counseling and support services, and legal advice and court representation for a total of 570 clients in the Jaffna and Puttalam districts. WIN staff also responded to 4,431 calls on their crisis hotline between July and September 2011.

1.1.1 GRANTS AND SUBCONTRACTS

GRANTS AND SUBCONTRACTS COMPLETED AND CLOSED

Grant Number	ARD040
Project	Analysis of the Judicial Prosecutorial System Regarding the Right to Life/ Liberty in Sri Lanka
District	National
Grant Award	Rs. 8,841,500
Dates	2 August 2010– 30 July 2011

The partner made notable contributions to research and advocacy in the area of habeas corpus jurisprudence through its “Analysis of the Judicial Prosecutorial System Regarding the Right to Life/ Liberty in Sri Lanka” project that concluded in July 2011. This project effectively aided in filling a longstanding lacuna that existed in Sri Lanka’s laws, practices, judicial/legal culture, as well as public awareness, vis-à-vis the protection of liberty rights. The study on the habeas corpus remedy proved to be extremely relevant as there had previously not been any academic or applied survey of the judicial response to this vital remedy.

During the first phase of the project (initiated during the last quarter of FY 10), an advocacy committee was formed, comprising lawyers, academics and activists. This team developed the advocacy strategy and a detailed questionnaire to be administered to consultation participants. Six extensive round table consultations were thereafter conducted with lawyers of Sri Lanka’s Provincial Bar Associations and legal activists in Badulla, Galle/Matara, Trincomalee, Jaffna, Ampara and Kandy. A total of 103 legal practitioners and activists participated in these consultations. The questionnaire was later administered to 29 lawyers of the Provincial Bar Associations who were selected out of the overall participant list as possessing the requisite

capacity to answer technical questions and contribute to the substantive content of the study and draft Habeas Corpus Act. Views of several judges, gathered during the course of a series of confidential meetings also informed the study. These inputs were received despite a circular issued by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) directing judicial officers not to engage in discussions without obtaining prior permission. Separate consultation meetings were held with family members of petitioners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on filing habeas corpus cases.

During the second quarter of FY 11, cumulative perspectives emanating from these consultations and analysis of the substantive content of the questionnaire responses were incorporated into the Final Habeas Corpus Report, entitled *Habeas Corpus in Sri Lanka; Theory and Practice of the Great Writ in Extraordinary Times*, published in January 2011. It is worthy of mention that the first print of the book was sold out within a month of publication, necessitating a second print. The project also provided for the translation and publication of the study in both the Sinhala and Tamil languages.

A parallel SC (FR) Study, *A Study of the Judicial Response to the Right to Liberty under the Fundamental Rights Jurisdiction of Sri Lanka (2000-2007)*, was also published in the partner's review journal.

During the second phase of the project, advocacy and outreach consultations continued, consisting of collaborative meetings with similar target groups as well as individual meetings with lawyers who wished to engage in more in-depth discussion on the contents of the publication. Three round table consultations were held with 50 senior legal practitioners of all three ethnicities from the Galle/Matara, Akkaraipattu, Kalmunai, Pottuvil and Batticaloa Bar Associations. In addition, the team conducted follow-up meetings with the presidents of the Bar Associations and individual legal practitioners from Badulla, Kandy and Jaffna who had collaborated during the first phase of the project, and presented the published book to them. Furthermore, several judges continued to engage with the project team. Consultations were also held with 41 relatives and activists of those disappeared during the final stages of the war in 2009 currently residing in the Jaffna peninsula.

Copies of the book were disseminated amongst collaborating judges and also sent to members of the Court of Appeal, the Supreme Court and the Provincial High Courts of Sri Lanka. The Habeas Corpus book and the SC (FR) Study were also sent to all the leading university and mainstream libraries in Sri Lanka, and UN agencies.

The partner conducted academic sessions at the Department of Law, University of Peradeniya with 30 students and staff and with 67 students and staff at the Department of Law, University of Jaffna. Arrangements were made to include habeas corpus as a taught subject in the LLB and LLM curricula. This aspect constitutes an important part of the impact of the Habeas Corpus Study as the writ of habeas corpus is currently not given due emphasis in legal curricula. There are no textbooks or other resources with local jurisprudence available for students to examine and critique the judicial response in such cases. A formal memo was submitted to the Council of Legal Education, which determines curricula content at the College, to formally include habeas corpus as a subject in the students' third year. The memo was considered by a committee of Supreme Court judges some of whom were receptive to the idea.

A Draft Habeas Corpus Act was finalized along with draft Supreme Court Rules pertaining to procedural aspects of improving the functioning of the remedy, particularly in the current, post-war context that exists in courts of the North-East. The partner conducted a series of consultations on the draft with small groups including the heads of bar associations, senior lawyers and judges in the Kandy and Badulla districts in April 2011. Efforts were made through these consultations to fine-tune the draft's provisions. Specific concerns were raised over certain provisions as well as the language used, and revised accordingly.

Following the study in Sri Lanka, four country papers on the writ of habeas corpus have been commissioned in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. Legal activists and practitioners in Thailand, Burma and Cambodia have also evinced interest in the study and its findings. The partner has received intimation from renowned activists in Thailand that the recommendations of the study would be used in the workings of a

Constitutional Committee set up in Thailand to recommend changes to the existing Constitution, and urge a constitutional formulation of the habeas corpus remedy as opposed to the unsatisfactory criminal law formulation that exists currently.

The partner, however, was unable to achieve certain components listed in its proposal related to its final phase; namely advocacy activities with parliamentarians and the final Colombo-based consultation with stakeholders. These activities could not be completed due to the prevailing political environment. Furthermore, the plan to monitor habeas corpus cases in courts was also cancelled as there were no cases up for argument in the relevant courts during the project period.

Grant Number	ARD022
Project	Mobilization of Community Development Groups
District	National
Grant Award	Rs. 8,652,960
Dates	December 1, 2009–November 30, 2010

The partner completed its “Mobilization of Community Development Groups” project in November 2010. Activities were spread across 62 communities and implemented with co-funding from the European Commission.

As the project drew to its end, the partner continued to maintain 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. In addition, the partner responded to identified community needs through the implementation of small-scale projects including provision of furniture, playground equipment and a sustainable water source to pre-schools, among others. Furthermore, the partner and the 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 trainings focused on social mobilization, documentation, and micro-enterprise development.

Mobilization Of CDG Project December 2009 – November 2010	
Achievements	Key Findings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 914 people provided with legal advice or support • 211 cases filed in court • 62 motivators in 62 communities trained • 62 <i>shramadanas</i> conducted • 17,000 people registered to vote • 35 community development projects implemented • 25 livelihood projects initiated • 135 birth certificates secured • 5 death certificates secured • 5 marriage certificates secured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-war HR concerns shifted from arrest, detention and abduction to land, detainee and surrenderee issues • Needs of detainees include psychosocial counseling as well as attention to the economic needs of their families • Delays in court proceedings increase the duration of detention even for those who are innocent and on remand under the PTA or ER; direct ties with the AG or State Counsel have proven effective in reducing court delays

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

The CDGs were successful on many occasions in mobilizing communities and helping them to address critical concerns such as the lack of documentation for returnee families, and to 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.

Grant Number	ARD010
Project	Strengthening Housing Land and Property Rights in Eastern Sri Lanka
District	National
Grant Award	Rs.16, 590,798
Dates	October 15, 2009–June 30, 2010

The partner’s “Strengthening Housing Land and Property Rights in Eastern Sri Lanka,” scheduled to end in January 2011 was granted a no-cost extension until June 2011. The project suffered numerous setbacks when its Country Director had to leave the country unexpectedly due to visa issues. Furthermore, the partner was unable to secure approval from the Ministry of Public Administration until late October to conduct its trainings for government officials. The trainings that were eventually held beginning in November 2010, 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. A total of 218 GNs from the districts of Batticaloa, Jaffna, Vavunia, and Trincomalee participated in these trainings. Participants were selected based on a pre-workshop assessment conducted among local government officials through their respective District Secretariats to ensure that the training was relevant to the GNs’ responsibilities. Several GNs reported that they found the training on gender issues in displacement particularly helpful as they were involved in selecting beneficiaries for housing projects and distribution of State lands.

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 in Vavuniya District in October 2010. The 29 participants included representatives from NGOs and three participants from UN agencies. In the post-training evaluation, the participants indicated that their agencies would now be better able to identify HLPR issues and work towards addressing them, and be in a better position to advocate restitution on behalf of IDPs and returnees.

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

The partner conducted a discussion in May 2011 in Vavuniya on the topic of “Defining Minimum Standards for Adequate Housing” with the participation of 36 representatives of the government, civil society, UN and other donor agencies, in cooperation with UNDP and NEHRP. Discussion topics included 1) outlining a relevant approach to defining adequate housing; 2) what minimum standards should mean in a post-conflict context; 3) re-assessing criteria for beneficiary selection; 4) increasing accessibility to adequate housing; and 5) the problem of land tenure in housing implementation. Participants at the meeting decided that findings should be presented to the Permanent Housing Group in Colombo which deals directly with the Presidential Task Force.

The partner also conducted a fact-finding mission to Vavuniya in May 2011 to explore issues that broadly impact on HLP rights, including the human right to adequate housing in the post-war context of development in the north and east. The data collected during this visit was used for the 3rd and 4th policy briefs with recommendations from inter-agency working groups. The 3rd policy brief was entitled “Post Conflict Development and the Right to Restitution – Implications for National Policy” and the 4th was entitled “Ending Displacement: Definitions and Reality.” 500 copies of each brief were distributed among HLRP stakeholders.

Grant Number	ARD042
Project	Defending Human Rights in Sri Lanka
District	National
Grant Award	Rs. 6, 804,639
Dates	September 10, 2010 –September 9, 2011

The partner’s “Defending Human Rights in Sri Lanka” project came to an end in September 2011. Discussions are currently underway to provide them with a follow-on grant expected to begin early next fiscal year.

Under its legal aid services component, the partner undertook a total of 194 cases (including appeals) on behalf of 148 persons (130 male and 18 female); 28 cases were FR applications, 20 were Court of Appeal applications, 89 were High Court cases and 11 were Magistrate’s Court cases in the Anuradhapura, Hambantota, Jaffna, Kandy, Monaragala, Vavuniya, and Colombo districts.

Cases involved arrests, detentions and disappearance. One hundred three cases were concluded, of which 35 yielded favorable outcomes. The partner noted that success in such cases was often achieved through a combination of legal intervention and advocacy.

Of the remaining 68 cases, indictments were served for 30 and the rest were closed on requests made by the detainees and their families. The partner also undertook 45 habeas corpus applications. However, there has been little or no progress on these cases due to the failure on the part of the State as well as the judiciary to effectively enforce this writ remedy. The partner is in the process of discussing the matter with its panel of lawyers and is considering closing some of these cases if the families are in agreement.

The partner’s legal coordinator and panel of lawyers conducted a total of 16 visits to prisons and detention centers across the country. Through these visits, the partner has not only been able to provide legal services, but also assess the conditions of the detainees and their various grievances. The partner has been able to advocate on behalf of the detainees with the AG’s Department and Prison Authorities and, in some instances, file motions in court; for example, a motion was filed against inadequate medical attention available to the detainees. With regard to other detainees, a number of them did not want to proceed with legal action as they had been made to believe that they would be released or sent for rehabilitation soon.

The partner also conducted three training programs for 79 (49 female and 30 male) young individuals belonging to CBOs, NGOs, church groups, as well as individual civil society representatives from the districts of Jaffna, Mannar and Vavunia. Training focused on the international Human Rights framework, laws and procedures as well as the need for HRDs and their role in society. Practical information on reference mechanisms was also provided.

The partner organized a three-day workshop in Trincomalee for 45 lawyers entitled “Invoking the Jurisdiction of International Tribunals.” The workshop, which was held in May, was aimed at increasing the capacity of the partner’s current pool of lawyers as well encouraging more lawyers to join the panel, thus strengthening and expanding the partner’s legal aid program. A majority of the participants had attended the

partner's training workshop in 2009. The others were either those already working in partner target areas or those who were considered to be potential partners.

Grant Number	ARD017
District	Batticaloa
Project	Peace through Community Self-Protection and Inter Communal Dialogue
Grant Amount	Rs. 2,982,350.00
Dates	February 17, 2010 – March 31, 2011

The partner concluded its “Peace through Community Self-Protection and Inter-Communal Dialogue” program on 31 March 2011. This program sought to empower communities in Batticaloa District to enhance their capacity for peaceful co-existence through community self-protection and inter-communal dialogue. Relations between the Tamil and the Muslim communities living in the area were identified to be tense, and at times, prone to conflict. And given the absence of a formal mechanism to address such conflict-induced inter-community antagonism and rebuild trust, the need for smaller targeted initiatives such as these were seen as vital. To this effect, the program conducted numerous inter-ethnic events, including *shramadana* and awareness-raising campaigns. The partner network also facilitated greater information-sharing through its early warning system (EWS) network, an initiative that has grown to fulfill numerous local community information needs. This is particularly valuable as the lack of accurate information, and spread of misinformation, has oftentimes been responsible for violent clashes between Muslims and Tamils in the east and has also contributed toward greater inter-ethnic polarization.

The EWS was originally created to relay information on security-related issues and threats, including abductions. With the end of the war and the decrease in such incidents, the network has adapted to become an important medium to mobilize the local community and disseminate information in instances where other information dissemination mechanisms have not adequately reached the grassroots level. One hundred ten messages were disseminated via mobile phone to 250 contacts that include religious leaders, GNs, DSs, school principals, journalists, police officers in-charge (OICs) and community leaders. Several examples of its effectiveness were visible throughout the grant period. During the flooding that occurred during the months of February and March 2011, government announcements regarding extreme weather conditions were sent across EWS contacts. Not only did this system contribute to greater disaster preparedness but consequently also linked flood victims with relief; for example, affected people from the three villages receiving relief items from the Lions Club and partner staff and volunteers assisted in distributing these items. When the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) met, 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 and testify. 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. Building on the success of this medium, the EWS more recently expanded to cover 10 new villages, and steps have been taken to strengthen information-gathering and verification processes.

In other activities, the partner selected 20 facilitators (10 from partner member organizations and 10 members of the local communities), both Tamil and Muslim, to mobilize communities in monthly meetings and other mixed-community activities. As this process often requires skills such as facilitation and negotiation, these 20 individuals were provided with training on how to build trust, network, facilitate dialogue and prioritize issues that need to be resolved.

One of the partner's chief tools for enhancing inter-community interaction are its community peace-building meetings (CMs). Such meetings have been conducted to raise awareness on a host of issues including women's and children's rights and the importance of collective action. The meetings have also been used as forums to mobilize people for mixed-community *shramadana* activities such as clearing mosque and temple

premises and sharing of cultural and religious experiences between ethnicities. A total of 1,356 participants attended awareness sessions and 294 participants took part in *shramadana* campaigns during this fiscal year.

Another important feature of the project is that the targeted communities, both Tamil and Muslim, determine the agendas of these meetings and awareness campaigns. For example, issues such as the poor level of education amongst children and the high incidence of school dropouts and early marriages were repeatedly brought up. As a means of addressing these issues, participants of the October 2010 CM engaged in a discussion on the topic of “laws related to marriage” and the consequences of early and/or unregistered marriages. Following this meeting, the GNs identified 15 unregistered couples and with the assistance of local marriage registrars, 11 of these couples were registered and provided with marriage certificates. Similarly, in November, the main theme of the CM was the “importance of child education.” And as a direct result of this meeting, a few educated individuals volunteered to conduct evening classes for poor students, without a fee.

Inter-ethnic cooperation and interaction was encouraged by a process of pairing bordering Tamil and Muslim villages together. These communities frequently tend to ghettoize both physical and socio-cultural spaces and would have otherwise preferred to work only amongst their own. Pairing them ensured that they attended meetings together and discussed common issues at a common forum. Five sets of bordering Tamil and Muslim villages affected by the conflict were paired together in such meetings.

As a means of enabling minority communities to have greater access to state institutions and government services, the partner provided Sinhala language training to 76 Tamil and Muslim individuals (56 women and 20 men), including youth, community leaders, members of WRDSs, RDSs, fisheries societies, NGO workers and government officials. The classrooms also provided the space for Tamil and Muslim youth to interact with each other. In one batch, four youth who attended these language classes assisted other members in their communities to lodge complaints with the police during a mobile clinic conducted by the police to record grievances.

Under its legal aid component, the partner provided legal counsel and referrals for a total of 142 cases during the entire project period. The table below sets out the types of cases that were referred to service providers during FY11 and their status at the time of writing:

Partner Legal Support by Type, Number and Status		
Type of Cases	No. of Cases	Referrals/Status
Child abuse	2	Referred to probation department
Matrimonial	22	21 referred to legal aid provider 1 referred to mediation board
Torture	4	4 referred to HRC
Abduction and missing	5	5 – Referred to police
Money dispute	1	1- referred to police
Land dispute	1	1 referred land registry, DS Office
Documentation	13	13 Referred to DS office
Migration abroad (missing)	2	2 referred to foreign employment bureau
Total	50	

The partner published six leaflets designed to raise awareness on the Fundamental Rights of a citizen, laws related to matrimony and domestic violence. These leaflets were distributed to as many as 480 recipients, including government offices, schools, police stations and hospitals. In addition, 10 mobilizers, trained by the partner, performed four street plays over the life of the project on the themes of non-violent communication, child education, the importance of citizen engagement with the Local Authorities and rumors and the importance of information verification.

Grant Number	ARD052
District	Ampara
Project	Raising Awareness of Human Rights in Vulnerable Communities of Ampara District
Grant Amount	Rs. 2,230,825.00
Dates	February 17, 2010–March 31, 2011

The partner completed its “Raising Awareness of Human Rights in Vulnerable Communities of Ampara District” program on 31 March 2011. Through this grant, the partner raised awareness on human rights amongst local communities in 16 villages within 8 DS divisions. In total, 421 individuals (139 Tamil and 282 Muslim) attended 17 awareness-raising sessions. These sessions focused on Human Rights, Fundamental Rights—as guaranteed by the Constitution of Sri Lanka, particularly the right to equality—as well as women’s and children’s rights. Participants were drawn from WRDSs, fisheries societies, RDSs, youth clubs, and other local CBOs. It is hoped that through such awareness-raising, these civil society structures would be better equipped to advocate on behalf of their communities.

In addition to general awareness-raising within local communities, the partner also conducted a Diploma in Human Rights Course. This initiative filled a longstanding gap identified by civil society, by providing a course at the regional level, making it both physically and financially accessible to a number of people who, though demonstrating a keen interest in human rights education, would have otherwise been unable to access such course. The course began in July 2010 and concluded in December 2010. 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.

Reports from course graduates indicate they are applying what they learned to their respective work places, as well as villages. Many have gone on to create and strengthen awareness, and in some instances, have become motivators and defenders of human rights within their communities. Three journalists who participated in the course were able to utilize knowledge gathered through the course to write articles related to women and child rights. Details of articles published are provided in the table below.

“ Our boys and girls were arrested without a reason; we watched and cried...Most of the people were oppressed... We have the right to question. Anyone from the community can ask for reasons, and we can take legal action. This understanding we gained through the human rights awareness raising sessions conducted.”

PARTICIPANT PARTNER HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS RAISING SESSION

Articles Published by Graduates of Diploma in Human Rights Course

Title of Article	Newspaper	Date Published
Child Labour is a Crime and a Type of Violence	Thinakaran	June 2010
The Important Responsibility of Parents to Care for their Children's Rights	Veerakesary	November 2010
Every Child has the Right to Express His Opinion, Views and Ideas	Sudar Oli	November 2010
Respect Other’s Rights as You Would Your Own	Thinkaran	December 2010
Educating Children from the Age of 3 -14 is Compulsory	Vijay	January 2010

One of the graduates of this course attached to a PS conducted three information sessions on human rights focusing on women's rights for her PS members. Members and officers of the PS frequently lack the necessary knowledge on human rights in general and women's rights and gender equality in particular, to be able to address issues within their communities in an equitable manner. Greater awareness of human rights is of particular importance in this area which was badly affected by the war and also known to have a high prevalence of GBV. In another example of follow-up action, a teacher from a school that has previously meted out corporal and other forms of improper and often public punishments to their students was able to advise staff on the impact it had on children and stop such treatment.

In addition to raising awareness on human rights, the partner also provided access to legal services for people within their target villages. Ten mobile legal aid clinics were held, at which 166 persons obtained services. A majority of the cases were referred to other legal aid agencies to file action; however, where legal counsel was sufficient to resolve matters, the necessary advice was provided. Issues dealt with included documentation, procedures to obtain birth certificates, issues relating to the payment of spousal and child maintenance and property disputes. Six cases involved abductions by paramilitaries during the war. These cases were referred to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Colombo. Cases on land matters were referred to the relevant DSs and 14 FR violations over the failure to issue legal documentation over a long period of time were taken up with the relevant provincial land department, following which the lands were surveyed and action

MOBILE CLINICS HELP FAMILIES SECURE BASIC LEGAL DOCUMENTS

At a partner mobile legal clinics, lawyers consult with community members on issues including documentation, procedures to obtain birth certificates, spousal and child maintenance and property disputes. One resident of the Batticaloa District, is one of the 166 community members who received legal assistance from the 10 legal aid clinics the partner conducted with its grant from SuRG.

Her husband, a member of one of the many paramilitary factions active in the east during Sri Lanka's 30-year conflict, died in 2007. The loss of her husband, the primary breadwinner of the family, left her on her own to tend to her two young daughters. "I approached the Grama Niladhari and asked for help. He wrote a letter confirming the news of the death and told me to take the letter and lodge an entry with the police. With my three-month old daughter, I somehow managed to make it to the police station. They refused to accept my story and did not enter the details in their record books saying things like 'Oh he will return. How do you know for certain he is dead?'"

Without an interim death certificate, she was unable to access services for widows offered by the government or local civil society groups. Especially helpful would have been access to a livelihood support fund operated by the Divisional Secretariat Office which provides up to 20,000 rupees for women to start or improve a livelihood activity. She was also unable to seek assistance from a children's home run by a local Church for children affected by the war. For nearly four years she was unable to access any such support.

Refusing to give up, she approached the partner's mobile legal aid clinic conducted in her village for help. The partner accompanied her to the police. "The police were now very nice and were asking me why I didn't come before this and why I had waited all this time to lodge a complaint. But I had visited the police station seven times with my children and waited for hours hoping to get them to lodge my entry and they always refused."

As the President of the village Rural Development Society explained, "This is a very common, basic problem a lot of poor, conflict-affected people in our villages face. The authorities dismiss us quickly. But when someone with power and authority approach those same people, they listen and things get done really fast."

Now that the police have officially recorded the disappearance of her husband, the process of issuing an interim death certificate is in motion and she is hopeful about her future. "I'm thankful for this service because I can now access funds and also improve my children's education."

was being taken to issue permits. Other issues addressed included missing and disappeared persons, marital problems and maintenance issues, domestic violence, civil documentation and financial matters.

Gant Number	ARD041
Project	Respect for Human Rights in the Trincomalee District
District	Trincomalee
Grant Award	Rs. 7,014,275
Dates	August 16, 2010–August 14, 2011

Building on the success of its first SuRG grant which ended in December 2009, a follow-on grant awarded in August 2010 allowed the partner to continue implementing activities in human rights education and assistance to female heads of households. The grant entitled, *Respect for Human Rights in the Trincomalee District*, had three main components: human rights education; legal assistance; and psychosocial support to female-headed households.

Human Rights Education

The partner offered two certificate courses in human rights. The first was a six-month course focusing on young people who had successfully completed their secondary school (General Certificate of Education–Advanced Level) exams. Participants were drawn from pools of interested students, NGO workers, community activists and public servants. The partner’s courses are popular among persons working in the human rights field as they are one of the few programs available to the public. Twenty eight students, including 20 women and 8 men, completed the course. The course also included three days of skills building on non-violent communication. Participants of this course noted the value not only of the substantive knowledge they gathered through the program but also the opportunity and space provided for Tamil and Muslim individuals to interact with each other and rebuild relationships disturbed as a result of the war.

The second course proposed as an advanced program in human rights was cancelled due to poor attendance. A number of prospective participants who initially expressed interest were not available when the course was ready to start, and other prospective participants from both NGOs and the government had been transferred from the east to the north during that interim period as well.

The alumni network of graduates from the last two years of partner courses conducted five awareness sessions on women’s rights covering topics such as laws affecting domestic life, policing, bribery and corruption in public places, and child rights. In total, 242 participants including 149 men and 93 women (129 Tamils and 113 Muslims) from 4 villages and one school participated in these sessions. The alumni organized and participated in these programs on a voluntary basis, reflecting the graduates’ commitment to the field of human rights. The partner is considering ways to make the alumni network more effective and sustainable.

“ I understood that human rights are the same for all and we have suffered a lot by its denial. I feel that I am a better person because now I can relate and share my experiences with my Tamil friends.”

PARTICIPANT HUMAN RIGHTS COURSE

The partner developed and distributed approximately 3,000 copies of their awareness pamphlet which covered topics such as domestic violence, laws relating to maintenance application, custody and guardianship of the child and adoption. The pamphlets were designed to raise awareness on the above issues and laws in a language accessible to lay individuals. The choice of issues addressed in these pamphlets was based on knowledge gaps identified through working closely with communities and community-based organizations. It is expected that these publications will also be used as resource material for or by NGOs and CBOs during trainings on these topics. They were distributed to SuRG grantees and trainees, NGOs, local libraries and

police stations as well as to probation and women development officers. Copies were also distributed to the Legal Aid Commission.

Legal Assistance

The partner's legal assistance component focused on legal counseling and representation. The partner represented clients in Trincomalee courts where victims of human rights violations were involved. The partner also represented clients involved in arbitrary arrest and detention cases under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) and under the Emergency Regulations (ER) held before the Supreme Court.

During the grant period, the partner filed 18 fundamental rights cases at the Supreme Court in Colombo (utilizing SuRG-funded Colombo-based lawyers), 20 maintenance cases, 6 divorce cases, and 10 indictments.

Eight prison visits were also conducted during the grant period to provide 34 detainees in Colombo, Trincomalee and Vavuniya with legal advice and general counseling.

Due to financial restrictions, the majority of family members of detainees are unable to visit them if they are detained in locations other than the Trincomalee District. Under the Legal Assistance component, the partner provided small cash grants to family members of 93 detainees, based on need, to meet the costs of bus or train fare so they can visit detainees in the Vavuniya or Anuradapura detention centers. Each family was provided with a care package of essential items to give to detainees during these visits. The care packages consist of soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, tea and powdered milk.

Psychosocial Support to Female-Headed Households

A direct result of the conflict in Sri Lanka has been the increase in the number of female heads of households. It is estimated that there are over 12,000 female heads of household in the Trincomalee District. Many of the women are IDPs returning from the Vanni and Vavuniya who have no means of support. The partner responds to this need by supporting the psychosocial needs of female heads of households through the provision of livelihood activities, counseling and training on life skills, child rearing and human rights.

During the grant period, the partner provided livelihood support to 30 female heads of households by purchasing items such as sewing machines, a water pump for highland crop cultivation, livestock and poultry, as well as cash inputs and a refrigerator for small grocery stores. This support has enabled these women to regain a certain level of economic independence, confidence and peace of mind.

The partner also held 10 skills development workshops for all 30 women. Workshop topics included life skills development, women's empowerment, personality development, stages of growth in children, business promotion, managing a small business, health and nutrition, and home gardening techniques.

Fourteen beneficiaries also received 1,500 Rs. each to pay for their children's daily needs such as food and education. Recipients of this support have stated that they are now able to provide for at least some of their children's needs which would have otherwise been difficult to meet due to their economic strain.

In April 2011, SuRG commissioned an anthropologist with extensive experience in the north and east, to examine and document the needs of widowed mothers and recommend steps to improve transition and recovery programming, particularly from a gender perspective. Her research was based on interviews and focus group discussions with 40 partner beneficiaries as well as partner staff. The report detailed issues that occur as a result of the women's social stigmatization and unresolved trauma and grief, as well as their economic and physical insecurities.

The report's findings confirmed the importance of providing assistance for widowed mothers' needs from a broad, holistic perspective, rather than a traditional and more narrowly focused livelihood approach. The report found the partner's pioneering assistance to be effective because it approaches the women's problems with an integrated multi-level strategy that responds to their need for emotional support, parenting guidance, protection, and livelihood development. The report indicated that the rights-based approach taken by the

partner has, over time, effectively strengthened beneficiaries' self-confidence and awareness of their rights to enjoy physical, economic and emotional security and to be free from all forms of violence. It also provided a series of recommendations for the partner and for future programming for vulnerable women in the east and north.

Grant Number	ARD021
Program	Raising Awareness of Human Rights amongst Vulnerable Women and Adolescents in Ampara District
District	Ampara
Grant Award	Rs. 2,851,910.00
Dates	February 17, 2010 - April 30, 2011

The partner was awarded a grant to implement its “Raising Awareness of Human Rights amongst Vulnerable Women and Adolescents in Ampara District” program in February 2010. The goal of the program was to empower women and adolescents to be able to defend their rights and rebuild their social environments. The program sought to improve awareness on human rights amongst vulnerable women and adolescents belonging to both the Tamil and Muslim ethnic groups in six villages in the Ampara District.

The psychosocial program provided 53 women with access to counseling services. Over 60 percent of the women who received support were survivors of domestic abuse. In addition to individual counseling sessions, the partner created a support group for affected women in all of the targeted villages. These groups continue to function to date, despite the completion of program activities. The support groups provide women with a safe space to share their experiences, discuss their problems, and seek solace in each other. Recipients of the psychosocial counseling have indicated that their personal wellbeing has greatly improved as a result of these initiatives, as they had previously been completely unaware of who to seek out in times of need.

Towards the latter stages of program implementation, the partner facilitated six, half-day sessions with a psychiatrist for 34 women (out of the 53 that attended the counseling services) who had been identified as having suffered trauma and mental instability. The psychiatrist led discussions with the aid of case stories, allowing for the participant women to identify and empathize with these examples and discuss their own problems through this. The sessions also aided in conveying information with regard to resources available for issues of this nature, such as the medical clinic at the nearest Base Hospital. These women had previously hesitated to acknowledge their conditions and seek medical assistance, but have since accessed local medical resources and obtained treatment for their illnesses.

The partner provided livelihood assistance to 60 women in desperate need of economic support. Thirty of them were victims of domestic violence and recipients of psychosocial counseling; the other 30 had received legal aid support. Financial and/or material assistance was provided for small-scale business ventures, including poultry rearing, paddy/rice processing and sale, metal works, pottery, sewing, sale of snacks, food and sweets and brick production, among others. The partner also provided these women with training on bookkeeping, accounting and budgeting. Furthermore, the women were encouraged to support each other in their businesses.



Members of the women's group participate in a session on peace and co-existence.

Case studies and analysis of income revealed that over 90 percent of the beneficiaries of this program generate a regular income as a result of the input provided. The beneficiaries also maintained regular records of financial transactions and profits made. Approximately, 10 out of 60 beneficiaries had expanded their businesses with small savings made on a monthly basis. For instance, one woman had bought a few more chicks; another had expanded her saree business to cover neighboring villages; and another woman had bought an additional cow. Several beneficiaries have also begun to engage in value-addition activities that enhance the productivity of their businesses. For example, a woman who processes paddy also sells the paddy husk as an alternative source of fuel, and leftover rice flakes as fodder for chicken. She also sells semi-processed rice at a cheaper rate to those who cannot afford fully processed rice. These features are all strong indications that beneficiaries have begun to expand their ventures beyond the subsistence level. If this trend continues, it can contribute considerably toward an enhanced socio-economic position for these women, within their communities.

The partner has also observed that relations between Muslims and Tamil in the area have improved as a result of these livelihood activities, as a number of women either barter their goods or help each other maintain accounts. These relationships, created and sustained within and between communities are unintended positive impacts of the program.

Under the legal aid component of the program, the partner conducted six legal aid clinics, and provided 291 persons with legal advice on a host of issues. In general, cases included maintenance and divorce; arrest and detention; documentation support for land, birth, marriage, housing and death; financial and business disputes; property and land disputes; acquisition of national identity cards; child abuse and environmental pollution. Partner lawyers either provided immediate legal counsel or referred cases to relevant service providers, including the LAC, a legal aid NGO, or other redress mechanisms, such as the Mediation Board, the police, Divisional Secretariats and the courts. A notable impact in this area has been the formation of an informal network comprising organizations with the common goal of assisting people with their legal issues. The partner played a key role in initiating this network, which continues to function successfully.

The partner also conducted six training sessions on leadership and non-violent communication for 112 youth, including 55 girls and 57 boys. A number of women and adolescents who have participated in the various awareness-raising sessions notify the partner of violations within their villages, mostly with regard to domestic violence and sexual abuse, but also harassment of children and young people of a particular socio-economic background. They also help affected people, particularly women, to identify available resources that can be used in order to address grievances and rebuild their lives. The partner maintains regular contact with such active women and youth who have been motivated following their participation in the awareness programs.

Another valuable outcome of the partner's continuous efforts in raising awareness has been the re-enrollment of 17 school dropouts who now show a renewed interest in pursuing their education. Families of these children have also been motivated to support them and ensure they attend school regularly.

Drawing from experiences and lessons learned, the partner will continue to address issues related to women's rights in the Ampara District. In order to maximize impact in its next phase—due to begin soon with the awarding of a follow-on grant—the partner plans to expand its geographical coverage from six to eight communities. The program will also seek out novel ways to work with men in addressing issues of women's rights and domestic violence.



SuRG Partner

Tamil and Muslim community members joined together for the first time since before the war to celebrate International Human Rights Day 2010.

NEW AND ONGOING GRANTS

Grant Number	ARD033
Project	Essential Document Support to Resettled Populations
District	Batticaloa
Grant Amount	Rs. 2,887,280
Dates	August 15, 2011 – August 14, 2012

The partner was awarded a grant on 15 August 2011 to implement its “Essential Document Support to Resettled Populations” program. The program will assist resettled communities in 24 GN divisions in the Batticaloa District to acquire basic legal documents. This objective is to be reached through:

1. The strengthening of capacity of WRDSs; and
2. Coordination of legal support clinics.

Orientation meetings were held with all 24 WRDSs which were then grouped into four geographical clusters. The first component, strengthening the capacity of WRDSs, will focus on improving WRDS members’ understanding of administrative procedures related to acquiring legal documents and the importance thereof. The second component will seek to empower the WRDS members, who in turn, will be expected to provide leadership and guidance to the people of their villages on the process of acquiring documentation.

The partner conducted four introductory meetings with WRDS members, in order for them to become more familiarized with the proposed program activities. Four representatives were invited from each WRDS, together with their respective Grama Niladhari (GN), Samurdhi Officer and Rural Development Officer (RDO). Fifty-nine WRDS members and eight government officials participated in four such meetings thus far. These meetings were conducted in four villages.

At the meetings, program goals and responsibilities were clearly defined and delegated. The government officers present at the meetings, particularly the GNs and the RDO, offered their support toward monitoring program activities in their respective villages. A decision was also made by members to meet every month.

Grant Number	ARD034
Project Title	Community Empowerment through CBO Capacity Building
District	Batticaloa
Grant Amount	Rs. 3,169,000
Dates	August 15, 2011 - August 14, 2012

A grant was awarded on the 15th of August 2011 for the “Community Empowerment through CBO Capacity Building” program. The aim of this program is to build community advocacy capacity in the Batticaloa District.

The program seeks to build the capacity of 33 CBOs to identify critical issues within their communities, and assist them in developing appropriate plans to address such issues through advocacy directed at local government authorities and other local service providers.

The program is comprised of three components:

1. Mobilization of CBOs;
2. Strengthening capacity and leadership of CBOs; and
3. Building linkages with service providers.

The partner will mobilize members and leaders of 33 CBOs (RDS, WRDS and Fisheries Societies) selected from 11 villages in 7 GN Divisions.

The partner began work with staff recruitment and orientation. A Program Officer, Training Coordinator (Batticaloa-based) and several field officers are now on board. An introductory meeting was also conducted with the DS to introduce the program and its staff. The DS confirmed his approval and promised support and cooperation particularly in providing necessary data on the CBOs within the division.

Introductory meetings were held with CBO members from 11 villages. The members of each of these CBOs have shown great interest in pursuing the objectives of this program. Ten members from each of the CBOs were then selected to undergo training, pending approval from the DS. The program staff has also carried out meetings with potential trainers to explain the nature and objectives of the proposed training. Two workshops are planned for November 2011.

SECRETARY OF STATE/WOMEN'S GLOBAL ISSUES GRANT

Grant Number	ARD046
Project	Domestic Violence is a Human Rights Issue: Expanding Prevention and Enhancing Support Services in Post-war SL
District	National, Jaffna, Puttalam
Grant Award	Rs. 8,450,550
Dates	July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

WIN was awarded a Department of State/Women's Global Issues grant for its "Domestic Violence is a Human Rights Issue: Expanding Prevention and Enhancing Support Services in Post-war Sri Lanka" project through SuRG in July. The project has already gathered significant momentum in all three of its focus areas: capacity building of staff to better respond to the needs of clients; outreach and awareness-raising in communities; and enhancing WINs service provision in Jaffna and Puttalam.

Under the first component, an intensive two-day workshop was conducted for the Tamil-speaking staff of WIN's Jaffna, Batticaloa and Puttalam centers. Six staff from Jaffna, three from Puttalam and three from Batticaloa, attended this workshop. The program was divided into three parts comprising counseling, legal aid and information technology.

During the session on counseling, staff was exposed to methods such as "timeline therapy and journal therapy." Several case studies were included in the curriculum in order to generate discussion and assist participants in applying these methodologies to practical situations where clients were dealing with issues of grief or trauma. The legal component of the training dealt with the penal code and its amendments together with other relevant laws and their application. The session also touched on the gaps that currently exist within the law, the challenges they present and how they can be overcome. An IT component of the workshop was aimed at strengthening staff members' ability to input and edit data in WIN's case database—an important feature of WIN's overall programming.



WIN performs a street drama highlighting gender-based violence issues in the Jaffna District.

Three awareness-raising programs were conducted in Jaffna District under the project's outreach and awareness-raising component. The first of the three targeted medical officers; 66 peripheral unit doctors, nurses and nursing students from the Nursing School in Jaffna participated. Topics included referral systems, problem analysis and intervention, psychosocial impacts of gender-based violence (GBV) and child abuse, and the identification of physical and non-physical forms of violence. Thirty-one GNs from five DS divisions attended the second workshop. Topics covered in this workshop included issues faced by women in today's

“...it was a different workshop...colloquia and training workshops of this nature make judges more action oriented and motivate them in their efforts to interpret and apply laws correctly, thereby providing the users of the system what they want, which is justice.”

CO-DIRECTOR OF THE JUDGES INSTITUTE

society, particularly within a post-war environment, different types of violence and the legal framework available to address them. The third workshop was held for community members with a view towards improving general awareness on GBV and child abuse, as well as introducing WIN to the community and providing affected women with easy access to its services. Eighty five individuals (52 males and 23 females) including mothers, youth and teenage girls participated in this program. Participants engaged in a vibrant and open discussion about the types of

problems that are currently prevalent in the Jaffna peninsula and their impact on local communities. This session was followed by a street drama on the theme of domestic violence, which evoked much interest and discussion amongst members of the audience.

Under the third component of the project, WIN provided psychological counseling and other non-legal support services and/or legal advice and court representation for a total of 570 clients in the Jaffna and Puttalam districts (315 in Jaffna and 255 in Puttalam). Eighty-seven clients were housed at the WIN shelters during the reporting period (July–September 2011). This included 64 at the Colombo shelter and 23 in Matara. WIN staff also attended 4,431 calls on their crisis hotline between July and September 2011.

SuRG currently funds 12 WIN staff members in Jaffna, Puttalam and the Colombo headquarters: 2 legal officers (Jaffna and Puttalam), 3 counselors (Jaffna and Puttalam), and 1 social worker, together with a coordinator, an accountant, an account executive, a monitoring officer, an administrative officer and a shelter matron in Colombo. The accounts executive was recruited in July specifically to manage the SuRG project account. Recruitment of an additional lawyer for the Jaffna office is also currently underway.

1.1.2 TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Lawyers and judges working in the north and east are dealing with a host of new and complex post-war issues. The law on many of these issues is difficult and subject to frequent changes. It is further complicated by the highly political nature or sensitivity of many of these areas. Both lawyers and judges are often finding they are ill-equipped to deal with these new issues. In addition, they lack access to basic legal resources, such as recent legislation and case law. In response, SuRG has developed a series of training sessions for lawyers and judges in the north and east on emerging post-war legal issues. All the sessions are facilitated by leading Sri Lankan practitioners—sitting or retired judges and lawyers—who as much as possible deliver sessions and resources in Tamil. SuRG staff works closely with the resource people to develop sessions that are interactive and practical with case studies, moot



Lawyers from the Eastern Province engage in a discussion during the training workshop organized by SuRG in December 2010.

courts and other participatory techniques. Furthermore, a resource packet is compiled so that participants take away research, cases and judgments, legislation and other relevant information.

The first module was rolled out in FY 10 for lawyers from the north. A second training for lawyers from the east was held in December 2010.

In May 2011, the SuRG SE staff conducted a follow-up assessment of the training for lawyers in the north, six months after the training concluded. The SE team interviewed all 20 lawyers who participated in the training to identify whether participants were using the knowledge and skills learned and to assess the relevance of the topics covered. The team also used the opportunity to discuss priority issues and needs for future training with other members of the legal fraternity in the north—Bar Association officials and members and judges. The findings of the training assessment showed overall appreciation for the training and substantial use of the information by participants in their current practices. Highlights included the participatory nature of the sessions, the opportunity to discuss and ask questions of eminent judges and the value of the resource materials. The findings were incorporated into the design of the remaining FY11 training for judges and lawyers as detailed below.

EASTERN LAWYERS WORKSHOP

The SE team conducted a workshop in December 2010 on issues related to undocumented deaths arising out of the conflict and securing proof of death in order to obtain a death certificate. Other substantive areas covered at the workshop included succession, testamentary action, inheritance of property, and the custody and adoption of minors whose parents had died in the conflict. Thirty-one lawyers from the Eastern Province attended the workshop. These participants were selected with the assistance of the presidents of their respective District Bar Associations.

The workshop was facilitated by a retired Supreme Court judge, a sitting High Court judge and a senior attorney.

JUDGES WORKSHOP

SuRG worked with the Judges Institute (JI) to conduct “The Judicial Colloquia and Training Workshop for Magistrates and District Court Judges-Northern and Eastern Provinces.” The course was developed based on a concept note prepared by SuRG for the Judicial Services Commission (JSC). The proposal was approved by the Chief Justice who then nominated Justice Weerasuriya, Retired Judge of the Supreme Court for sessions, Justice Eric Basanayake, Judge of the Court of Appeal for sessions and Justice Sripavan, Judge of the Supreme Court for sessions as resource persons. The JSC then nominated 26 (16 Tamil and 08 Muslim) Magistrates and District Court judges, including those newly appointed as magistrates and district judges in the north and east, as participants. The workshop was conducted in April 2011.

Justice Weerasuriya led the sessions on the laws and common law practices related to partition of land and property. Justice Basanayake’s session focused on testamentary action and succession. He also discussed the following subtopics: proof of last will, issuance of probate and property administration in the absence or loss of a last will, and procedural aspects with regard to admission of secondary evidence. Justice Sripavan’s session was on judicial ethics and aimed primarily at the new magistrates and district judges appointed in former LTTE controlled areas. The discussion was made relevant to all the participants through the use of examples from foreign jurisdictions, including the United States and India.

Several of the participants noted that the workshop provided them with a tremendous opportunity to interact with senior judges, particularly during group work sessions which comprised drafting and presenting of a judgment on a case study provided. In informal conversations in the months following the training, participants commented to SuRG staff that they are finding the resource materials very useful and they have cited several international judgments for the first time.

NORTHERN LAWYERS WORKSHOP

SuRG's second module for training lawyers from the north and east focused on "Emerging legal issues on land in a post-conflict scenario" and was held in September 2011 for lawyers from the Northern Province. Land has emerged as a key area of concern in the post-war context, bearing significant implications on individual and community rights and was identified as a priority issue for training in the assessment of previous training for northern lawyers as well as by many from the District Bar Associations in the north and east.

Thirty-one lawyers practicing in courts in the Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts, including senior lawyers with more than 12 years of experience, junior lawyers just starting their practice in district courts and lawyers providing pro bono services to local NGOs, participated in the workshop.

The workshop covered both substantive and procedural areas of land law. In addition, a session was dedicated to administrative issues regarding state land and state policy on land. Sessions included:

- Breach of peace over land disputes—and possessory remedies.
- Civil litigation relating to immovable property (Private land)—Rei Vindicatio Action, Declaratory action, action for prescriptive title and appellate jurisdiction in respect of land; and
- State land issues: types of land and property issues in the north, state land ordinance property rights and land for landless and new circular and policy, Bimsaviya Scheme, Land Acquisition Act and state land recovery of possession.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE - DISTRICT MEETINGS

SuRG held two district-level networking meetings for its partners during the last fiscal year. The purpose of these meetings was to facilitate case referral mechanisms, general coordination and information-sharing among HR organizations. Participants in the first meeting, held in December 2010, included all SuRG grantees from Trincomalee and Polonnaruwa, as well as two potential new grantees. As a direct result of this meeting, one participating partner received 14 new cases.

At the second meeting, conducted in February, 22 representatives from 7 current and prospective grantee organizations and from five other local legal aid providers attended. During the meeting, one partner pointed out that they and other local groups often face long delays after a case is referred and before it is filed in court. Following the meeting, the legal aid provider deployed a lawyer to visit the partner's office once a week. The partner has seen a notable turnaround in terms of efficiency of case handling.

"As a junior practitioner who mainly handles civil legal matters in Vavuniya, Killinochchi and Mullaitivu, these sessions provide a lot of information and lessons particularly on matters related to the 66 application, state land issues and re-vindication action. Participating in this workshop has helped me with my current cases being heard in court and I am certain my clients will benefit immensely with the improvement in my submission and presentation of cases."

**ATTORNEY-AT-LAW,
BAR ASSOCIATION OF VAVUNIYA**

1.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

The Community Empowerment and Transformation (CEaT) component provided a comprehensive program of grant management, capacity building and monitoring of grantees implementing a range of activities focused on building ties across ethnic and religious communities, regenerating and strengthening local civil society and community-based organizations (CBOs) and empowering women and youth in the east and Polonnaruwa District. SuRG support has proven critical to many partner organizations as it comes at a time when funding for NGOs in the east is in decline, pressure on non-official civil society organizations is severe and general economic stress acute.

Over the course of the fiscal year, small CEaT grants—awarded through last year's APS—wound down. SuRG field teams conducted end-of-grant review meetings with these and all other local partners whose

activities were ending this FY. These meetings, conducted in March and April 2011 as one-to-one discussions between SuRG staff and the respective partner staff, allowed the team an opportunity to review the projects from different angles including that of the partner staff. The review of the grants centered on implementation of project activities and achievements and challenges faced in project implementation. Findings from these meetings were utilized to review the overall small grants and CEaT program and to inform the decision on which partners and what activities should be considered for a follow-on grant and ongoing programming.

In general, these reviews underscored the importance of SuRG's small regional grants program and the work being done at the community level. SuRG grantees are reaching out to the most vulnerable communities. The vast majority of beneficiaries of these activities are people who do not receive assistance from the government or NGOs and who have generally been neglected by society at large.

A strong theme which emerged was the effective linkages that partners, communities and government representatives are making through SuRG-funded programs which work with CBOs such as WRDSs, RDSs, youth groups, fisherman's groups, farmers groups and peace committees. SuRG activities have resulted in the establishment or invigoration of numerous CBOs throughout the region which are well organized, have been taught to identify issues of critical concern to communities and which represent the communities' interests in their dealings with relevant local authorities. Throughout the various grants, there have been several examples of successful cooperation between CBOs and government authorities which have led to resolving local disputes, addressing local infrastructure needs, responding to flooding, supporting communities by acquiring essential documentation, among many others. SuRG has identified this type of cooperation between CBOs and government authorities as a major theme for the CEaT component and plans to focus additional effort during FY12 to make these relationships even more effective. SuRG views the assistance to communities in acquiring a voice with their local authorities as a major objective which can yield tangible results in the short and long term.

When the most severe flooding in decades hit the Eastern Province (December 2010–January 2011), project community groups, stakeholders and partners mobilized to support flood-affected communities and families, showing the importance of SuRG activities in the field. Although SuRG funds could not be used for relief and rehabilitation, SuRG projects in a number of communities served as a basis from which relief and rehabilitation activities were launched. Partner community groups secured loans for Muslim and Sinhala families in Polonnaruwa; partner youth groups secured funds for livelihood assistance for flood-affected families; partner women's groups established a revolving loan fund for vulnerable women; and one partner renovated flood-damaged roads during project *shramadana* activities. This mobilization of support, without additional SuRG funds or input, is an important sign that these groups have been embedded in the fabric of the community and bodes quite well for their sustainability once the SuRG project ends.

Through the end-of-grant review meetings, SuRG and grantees were able to identify which aspects of programs should be continued, be cancelled and/or expanded during future grants either with SuRG or other donors. Grantees were also given critical feedback on their implementation and were given ample opportunity to respond to any concerns and suggest alternative practices based on their lessons learned.

Building on the work that CEaT partners completed during their first grants and taking the end-of-grant reviews into consideration, planning for follow-up grants took place during the latter part of the year. New programs have been designed and will be proposed to USAID during the first quarter of FY12. Grants will complement two additional small grants awarded this year in Trincomalee which continue with the theme of community empowerment and peacebuilding as well as focusing on empowering women to participate in local politics.

A grant was also awarded for a follow-up project with Buddhist clergy in Ampara, Monaragula and Polonnaruwa. And, as directed by USAID in contract modifications, grants were awarded to the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding to work with religious leaders from all four faith groups in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Padiviya; the Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce (HDCC) to support women's

entrepreneurship in Hambantota; and American University (AU) to work provide technical assistance and support to a national partner.

“Sri Lanka is a small country which is multi ethnic and multi religious in nature. Therefore, there is an immense role to be played by not only the *Bhikkus* (monks) but also the *Bhikkunis* (nuns). The importance of this project is that it allows all religious leaders to come together, exchange ideas and work together with all communities through mutual understanding...This project will help and guide us to mold the younger generation of religious leaders as social mobilizers, to work with all communities, regardless of religious or ethnic backgrounds and create a clearer understanding of each other.”

VENERABLE MONK, PARTNER DIALOGUE FORUM, MONARAGALA, SEPTEMBER 2011

These grant activities were supported throughout the year with ongoing technical assistance and training, including a series of residential training programs on advocacy and gender, as well as district and all partner quarterly workshops. The quarterly review meetings allowed partners from throughout the province to network and create linkages while district partner review meetings enabled SuRG staff to more closely monitor the activities of the projects and provide a space for the partners to review their work on a regular basis.

During the first quarter of FY11 and prior to issuing a grant to AU, an AU professor was commissioned by SuRG, to follow up a grant to the Peace Secretariat to Muslims (PSM) with an assessment of the viability of the PSM and other mechanisms in the post-war context and 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 consultant met with a wide array of stakeholders in the Muslim community including PSM staff and board members, Muslim Peace Assembly members, the Muslim Information Centre, and Mosque Federation. He concluded that despite numerous challenges since its founding in 2002, the PSM 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.

The consultant concluded that for the PSM to be a credible and effective voice for the Muslim community, a number of changes are required. He recommended they:

- Revise the existing organizational structure to reduce administrative costs;
- Set up a new internally and externally transparent financial and administrative mechanism;
- Restrict board involvement to policy decisions and general strategic direction of the organization;
- Build capacity of the new board to pursue PSM's mission;
- Provide space for the Executive Director to implement decisions and take initiatives independently;
- Involve other political groups on the board to break the existing image of one-party domination;
- Involve religious constituencies on the board (especially outside Colombo); and

- Maintain regional offices but reduce the administrative costs and focus more on programming capacity.

The consultant also recommended donors provide support for the PSM to stay operational including support for basic administrative and programmatic salaries. He suggested that the PSM should be given a medium-term commitment to allow the organization to evolve into an umbrella organization that combines civil society and direct access to politicians.

1.2.1 GRANTS

GRANTS COMPLETED AND CLOSED

Grant Number	ARD016
Project	Relationship Building between Diverse Social Groups in Tamil and Muslim Communities
District	Batticaloa
Grant Award	Rs. 2,452,960
Dates	February 15, 2010–April 30, 2011

The partner completed its “Relationship Building between Diverse Social Groups in Tamil and Muslim Communities” project in April 2011. Over the course of the 12-month project period, the partner established links with eight neighboring Tamil and Muslim communities in the Batticaloa District—communities with a history of violence and mistrust between them.

The partner helped establish women’s, youth, fishermen’s and farmers’ groups in each of the eight project communities. They engaged 282 Muslim and Tamil community members in project orientation meetings, provided training on a range of topics and held 28 one-day awareness-raising sessions for 366 Tamils and Muslims on topics including conflict management and mitigation, coexistence and peacebuilding, non-violent communication and negotiation skills, and *Do No Harm* and conflict sensitivity. They also conducted a six-month 72-hour Sinhala language training program for 81 youth (39 males, 42 females).

“They have achieved two objectives with this program: participants have learned Sinhala and peace has been achieved between participating Tamil and Muslim communities.”

ZONAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Groups established in project communities met with their respective counterparts from neighboring communities each month to identify and resolve common problems. The partner conducted monthly meetings and sectoral quarterly meetings for all groups to discuss and plan how to address concerns. Among the groups, the women’s groups stood out. They secured registration for two WRDSs which had long been pending; they obtained a Rs. 250,000 government contract to renovate the local mosque; and they increased coordination with youth groups to identify and take action against illicit liquor producers in their communities.

Youth groups, apart from supporting the women’s groups’ efforts to reduce the production of illicit liquor, actively sought the assistance of government departments in securing sports equipment and joined flood relief efforts during the unprecedented rainfall earlier in the FY.

At the quarterly sectoral meetings, the interest groups rallied support to address priority concerns. The partner invited relevant government officials—rural development officers, agrarian officials, social service and youth services officers, and officials from the Divisional Secretariats—to attend each of these meetings and facilitate resolution of problems raised at the meetings. For example, fishermen in one community were

able to take back a boat and other fishing equipment for common use by the Society that had been taken for private use and farmers societies repaired an irrigation channel and rehabilitated four by-roads.

Project implementation and progress was not without challenges, however. The lack of physical works projects or financing for community projects amidst the extreme poverty prevalent in these communities made it very difficult to secure the participation of community members at all the monthly meetings. In addition, many of the issues identified by the community groups could only be dealt with by government officials/agencies—a process that is both time-consuming (as experienced by the WRDSs in securing registration) and requires focused and longer-term advocacy efforts.

Nonetheless, the resolution of several of the above-mentioned issues, and the process initiated to tackle priority issues contributed towards both the building of durable relationships across ethnic and religious lines in these eight communities and towards building the confidence of community members needed to raise their voices and negotiate with government officials for the services and rights they are legally entitled to.

Grant Number	ARD012
District	Trincomalee
Project	Promoting Peaceful Co-Existence through Multi Ethnic Community Participation
Grant Award	Rs. 2,319,430
Dates	March 10, 2010–March 31, 2011

The partner completed its “Promoting Peaceful Co-Existence through Multi-Ethnic Community Participation” project in March 2011. The project, working with all three communities in the Trincomalee district, organized youth and community members in project Peace Committees and Youth Groups to work together to address issues of community stability and reconciliation.

Peace Committees set up in 15 villages included village leaders, religious leaders, government officers (*Samurdi* officer or a teacher), farmer organization leaders, and Rural Development and Women Rural Development Society members. Over the course of the project, these Peace Committees resolved 11 community-level conflicts on their own and also linked up with village Mediation Boards. For example, in one community a land issue arose from the allocation of land donated to two married sisters as part of their dowries. When one of the sisters claimed the partition of the land was done unfairly, the issue was raised with the Peace Committee. The Committee approached the Mediation Board and together they convinced the sisters and their families to abide by the instructions in the land deed.

The partner also brought project Youth Groups together to identify and address issues of importance in their communities. For example, one Tamil Youth Group, in response to villagers concerns about illicit liquor production, got together with the Sinhala Youth Group in the adjoining villages who were also concerned about their villagers buying illicit liquor. The Tamil community members were reluctant to take up the issue with the police. So the Sinhala group members agreed to talk to the police to persuade them to take action. Sinhala youth initially spoke to Seruvila police. However, since the Tamil village came under a different police jurisdiction, both Sinhala and Tamil youth joined forces to make appeals to both police stations. Their joint efforts led to a police raid of illicit liquor production, with the support of community members from both Sinhala and Tamil villages. The groups also extended their assistance to flood relief activities early this year and organized a sports festival and exchange visits between the different ethnic communities.

Implementation was challenging as many issues facing project participants and communities, such as youth unemployment and domestic violence, were well beyond the reach of this project. However, the partner’s work with these Peace Committees and Youth Groups and its numerous project activities including language classes, *sbramadana*, sports festivals, exchange visits and cultural celebrations provided opportunities for members of these very separate communities to interact and work together on issues of common concern in many instances for the first time in decades.

Grant Number	ARD011
Project	Promoting Peaceful Community Co-existence through Social Mobilization of Women's and Youth Groups
District	Trincomalee
Grant Award	Rs. 2,959,600
Dates	10 March 2010–31 March 2011

The partner completed its “Promoting Peaceful Community Co-existence through Social Mobilization of Women's and Youth Groups” project in March this year.

Over the course of the project, the partner established 14 women's groups and 14 youth and brought them together at monthly meetings to identify community issues and then develop action plans towards their resolution. For example, several communities identified the elimination of the production and sale of illicit liquor as a priority. The partner worked with various women's groups to address the problem. The groups identified and reported approximately 28 illicit liquor producers and 899 consumers to the Excise Department. The Excise Department together with Police then raided these illicit liquor producers and production was discontinued.

The women's groups also prioritized cases relating to domestic violence, child abuse and sexual harassment. Over the course of the project, they identified 53 such cases (21 domestic violence cases, 18 maintenance cases, 12 school dropouts and 2 sexual harassment cases) in six villages. Thirty-four cases were referred to the psycho-social officer located at the Divisional Secretariat for resolution and five maintenance cases were referred to a Trincomalee legal aid provider for intervention. The groups also convinced the parents of six of the school dropouts to send their children back to school.

In addition, 13 women's groups comprising 217 members initiated a savings program. The group collected Rs. 20 to Rs. 50 from each person per month. By the end of the program, the group had collected Rs. 110,370. They also set up a revolving loan fund (RLF) to provide loans to vulnerable, war-affected women to start or develop livelihood activities. Since the individual groups' savings were not sufficient to maintain the RLF system and the individual groups were unable to access loans from development and commercial banks, they set up a Divisional Women's Network and registered the network in the Divisional Secretariat to access those loan schemes.

The Divisional Network includes three members from each of the women's groups. Documents were submitted to register the Network with the DS. The Network is now responsible to select beneficiaries and approve loans. During the final quarter of project implementation, two woman-headed households received loans of Rs 10,000 each to engage in income-generating activities for a mobile textile business and poultry keeping. The Network provides a tangible vehicle for sustainability of the work started by the partner through its SuRG project.



Muslim and Tamil community members from Trincomalee District were hosted by Sinhala community members of Polonnaruwa District in an exchange visit facilitated by SuRG partners.

The promotion of co-existence among different communities, primarily among Muslim and Sinhalese, was also a primary objective of the project. Towards this end, the partner organized both cultural and sports events in which there were opportunities for Tamil and Muslim communities to interact with each other and thereby increase mutual understanding and respect. In addition, 3 Sinhala, 12 Tamil and 29 Muslims who work with the partner hosted 44 community members working with a SuRG Polonnaruwa-based grantee. The groups learned about each other's grant programs and shared their experiences and strategies for rebuilding their lives and communities after the end of the war.

“This joint community activity has broken down stereotypes and helped build trust among people of different cultural and political backgrounds. I recognized some interconnections among different ethnic communities and learned to listen and tolerate values and opinions of others.”

PARTICIPANT IN PARTNER FAMILY EXCHANGE

The success of the partner's efforts towards co-existence was evidenced by the youth group's nomination of a Muslim youth to a national Youth Parliament. All Muslim and Tamil project youth groups collectively selected the nominee and worked together to campaign for him. This is a significant achievement in this context and locale.

The project was implemented in areas with high numbers of returnees from the Vanni and India who were faced with ongoing concerns about basic needs. This was a challenge for the partner, as participants were first and foremost concerned about livelihoods, housing, water and sanitation issues rather than peacebuilding and co-existence. This was somewhat mitigated by the introduction of the RLF but will continue to be a challenge especially as overall support for development activities in the east is scarce.

Grant Number	ARD014
Project	Community Empowerment and Mobilization for Muslim and Sinhalese Coexistence Project
District	Polonnaruwa
Grant Award	Rs 2,383,150
Dates	15 March 2010 - 30 June 2011

The partner completed implementation of its “Community Empowerment and Mobilization for Muslim and Sinhalese Coexistence Project” in the latter part of June 2011. The project was intended to promote peaceful coexistence among Sinhala and Muslim communities in Polonnaruwa District, in an area severely affected by the war.

Over the life of the project, the partner worked with 3 Sinhala and 4 Muslim communities, setting up and working with 67 small groups to create an environment in which villagers could raise and address issues of mutual concern and increase interaction among Sinhalese and Muslims. The groups were trained on topics including group formation, communication, leadership and gender sensitivity. Each group then nominated members to 7 Village Committees and a Divisional Committee thereby creating a network to represent the needs of the people at the divisional level to the relevant government authorities.

The major project activities of the partner included:

- Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) in each community to identify critical needs of the villagers that were then shared with relevant government and local officials;
- Exchange visits to Ampara, Trincomalee and Kandy for committee members to improve their understanding of how committees and CBOs address local issues;

- Tamil and Sinhala language classes for 78 community members (36 Sinhalese and 42 Muslims); 66 students sat for the OLD examination and 50 passed;
- Dialogue forums with Muslim and Buddhist religious leaders to learn about the religious practices of each religion and the commonalities in the teachings;
- *Sbaramadana* activities;
- Organizing cultural events and hosting other communities' participation including celebrations of the Sinhala/Tamil New Year, the Prophet Mohammad's birthday and Ramadan; and
- A joint trade exhibition which provided space for Muslim and Sinhalese traders to exhibit their wares and products.

Project activities not only helped participating communities to address concerns but to do so in a way that created a space for Muslim and Sinhalese to work together on these common issues. For many participants, it was the first time they had worked together with members of the other community.

These efforts were not without challenges. At the start of the project, community members were skeptical about committing time to an initiative that could not directly address their basic and most urgent needs (livelihoods, food, credit, etc.). The partner addressed this issue by securing funds from other organizations to address some of these critical needs and build the trust they needed to move their SuRG program forward.

The partner was also able to include members of small groups, including those in the Muslim villages, in their loan scheme allowing the members of the project's small groups to apply for credit. By the close of the project, 208 individuals from the 7 communities had accessed in total Rs. 5,316,480 in credit. In order to give more authority and responsibility to the village committees, the partner authorized the village committee to review applications and approve the applicants for consideration of credit.

Another key accomplishment of the project was securing space for Muslim traders in the weekly market. This also was not without challenges. It took several rounds of direct negotiations with the Local Authority Chairman and the Divisional Secretary to overcome policies of the Sinhala Traders' Association which were impeding the entry of Muslim traders before AF could secure space for Muslims in the fair for the first time.

Grant Number	ARD015
Project	Engaging People's Fora and Local Authorities to Empower Communities
District	Polonnaruwa
Grant Award	Rs. 2,833,225
Dates	15 February 2010 - 31 March 2011

The partner completed implementation of its "Engaging People's Fora and Local Authorities to Empower Communities" project in Polonnaruwa District. The project was designed to enhance participatory local governance in 10 of the most underserved and geographically remote Grama Niladharis (GNs) in the district.

The partner identified community members and educated them about the roles and responsibilities of communities as well as local authority members in local government. Through People's Forums established in each community, community members identified priority issues to raise with their local authority and negotiated to address those issues. The partner created awareness in the community on citizen engagement in local government to promote transparency, accountability and good governance through the development and enactment of a street drama. The street drama was performed 28 times throughout the division for approximately 3,700 people over the course of the project.

The partner also developed the skills of both political stakeholders and the staff of the local authority to help them provide efficient and effective services to the public. Training and workshops for political and government staff at the LA included office management, financial accounting and proposal development.

Among the partner’s most important achievement was the implementation of the provision in the Local Authority Act which requires local authorities to establish Standing Committees (Finance and Policy; Housing, and Community Development; Technical Services; and Environmental Services) with citizen participation. The partner successfully negotiated with the local authority to set up the committees and include citizen representation which provides a mechanism for collective decision making among the LA and the community. This is the first time this has been accomplished in the Polonnaruwa District.

The standing committees were able to convince the local authority to include 35 community-level projects out of 70 identified through project 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 required. It is important to note that this was a time-consuming process requiring much effort and patience so that trust could be built among the community, political stakeholders and government officers.

In addition to strengthening relationships between the PS and the citizens, the partner also supported the communities affected by the floods early in 2011. Through previously planned *shramadanas*, they renovated six gravel roads in six villages damaged by the floods with the support of the PS and both Sinhala and Muslim community members. In another *shramadana*, community members cleaned and renovated their cemetery. In total, 10 *shramadana* activities were completed over the course of the project.

The partner also conducted awareness-raising sessions on the citizen charter in 10 villages, providing information on the duties of the local authority, persons responsible, time required to deliver services and documents needed for services. Citizen charter display boards were erected in 11 strategic locations of the 10 villages and the premises of the LA.

Overall, the project activities worked towards creating a better understanding between the *Pradeshija Sabha* and the community members. The ability to discuss issues openly proved to be a two-way process that enabled citizens to reach their elected members and the latter to forge stronger linkages with the grassroots. By finding means to address common issues, the project also enabled Muslim and Sinhala community members to work together. The impact of the project is visible in the active participation of citizens in the respective committees of the PS and also in their improved capacity to discuss community concerns in an open forum with the elected and LA staff members.

NEW AND ONGOING GRANTS

Grant Number	ARD049
Project	Deepening Buddhist Practice of Social Engagement and Interfaith Dialogue
District	Ampara, Monaragula, Polonnaruwa
Grant Award	Rs. 7,356,500
Dates	August 15, 2011 – July 14, 2012

The partner’s grant entitled, “Deepening Buddhist Practice of Social Engagement and Interfaith Dialogue” was launched late in FY11. The program is based on experiences and lessons learned from the partner’s “Promoting Social Engagement through Buddhist Practice” project funded by SuRG and completed in August 2010. It aims to empower and strengthen Buddhist clergy’s ability to engage in and contribute to inter-community and inter-religious reconciliation and co-existence.

During the final quarter of FY11, the partner held two Beginners Dialogue Forums on “Religion as a Facilitator for Peace” at which participants discussed different definitions of peace by Spinoza, Gandhi and Nehru and by religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. A discussion was also held on the Buddha’s path to peace. Twenty monks and 7 nuns attended the session in Monaragala; 20 monks participated in the session at Hingurana.

The partner conducted an introductory Dialogue Forum for 31 nuns on gender equity in Bible. Discussion at the Forum centered on the differences between men and women, the colonial viewpoints of Buddhist women and on women’s role in Buddhist history.

The partner also began Tamil language classes for 23 monks in Ampara and 20 monks and 12 nuns in Monaragala.



Buddhist monks of the Monaragala District participate in a Beginners’ Dialogue forum organized in September 2011.

Grant Number	ARD038
Project	Supporting Women’s Political Candidacy in Trincomalee
District	Trincomalee
Grant Award	Rs. 3,164,000
Dates	August 15, 2011 to August 14, 2012

The partner commenced implementation of its “Supporting Women’s Political Candidacy in Trincomalee” project in August 2011. The project aims to increase the political influence and participation of women in the Trincomalee District. The project will work towards building positive public opinion on the value of women as political leaders and develop a local network to foster women’s leadership in politics.

Start-up activities included recruitment of staff for the project, obtaining approval from the Divisional Secretaries and an orientation session for all project staff.

Twenty-eight project participants were selected after introductory meetings were held with GNs, RDSs, WRDSs, political and civic leaders and youth club members. At these meetings SDRO learned that the WRDS members were very interested in being involved in the program. However, the interest was primarily from young unmarried women or women with adult children as women with young children would not be able to leave their children or take time away from their domestic responsibilities. The partner also found, even though they invited members of the fishing committees which are generally all men, participation from males was low and will be an ongoing challenge throughout the project.

The partner selected three experienced resource persons to conduct upcoming training; they are currently at work on the development of curriculum for leadership training to be held next quarter.

Grant Number	ARD036
Project	Creating Co-existence
District	Trincomalee
Grant Award	Rs. 2,150,250
Dates	August 15, 2011 to August 14, 2012

The partner was awarded a grant to support its “Creating Co-existence” project in August 2011. The project aims to promote integration and co-existence amongst the Sinhala and Tamil communities in the Trincomalee District.

Before initiating project activities, the partner discussed the scope of the project with the Divisional Secretary and secured approval for its implementation. The partner then completed an assessment of the capacity of the existing 9 CBOs in the 6 project villages. These included 5 youth groups, 2 women’s groups and 2 rural development societies. An awareness-raising session was then held to introduce and explain the project to the members of these groups.

As part of its community project component, the partner identified the rehabilitation of the Kovil (Hindu temple) premises as an initial project based on the cultural significance of the Hindu temple to both Tamil and Sinhala farming communities. The partner convened a meeting between the Sinhala Farmers’ Society and the Kovil Committee to discuss the rehabilitation. They then formed a common Kovil Development Committee, the membership of which is drawn from the two societies.

The partner’s project will also provide Tamil and Sinhala language training for project participants. Language teachers have been identified to conduct the classes and six sites chosen to hold the classes.

Grant Number	ARD048
Project	Inter-religious Cooperation for Community Development and Social Empowerment in Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts, and Padaviya Division
District	Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Padaviya Division
Grant Award	\$458,070
Dates	August 1, 2011 – July 31, 2012

As directed by USAID in Modifications 6 and 8 to Tetra Tech ARD’s SuRG contract, a grant was awarded to the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding (KCP) on August 1, 2011, to support its “Inter-Religious Cooperation for Community Development and Social Empowerment in Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts and Padaviya Division” program. The program is designed to engage religious leaders from the leading faith groups in reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts.

During its start-up in the final quarter of FY11, KCP successfully recruited 80 religious leaders for the core training program. Religious leaders were recruited by district teams of KCP’s implementing partner, working with their previously established network of local societies youth wing in each of the chosen districts. Criteria for selection included:

- At least 18 years of age.
- Resident in Trincomalee, Batticaloa, or Padaviya districts.
- Available to participate in the full program over the course of the year.
- Knowledgeable of their faith tradition with at least five years of experience as a religious leader.



- Currently active in the community.
- Interested in improving inter-group relations.
- Known to have demonstrated positive interpersonal relations in the community and a capacity for leadership.
- Interest in sustaining the impact of the project beyond the one-year sequence of activities.

Local partner staff also met with key religious leaders in each of the three project areas to ensure their support for the program and request permission for prospective participants under their supervision to attend. It was deemed especially important to get this approval from the heads of participating Buddhist monasteries. All 80 religious leaders have now been selected, with 20 from each faith group.

Program start-up meetings were held in each of the three project areas with selected participants from that area as well as other key local religious leaders who expressed interest in and support for the project.

Start-up Meetings: Participants by Area

Trincomalee	Batticaloa	Padaviya
8 Buddhists	7 Hindus	11 Buddhists
12 Hindus	8 Christians	05 Islamic
11 Christians	10 Islamic	2 Christians
15 Islamic	01 Buddhists	

The purpose of the start-up meetings were to introduce the program to the selected religious leaders, respond to any questions or concerns they might have, confirm their commitment to the full sequence of activities, and create an opportunity for the participants from each district to begin to get to know each other. In sharing why they wish to participate in the program, religious leaders in all three districts spoke to a strong interest in the planned community projects. They described difficult life conditions in their communities and their desire to find a way for religious leaders to make tangible contributions. Many also spoke of their interest in learning more about each other's religions. Hindu and Christian participants spoke of the need for programs that help to bring people together to reconcile after the years of war. All expressed interest in learning more about the subject of peacebuilding and how religious leaders in particular can contribute. When asked about concerns, many referred to the fact that the project will only last for one year, which seems like a short time.

The partner noted the lack of female religious leaders participating in the program. Although this challenge was anticipated prior to the commencement of the program, it has proven to be even harder than expected. Only 7 out of the 80 participants are women. Female participation in the community projects will be a high priority.

Grant Number	ARD047
Project	Technical Assistance & Capacity Building
District	National
Grant Award	US\$: 279,127
Dates	August 15, 2011 – August 14, 2012

USAID directed Tetra Tech ARD/SuRG in contract Modifications 6 and 8 to award a grant to the American University’s Peacebuilding & Development Institute (AU-PDI) to support its “Technical Assistance and Capacity Building” program. The program began in August 2011; it builds on AU’s project director’s work over the last five years with the local implementing partner and is based on his assessment findings from earlier in the year.

The main purpose of the program is to build the local partner’s capacity as a national-level organization that works with Muslim constituencies in Sri Lanka to bring their concerns and needs to the public and government’s attention. AU-PDI will deliver customized integrated trainings and workshops that enhance the technical capacity of the implementing partner and its local partners and members.

Project start-up took place in the last quarter of this FY. AU-PDI and the partner’s Board drew up an MOU for program implementation. The MOU highlights key personnel required for the partner to implement program activities and also clarifies the roles and responsibilities for the two organizations. The MOU highlights the key activities of the program, including (Phase 1) organizational capacity building and project planning workshops; (Phase 2) programs focusing on social science research methods and advocacy workshops; and (Phase 3) Mosque Federation and Jammiyat Al Ulama Capacity Building through workshops in land settlement and dispute resolution and counseling and family mediation.

After signing the grant, a program orientation was held for the partner board members via conference call to AU-PDI to launch the program. Participants on the call reviewed the program activities, the implementation plan, and discussed coordination between AU-PDI has also started working with the partner in the development of key job descriptions for the recruitment of a Program Manager and Program Assistant.

SECRETARY OF STATE/WOMEN’S GLOBAL ISSUES GRANT

Group Number	ARD050
Project	Promoting Entrepreneurship and Empowering Women in the Hambantota District
District	Hambantota
Grant Award	Rs. 9,423,362
Dates	July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

HDCC was awarded a Secretary of State / Women’s Global Issues grant for its “Promoting Entrepreneurship and Empowering Women in the Hambantota District” program. The project is implemented in eight Divisional Secretariat divisions of the Hambantota District in the Southern Province and is aimed at empowering women in the Hambantota District through entrepreneurship and increasing business women and female entrepreneurs’ capacity to engage in business.

During the final quarter of FY11, HDCC organized nine meetings with government agencies and NGOs working on women’s issues in the district. These included the Hambantota Development Foundation, the Divisional Secretariat offices and the Small Entrepreneur Development Division. Based on these meetings, 10 awareness-raising



sessions were conducted by HDCC in collaboration with these organizations at which 482 women participated. From these awareness-raising sessions, HDCC staff screened and selected 171 women who are keen to participate and were assessed as capable of starting their own business. Of the 171 women, 25 fulfilled HDCC's criteria set by the Hambantota Youth Business Program to access loans.

In mid-September, HDCC conducted a three-day training entitled "Generate your Business Idea" for these 25 potential businesswomen. The program was designed to provide knowledge and skills on the basics of establishing and operating a business. During the course, participants generated business ideas and developed business plans to submit to the HDCC Project Evaluation Committee. Of the 25 business plans submitted, the Project Evaluation Committee assessed 15 and approved 11 women entrepreneurs for loan disbursement. The women received loans ranging in value from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 200,000 to start up a range of business enterprises such as mushroom cultivation, broom manufacturing, nursery for plants, and tailoring. Each businesswoman has been assigned an established entrepreneur as a mentor. HDCC has also taken steps to identify 25 female mentors through mentor selection meetings.

HDCC convened a meeting to introduce the project and planned activities to established businesswomen in the Hambantota District. This also provided HDCC with an opportunity to listen to businesswomen's needs and challenges related to promotion of entrepreneurship. Seventy women attended the meeting. Fifty businesswomen attended a subsequent training conducted by HDCC entitled "Together We Can Achieve." The training covered business ethics and social responsibility; how to manage a business; identifying the market and how to reach it; and costing and pricing. This was the first time that many of the women who were in attendance, participated in such a business-specific training. At the training, HDCC identified 25 prospective new members to participate in the program. HDCC will have to address issues such as the limited business management knowledge and non-registration of their businesses before membership can be secured.

HDCC's greatest challenge currently is to find a means to increase and motivate businesswomen to participate in trainings and other project activities. Since many of the district businesswomen are sole owners of their businesses and lack the staff to delegate their work commitments, they are unable to commit to 5-6-hour sessions. HDCC will conduct more field visits and follow up with those who could not participate in the trainings and find ways to accommodate their needs to ensure participation.

"What we discussed and learned today will help us formulate a proper strategy to improve our businesses and I'm certain that at least a few of us will manage to break the many barriers that stand in our way and make it to the national level...What USAID and the Hambantota Chamber have managed to give us is strength, to think and go beyond our narrow realms and we thank you for this opportunity.

PARTICIPANT, HDCC "TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE" WORKSHOP, SEPTEMBER 2011

I.2.2 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

ADVOCACY

During FY11, SuRG held a series of four trainings on community advocacy, building on the activities and programming of participants. The workshops were developed and facilitated by a trainer with more than 20 years of experience working with and training grassroots groups from the east and other areas of Sri Lanka in advocacy, gender and community mobilization—in conjunction with CEaT staff. Partners learned about advocacy concepts and frameworks and were provided with guidelines and tools for planning, implementing and managing their own interventions.

During the first workshop, participants were introduced to advocacy concepts in relation to their projects. By the end of the workshop, grantees were able to identify specific advocacy interventions appropriate to their ongoing activities. At the second workshop, partners analyzed their own and each other's advocacy interventions. They learned and practiced key skills such as leadership, communication and negotiation—all of

which are necessary to manage advocacy interventions. Participants were also asked to collect data to design an appropriate advocacy strategy when they returned to their communities after the workshop.

The data they collected was analyzed in the third workshop and used to help participants hone their advocacy plans with support and technical assistance from the facilitator, CEaT staff and other participants. By the end of the workshop, each grantee organization had developed a detailed three-month advocacy action plan.

At the fourth workshop, partners were asked to present and review the advocacy initiatives they had undertaken after the previous workshop. In addition, participants worked on developing skills in community engagement and network building. Participants discussed a variety of approaches to engaging with communities when planning and implementing advocacy activities. It is expected that participants will continue these initiatives as part of their SuRG programs and their ongoing activities.

“We thought advocacy has to be done at the higher political levels and directly with policymakers or elected members...Thanks to the workshop, we got a clear understanding of what advocacy is and how we can implement advocacy efforts through our programs.”

**SuRG PARTNER REPRESENTATIVE
ADVOCACY TRAINING PARTICIPANT**

GENDER

An in-house review of SuRG partner activities revealed that gender consideration among partners has focused primarily on working with women or working on women’s rights issues. Partners generally do not conduct gender analysis prior to program development and implementation. As such, SuRG organized a series of gender workshops for partner organizations and SuRG technical staff.



SuRG partners participate in a gender workshop conducted in Trincomalee.

The series of workshops started with sessions held at SuRG Quarterly Review meetings for partners. In the December 2010 Quarterly Review, a half-day was allotted for grantees to look closely at their activities and determine how they might be enhanced or modified to better address gender issues. Participants looked at each other’s programs as well, focusing on balancing cultural and social sensitivities with program and gender objectives, the importance and challenge of including men in activities, and the importance of organizations “practicing what they preach.”

The Quarterly Review sessions informed design of follow-up residential workshops for partners. In June, 43 representatives of 20 SuRG partner organizations attended one of two workshops conducted in Trincomalee in June. The workshops were developed and facilitated by two local gender consultants, one a lawyer and the other a community development / advocacy expert. The general objective was to enhance participants’ understanding of gender equality and provide tools for mainstreaming gender throughout programs and in organizations. Key issues covered were notions of gender, hierarchy, discrimination, the legal framework, how to access the legal system, conducting gender analysis, and strategy and planning for future program activities.

The methodology was participatory and interactive. Through the course of the workshop, participants were asked to look at the concepts being discussed through the lens of their individual, family and community experiences. They were introduced to the laws affecting women and children and how to use the legal system to respond to problems and seek redress. Finally, they were asked to look at key challenges in each of the four

SuRG component areas and develop a strategy for tackling these issues. A follow-up session with grantees is scheduled in October.

TEACHING TAMIL OR SINHALA AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Included in seven CEaT grants is community Tamil or Sinhala language training. Last year, SuRG supported these activities by a Training of Trainer (ToT) workshop for the trainers of these language programs. In October 2010, SuRG held up a follow-up session for 16 teachers from these 7 grantee organizations. Prior to 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 and discussed needs, 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 and focused on course content and teaching techniques. 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.

QUARTERLY GRANTEE REVIEWS

The CEaT team facilitated quarterly grantee review meetings for partner staff in December 2010 and March 2011. The primary objective of these meetings was to review the progress of the projects collectively and provide opportunities for partner staff to share their experiences and network with each other. The meetings proved beneficial to the partner staff 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.

Thirty representatives from 10 partner organizations working in the east and Polonnaruwa participated in the December meeting, at which they reviewed their activities over the quarter and explored how those activities promote project objectives and results. Participants held a peer review session providing suggestions and feedback on each partner's progress.



SuRG partners discuss project progress at 'gallery walk' exercise during Quarterly Review meeting held in March.

As partner project activities were either winding down or entering the final phase of implementation, the emphasis of review meeting held in March, with the participation of 39 staff members representing 11 organizations, was on assessing the impact of the projects. Participants focused greatly on identifying and articulating achievements of their interventions and the impact on the community. In addition, grantees discussed future plans and ideas on how to maintain momentum and continue ongoing work with communities beyond the project period.

A third quarterly meeting was replaced by on-site end of grant reviews with each partner as described above.

DISTRICT PARTNER MEETINGS

The CEaT team also conducted partner review meetings at the district level to assist both SuRG and partner staff focus on the effective and timely completion of project activities as scheduled in partner work plans. One-day meetings for the Trincomalee-based partners were conducted in November, January and March.

And, a first district partner review meeting for staff of new grantees was held in September. At this meeting, a representative of two ongoing partners also participated to share experiences and lessons learned with the new grantees.

In November, two district meetings were conducted for two partners in Batticaloa and two partners in Ampara. Thereafter, in December 2010 and February 2011, common meetings for Ampara and Batticaloa grantees were conducted by the SuRG team at the Ampara office.

The content of district meetings include review of completion of activities against the monthly work plan, project achievements, challenges and lessons learned and areas for improvement. Open discussions center on clarifying M&E forms and data, sharing experiences from the field and formulating strategies to address concerns encountered during project implementation.

I.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The SuRG local governance (LG) team wound down activities in the east this year, completing the last of five technical training modules aimed at improving local authority (LA) staff and local government officials' ability to manage and administer their LAs and engage citizenry. Technical assistance to SuRG's 11 partner LAs was ongoing and included 'echo training' to provide staff from the LA who did not attend the residential session with key knowledge and learning on each technical topic and support the application of techniques and skills learned. Technical assistance also included the facilitation of the LA working group meetings and Participatory Governance Forums (PGFs) formed last year.

In addition, SuRG conducted assessments of its technical training series and ongoing technical assistance program to address overall program impact and to inform planning of programs in the Northern Province set to take place after elections in March and July. Key findings are summarized in the chart and sections below.

LG Technical Assistance and Training Program – Achievements, Challenges, Lessons Learned

Achievements

- ❖ PGFs formed in 11 partner LAs provide unique and effective mechanism for citizen participation
- ❖ Participatory plans completed in all 37 Eastern Province PSs qualifying all PSs for NELSIP funding
- ❖ Partner LAs submitted 62 proposals to NELSIP; 34 projects valued at Rs. 381,760,456 approved
- ❖ Final accounts for 2010 completed by 11 partner LAs
- ❖ Bi-laws drafted by 9 partner LAs
- ❖ 11 partner LAs completed and implementing citizen friendly office layout and structure

Challenges

- ❖ Human and other resources in all LAs are scarce and proposed cadres not in place in many LAs
- ❖ Frequent transfers of trained and experienced officers to other departments hamper LA ability to provide services to the public and maintain quality service provision
- ❖ Very low revenue in the LAs exacerbate frustration among and between LAs and citizens related to service provision

❖ LAs duplicate accounts management with manual register and automated software package

❖ Citizen engagement is an ongoing challenge where there is no or poor service provision

Lessons Learned

❖ Large technical training sessions are less effective than small hands-on, on-site combined training and technical assistance sessions

❖ On-site training ('echo training') allows training of full LA staff and is therefore more likely to result in application of new skills and learning

❖ Informal structures such as the PGF to engage citizens are important for unbiased public participation

❖ Coordination and cooperation between elected officials and administrative staff in the LAs can be complicated and in many instances does not exist. SuRG monthly working group meetings have helped to address this divide and create more efficient and public friendly service in the LAs. Bringing them together monthly for dialogue creates more efficient and effective public friendly service provision

❖ Citizen engagement is a long-term process and requires long-term commitment to see it through

❖ Exit strategy to ensure sustainability of the PGF is critical to maintain the success achieved to date

❖ Allocation of a small grant to the PGFs to implement a project will give legitimacy and support sustainability

❖ Refresher sessions on technical subjects are required to accommodate new staff and elected officials

❖ Lack of monitoring by the Ministry of its own policy regarding citizen engagement hampers implementation

❖ Greater national- and provincial-level coordination on training and donor programs necessary

These findings, along with SuRG's experience and relationships built over the course of the program, were fed into the design of a technical training and assistance program for LAs in the Northern Province. Based on SuRG's budget and the complexities of working in the north, SuRG plans to focus its program on 17 PSs. In the last quarter of this year, SuRG LG staff surveyed other donors and began consultation with Ministry and regional officials. Once local government elections were held in the last quarter, SuRG and USAID held an introductory visit with the Governor of the Northern Province. This allowed the SuRG team to travel to the north and begin planning in earnest.

Meetings were held with national-level Ministry officials as well as regional officials in two visits by SuRG staff to the north. Consultations were held with Mr. D. Soorasingha, Additional Secretary of the MLGPC; Mrs. Sanjeewani Weerasekara, Senior Assistant Secretary Local Government of the MLGPC; Mrs. R. Wijeludchumi, Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, Northern Province; Mr. A. Sivaswamy, the Chief Secretary of the Provincial Council; Mr. S. Achchuthan, the Commissioner for Local Government, Northern Province; Mr. A.B. M. Ashraff, North East Local Services Improvement Project (NELSIP) Coordinator, Ministry of Economic Development NELSIP Coordinator; and the staff of the Organizational Development Unit (ODU)/ North.

“According to our staff members and the people our PS, the Council was backward in supporting procedures for good governance before the start of the SuRG program. But at present, our staff and council members are at the top of the good governance process.”

FORMER CHAIRMAN OF PS, AMPARA DISTRICT

To assist in developing a strategy for the program, identifying the LAs where SuRG will work and liaising with relevant officials, SuRG contracted a former Additional Secretary. He is working with the ODU / North to collect data on all PSs in the province from which SuRG can choose the most needy in terms of resources and assistance and target those PSs servicing the highest percentage of resettled population. The results of the survey are expected early next quarter.

The SuRG LG program also continued language training for local government officials in the east this year—wrapping up Level III classes and initiating Level II classes.

1.3.1 TECHNICAL TRAINING

SuRG, through its local implementing partner, EML Consultants, completed a five-module technical training series early on in the fiscal year with final workshops on participatory governance for 52 government officials representing 22 LAs and legislature and leadership for two groups of 94 government officers representing 38 local authorities. The chart below summarizes all LG technical training offered this fiscal year.

LG Technical Training Program Activities FY 2011			
Training Program	Total LAs	Total Pax	Training Objectives
Participatory Governance (Group II)	22	52	Increase Secretary, Management Assistant, Community Development Officers and Elected Members' understanding of good governance including legal and administrative provisions and strategies for citizen engagement and the role of LAs in local economic development. Emphasis placed on Citizen Charters and preparation of by-laws.
Legislature and Leadership	38	94	Enhance elected members' understanding of leadership concepts and qualities of effective leaders and improve their knowledge of LA legal and regulatory framework and government policy and legal reforms.
Technical Training Review	36	110	Assess the application of technical strategies and processes learned in SuRG training; identify constraints, issues and challenges hindering application; and develop individual LA action plans.
ToT Resource Pool	15	15	To develop a pool of skilled local government staff with the training skills to act as resource persons for training of current and new local government staff.
Legislature and Leadership Newly Elected Councilors Eastern Province	36	41	To introduce newly elected Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to the LA legal framework and ongoing legal and policy reform; enhance understanding of concept, definitions and strategies for effective LA leadership.
Total	38	312	

A key outcome of the technical training series was the formation of a locally based resource pool of local government trainers. At the request of the CLG and ACLGs, SuRG organized a ToT for 15 outstanding participants from LAs and the ACLG and CLG offices. The intent is that this group of skilled local government officers trained as resource people, with their technical knowledge and hands-on experience in their local authorities in the east, will provide ongoing and new training for other and new government staff.

In addition, SuRG and EML conducted a review session of the application of skills and knowledge acquired through the training series. The review provided participants with a forum for each participating LA team to identify achievements and progress, challenges, constraints and lessons learned and



LA staff selected for an LG trainers Resource Pool review their progress in a 'Gallery Walk' exercise during a ToT.

develop an action plan for moving forward. Each participating LA provided a self-assessment and rating of their LA's progress in areas covered by SuRG training. SuRG and EML staff verified these assessments at on-site visits in a number of LAs.

“There’s a positive change in our local authorities thanks to these trainings and the SuRG project.”

COMMISSIONER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, EASTERN PROVINCE

The following chart shows the combined ratings of all LAs participating in the workshop broken down by the 10 SuRG partner LAs participating in the workshop and the remaining 25 other LAs participating in the workshop.

LA Achievements			
Areas of achievement	Functional Achievement All LAs	Functional Achievement SuRG Partner LAs (10)¹	Functional Achievement Other LAs (25)
Preparation of participatory plan	100%	100%	100%
Setup institutional operational arrangements for community participation	97%	100%	96%
Facilitate identification of project ideas by the community and obtain approval by the planning committee represented by the community	94%	100%	92%
Development of project proposals	94%	80%	100%
Development implementation revenue generation projects	94%	90%	96%
Preparation of annual budget in accordance with the legal provisions	86%	80%	88%
Conduct council meeting according to the roles and regulation setup.	86%	100%	80%
Obtain citizen inputs in the preparation of budgets	80%	100%	72%
Form advisory committees with 50% citizen participation and keep them active with responsibilities	77%	80%	76%
Design and operationalized new office design	74%	90%	68%
Introduce computerization of the office management related work	74%	80%	80%
Establishment of a Participatory Governance Forum	77%	100%	68%
Hold regular community meeting (standing or advisory)	74%	80%	72%
Preparation of citizen charter with inputs from the citizen	63%	80%	56%
Appointment of a public relations officer (PRO)	63%	100%	48%
Improvement of accounting system and introduction of a software package for accounting and finance	60%	80% ²	52%
Establishment of the communication network	60%	70%	56%
Implementation of the leadership (Quality)	57%	70%	52%
Establish partnership with private sector.	46%	60%	40%
Preparation of by-laws	40%	80%	24%

¹ Two of the 10 SuRG partners participating in this survey and review (Muthur and Seruvila) had not completed activities until just following the review session bringing down the score for development of project proposals, implementation of revenue generation projects and preparation of annual budget.

² Based on 9 PS partners. Software was developed for use in PSs only and so UC partners are not included.

Issues and challenges reflected tension between political and technical needs, lack of coordination among the council (political) and staff (administration), distrust of the community by local authorities and vice versa, lack of human and financial resources available to the LAs, lack of knowledge and/or understanding of the laws, and responsibilities and authorities of elected and government local authorities by staff, council and citizens.

“I have requested a copy of this budget plan so that we can keep track of whether the planned activities are happening or not.”

COMMUNITY MEMBER, AT PS PARTICIPATORY BUDGET PREPARATION MEETING

These challenges underscore the need for targeted and ongoing technical support to the LAs. The challenges involved in effectively engaging citizens as a result of distrust on the part of the LAs towards citizens, political pressure and citizens’ lack of understanding and distrust of the LA are considerable. As underscored by SuRG’s technical assistance assessment (see Section “1.3.2 Technical Assistance” below), PGFs developed in SuRG partner LAs have been very helpful in breaking down these barriers and supporting meaningful citizen engagement. It has also helped ensure women and other underrepresented groups are consulted and participate in LA decisions and forums. On-site ‘echo training’ has also proved an effective means to implement new processes and techniques and to adjust training and implementation according to the unique needs and facilities of each LA.

I.3.2 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

SuRG’s technical assistance program included support to partner LAs from SuRG and EML staff, organization of working groups comprised of elected members and staff, the organization and facilitation of Participatory Governance Forums and “echo training.” Support included working with LAs to prepare and implement the Citizen Charter, to set up the layout and structure of LAs, complete LA final accounts, establish Public Relations Desks and to build relationships between staff, elected members and citizens.

Over the course of the fiscal year, SuRG partner LAs conducted 88 working group meetings at which elected officials and staff reviewed key issues and projects and 76 PGF meetings, providing a forum for citizens and elected and government officials to discuss priorities and concerns. SuRG and EML provided “echo training” to help partner LAs apply techniques and skills learned in SuRG’s technical training programs as well as to train those staff member who were unable to attend the workshops. The chart below provides details on ‘echo training’ conducted this fiscal year.

Echo Workshops conducted in Partner LAs	
Training Topic	Results
Proposal Writing	62 Proposals developed and submitted to NELSIP and NECCDEP
By-law preparation	By-laws prepared to manage and maintain the standard quality of facilities and collect revenue from owners (license/tax) for the following facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle parking centers. • Fish storage centers. • Trishaw parking centers. • Market • Playgrounds • A crematorium • Cinema halls • Solid waste management
Citizen Charter Development	Citizen charter for 2011 was developed in consultation with community representatives, approved by the Council, displayed and under implementation

In an effort to assess the value added of SuRG's hands-on technical assistance program, SuRG LG and M&E staff conducted a review of the achievements of all of SuRG's 11 partner LAs as well as an additional 11 LAs which had not received any SuRG support beyond participation of three members or staff in each of the technical training programs. Although an attempt was made to choose LAs roughly similar in geography, resources and socioeconomic levels, SuRG partner LAs were originally chosen because they were among the most vulnerable in the province. They were resource-poor, had received relatively little or no prior donor support and had few qualified staff.

The assessment was carried out by SuRG staff visits to each of the 22 LAs. Each visit included a review of LA progress on the application of key elements covered in the SuRG training program. They discussed achievements, progress and challenges involved in the application of skills and moving forward with action points. Scores and ranking on each element were determined by the SuRG assessment team only after discussions with LA elected members, government staff and community members.

Among the findings, the most notable regards citizen engagement. None of the non-partner LAs visited engage with citizens in any sustainable or ongoing manner. They engage with citizens only through projects and when the project ends so does LA engagement with citizens. SuRG LAs engage with communities through the PGF which they have indicated will continue regardless of SuRG involvement.

And although 68 percent of non-partner LAs have advisory committees which include community representation, upon further review it was found that these committees are often biased towards the ruling party of the LA. Citizen representatives on advisory committees in SuRG partner LAs are selected from the PGF which requires representation from across the local political spectrum. In addition, 10 partner LAs have prepared a Citizen Charter and all have public relations units and public displays of their layout and LA structure.

Nine partner LAs compared to only five non-partner LAs have their by-laws prepared and approved. By-law development was noted in SuRG's training program review last quarter as one of the most difficult areas for completion so this level of progress made by partner LAs is notable.

Timely submission of final accounts is an issue raised repeatedly by the provincial Chief Secretary and the CLG when asked about key hurdles to better LA management and administration. Ten partner LAs submitted 2010 final accounts as compared to seven non-partner LAs. Ampara UC (a partner LA) did not submit 2010 final accounts due to an issue involving missing bills which is expected to be resolved soon.

To support training in financial management, SuRG developed and disseminated a software package for PSs to improve their ability to prepare their final accounts. Forty-five percent of SuRG partners LAs and 36 percent of non-partner LAs are currently using this SuRG computer software. There is a significant disparity in computer equipment between partner and non-partner LAs: there are a total of 43 computers available in partner LAs compared to 69 in the non-partner LAs surveyed. The package was developed for PSs and so is only viable in 9 partner LAs. It is currently being used in 5 of those 9 partner PSs; in 1 PS the staff trained to use the software was transferred and the remaining 3 PSs do not have proper or sufficient computer facilities.

A key objective of the SuRG training and technical assistance program was to support LAs' efforts to qualify for World Bank NELSIP funding, especially with regard to participatory development and project planning criteria. All 22 LAs surveyed submitted proposals and have projects approved from NELSIP.

“SuRG has fixed many old, unresolved issues in LAs. It has helped to put in place a long lasting, better system to regularize our activities. For instance, staff transfers have highly affected many LAs. But, our PS has not been affected. Even though the person who handled accounts was transferred our accounts are up to date and function well. We did not find it difficult to handle finance as a better system was in place.”

SECRETARY PS

I.3.3 LANGUAGE TRAINING

SuRG continued its Tamil and Sinhala language training for government officials throughout the year. In Q2, 449 officials from 27 LAs completed the OLD 108-hour Level III language program from 27. The post-evaluation examination was held on March 10, 2011; 303 sat for the examination conducted in collaboration with the OLD and 269 people passed as detailed in the chart below.

SuRG LANGUAGE TRAINING: LEVEL III EXAMINATION RESULTS				
Language Class	Total candidates	Passed	Male	Female
Sinhala	239	213	101	112
Tamil	64	56	31	25
Total	303	269	132	137

Those officials who passed the Level III examination, along with 30 additional local authority staff who had previously qualified for Level II classes, began SuRG-sponsored Level II training in June. The course is being held in 28 locations. Government officers (139 males and 150 females—101 Sinhalese, 123 Tamils and 65 Muslims) from 33 LAs are participating in the classes. Prior to the start of the course, SuRG organized a ToT workshop in collaboration with the OLD for 26 trainers (14 male and 12 female / 8 Tamil teachers and 18 Sinhala teachers).

I.4 OPEN DIALOGUE

The SuRG Open Dialogue component, consisting of media and civil society activities, has been geared towards building capacity of aspiring journalists and supporting strategic opportunities as they arise.

SuRG seized on one such opportunity in FY10 by supporting the provincial consultations with regional policy makers and leaders on the provincial councils and regional governance. This year, in January 2011, SuRG supported a partner follow-up workshop to assess the findings and conclusions of those consultations and the viability of further work to promote dialogue on regional governance through the Forum for Members of Provincial Councils (FMPC). Although there was much support for future work among participants at the workshop and members of the FMPC, as the political situation unfolded over the following months, SuRG questioned the relevance of support at this time. Plans for additional support to the partner and the FMPC were cancelled.

SuRG also continued to provide scholarships to the Journalism Diploma Course at the Sri Lanka College of Journalism (SLCJ) in Colombo. In Trincomalee, a partner continued its support of aspiring female journalists and the Trincomalee District Media Society. Details of these activities, as well as support to strengthen a national partner's M&E capacity under the civil society component, are detailed below.

I.4.1 MEDIA GRANTS

Grant Number	ARD031
Project	Scholarship Fund for Applicants from the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa District to the 2010 Journalism Diploma Course
District	National – Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullativu, Monargula
Grant Award	Rs. 3,900,000
Dates	January 6, 2010 – December 31, 2010

Twenty-two 2010 scholarship recipients completed the SLCJ Diploma in Journalism Programme in the first quarter of this fiscal year. Their graduation ceremony was held on March 3, 2011. The function was organized at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute. Twenty-one of the 22 graduates are currently working in media and one is employed as a school teacher. The chart below provides details on students' current employment.

2010 Scholarship Recipients Current Employment

Place of employment / Position	Course of Study
Shakthi FM, (2 students including 1 Regional Correspondent based in Muthur)	Tamil Radio
Irukkuram Tamil Weekly News Magazine	Tamil Radio
Unnmai Tamil Online Radio & Magazine	Tamil Radio
Vettri FM News (2 News Reporters and 1 Regional Coordinator)	Tamil Radio
NGO Media Coordinator	Tamil Radio
Thinakaran (2 students)	Tamil Print
Virakesari	Tamil Print
Thinamurasu	Tamil Print
Vettri FM	Tamil Print
School teacher	Tamil Print
Sri TV	Tamil TV
Freelance	Tamil TV
Uthayan Online	Tamil TV
Shakthi TV	Tamil TV
Dan TV, Colombo	Tamil TV
Dan TV, Jaffna	Tamil TV
Uthayan Newspaper	Tamil TV
Tamil Community News Network (website)	Tamil TV

Grant Number	ARD045
Project	Journalism Diploma Scholarship Program
District	National – Mannar, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Ampara, Trincomalee, Badulla, Nurwa Elya
Grant Award	Rs. 3,719,000
Dates	February 2, 2011 – December 31, 2011

SuRG awarded a third grant to the partner for scholarships to 20 aspiring journalists from the north, east and the estate sectors. These students joined a batch of 60 students in the 2011 Diploma in Journalism Programme. SuRG and SLCJ held a ceremony to officially award the scholarships to recipients and

acknowledge that, as students who, for the most part, come from extremely rural parts of Sri Lanka and often experience difficult living conditions, being accepted to the College and being selected to receive the SuRG scholarships is an important achievement.

Over the course of the year, SuRG scholarship recipients passed their first and second semester exams. During the second semester, they engaged in practical work with internships at:

- Print - Virakesari, Thinakaran, Thinakural;
- Television - Sirasa, Rupavahini, Shakthi;
- Radio - Vasantham, Vettri, Soorayan, Shakthi FM.

Students will complete their program and receive their diplomas in the coming fiscal year.

Grant Number	ARD013
Project	Strengthening Media in Trincomalee District
District	Trincomalee
Grant Award	Rs. 3,120,225
Dates	March 10, 2010– July 31, 2011

The partner completed implementation of its “Strengthening Media in Trincomalee District” project in July 2011. The goal of the project was to strengthen media in Trincomalee as an effective vehicle and platform through which the voices and concerns of the communities of the district could be raised and represented.

The partner worked with the Trincomalee District Journalist Association, renamed Trincomalee District Media Society (TDMS), to register the organization with the Eastern Province’s Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. The constitution of the organization was designed, finalized and published in both Sinhalese and Tamil languages. Through the project they collected information on 35 of the 49 journalists in the district and made these accessible through the project’s website (www.mediatrinco.org) developed by the partner and launched in July 2011. The partner also handed over office equipment—computer, scanner, fax machine, digital camera and office furniture—TDMS to set up its office space.

The highlight of the grant was a Diploma in Journalism program for aspiring female journalists. The course, attended by 15 Advanced Level graduates from throughout the district, was the first of its kind in Trincomalee. There are currently no practicing female journalists in the district. In addition to the classroom sessions, students traveled to Colombo for an exposure visit where they saw, for the first time, how national print and media houses function. The partner also arranged for a specialized training on women in media and the current context by Young Asia Television. They participated in listening and learning activities conducted in 28 communities in the district through which they collected information for stories highlighting the socio-economic hardships faced by the people of Trincomalee. These were subsequently published in the



Sinhala and Muslim students of the partner’s Diploma in Journalism join their Tamil counterparts to celebrate the Saraswathi Pooja – a Hindu religious event. This marked the first time the students were exposed to a Hindu religious festival.

partner's newsletter. The course not only provided the students with an introduction to journalism but also brought together women from all three communities. For many, it was the first time they had the opportunity to get to know and build meaningful relationships with people outside their own ethnic group. Program graduates will be encouraged to apply for the SLCJ 2012 Diploma in Journalism Programme. For those who gain admission, SuRG will provide a scholarship.

The partner also conducted language classes in Sinhalese and Tamil for 32 participants, including TDMS journalists and the female journalist students. Twenty-six received training in information technology and 28 participated in a photo and video editing workshop.

Project implementation was hampered by the weak institutional capacity of the partner. Throughout the course of the project they faced a number of financial and human resources issues. In addition, tension between TDMS and the partner was high, as TDMS considered the partner an outside entity. TDMS wanted the grant to go directly to them; however, since they were not a legally registered entity, this was not possible.

1.4.2 CIVIL SOCIETY GRANTS

Grant Number	ARD043
Project	Monitoring and Evaluation System Design and Capacity Development
District	National
Grant Award	Rs. 3,149,600
Dates	October 20, 2010 – October 14, 2011

Grant Number	ARD044
Project	Monitoring and Evaluation System Design
District	National
Grant Award	Rs. 9,083,071
Dates	October 20, 2010 – October 14, 2011

At the start of the fiscal year, SuRG awarded two grants to support the efforts of a national partner to upgrade its Monitoring and Evaluation capabilities, particularly with regard to the management of donor-funded projects in the north and east. The grants were intended to increase the partner's monitoring and evaluation capacity, provide them with an electronic system for better management of their M&E system and for better reporting and, as the partner is the largest local provider of relief and rehabilitation in the north and east, serve as a source for systematic and accurate information on relief and rehabilitation efforts in the north and east. The partner received a grant to refine and develop results frameworks or logframes and indicators for donor-funded projects being implemented in the north and east and to inform and support the development and implementation of an electronic M&E database to serve as a management and reporting tool for the organization. A second grant was made to an IT firm to build the database. SuRG also supported this effort with a team of two consultants from our M&E subcontractor, MSI, to provide technical assistance to the national partner throughout the grant period.

The partner worked closely with SuRG/MSI during a visit by two consultants in November and follow-up electronic communication, and a second visit with the lead consultant in early March to develop and upgrade frameworks and logframes (based on the requirements of the donor), select indicators and develop data collection plans for 12 projects as well as the partner's new overarching strategy. They also reviewed and upgraded the partner's management processes for overseeing donor-funded projects and developed job

descriptions for additional staff needed to effectively address M&E and oversight needs. Based on these efforts, the partner hired an additional Project Manager, a full-time M&E Officer and a Project Coordinator.

In addition, the consultant provided a full two-day training session on “Designing and Monitoring Donor Funded Programmes” for 18 partner staff, including the M&E Officer, Project Managers, and the Director of Projects. The partner retained the training materials from this session and will be able to use them in the future with new staff and as reference material.

Beyond direct work on specific projects, the partner also worked with the consultant to further strengthen the internal management systems it uses to oversee and manage donor-funded programs. Working together both remotely and during the consultant’s site visit, progress was made on strengthening the standard metrics to be reviewed at each monthly portfolio review meeting, developing mechanisms and schedules to allow the Director of Programs to provide adequate support and supervision for all Project Managers (the number of whom has increased sharply with new projects), and developing a management checklist to help manage partner relationships when the partner is involved in subcontracting (something which had created some major issues in the recent months).

The IT firm, the partner and SuRG/MSI consultants worked together to develop the concept for the M&E database. The IT firm then reviewed the project frameworks and indicator lists to develop specifications for the database. Detailed specifications were provided in early March.

The partner requested significant changes in the specifications based on changes in their grant portfolio as well as organizational changes they are instituting in response to SuRG/MSI technical assistance. After careful review of the partner’s feedback to the final specification document, the IT firm concluded that the system partner was requesting in light its project and organizational changes was well beyond what the partner could produce within the parameters of their current grant. In an effort to not forfeit the investment of money and other resources already made, the SuRG COTR agreed to explore options for USAID to directly fund the remaining development of the electronic database and take the project to completion to respond to the wider system requirements of the partner at this time.

2.0 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

In December 2010, USAID extended the project base period from February 2011 to June 2012. In February, USAID requested Tetra Tech ARD to submit a budget modification to exercise option year funding and extend the contract to February 2013. A modification to Section C. of the contract and the budget was signed in July 2011. The modification to Section C reflects changes in the operating environment in Sri Lanka and USAID programming priorities. It stipulated that Tetra Tech ARD award grants to the Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, the American University, Women in Need and the Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce. Optional year funds were added to the budget and the end date of the contract was extended until February 28, 2013.

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