



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

APRIL - JUNE 2013 QUARTERLY REPORT



JULY 2013

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

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

Tetra Tech ARD Home Office

Address:

Tetra Tech ARD

159 Bank Street, Suite 300

Burlington, VT 05401

Tel: 802 658-3890, Fax 802 658-4247

www.ardinc.com

Cover Photo: Members of tribal communities in India at a discussion on issues and rights
of marginalized people during the SuRG Study Program.

Photo courtesy Tetra Tech ARD

SRI LANKA SUPPORTING REGIONAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM (SuRG)

APRIL – JUNE 2013 QUARTERLY REPORT

JULY 2013

DISCLAIMER

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

CONTENTS

- ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS II**
- INTRODUCTION I**
- I.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES 3**
 - I.1 SOCIAL EQUITY 3
 - I.1.1 Grants 3
 - I.1.2 Other Activities 5
 - I.1.3 Evaluations 7
 - I.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION 8
 - I.2.1 Grants 9
 - I.2.2 Training and Direct Implementation 16
 - I.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE 17
 - I.3.1 Technical Training 18
 - I.4 OPEN DIALOGUE 23
 - I.4.1 Grants 23
 - I.4.2 Technical Assistance and Training 23
 - I.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) 24
 - I.6 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION 24

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLG	Assistant Commissioner of Local Government
AU	American University
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCN	Cooperating Country National
CDO	Community Development Officer
CEaT	Community Empowerment and Transformation
CLG	Commissioner of Local Government
CLIN	Contract Line Number
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
D.C.	District of Columbia
DS	Divisional Secretary
EOG	End of Grant
EP	Eastern Province
EPC	Eastern Provincial Council
FSLGA	Federation of Sri Lankan Local Government Authorities
FY	Fiscal Year
GA	Government Agent
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GN	<i>Grama Niladbari</i>
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HDCC	Hambantota District Chamber of Commerce
HR	Human Rights
KCP	Karuna Center for Peacebuilding, Inc.
LA	Local Authority
LG	Local Government
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCO	Municipal Council Ordinance
MLGPC	Ministry of Local Government and Provincial Councils
MSI	Management Systems International
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NISD	National Institute for Social Development
OD	Open Dialogue
OLD	Official Language Department
PC	Provincial Council
PGF	Participatory Governance Forum
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRO	Public Relations Officer
PS	<i>Pradeshya Sabha</i>
PSA	Pradeshya Sabha Act
Q	Quarter
RDS	Rural Development Society
Rs.	Rupees
SE	Social Equity
SL	Sri Lanka
SLCJ	Sri Lanka College of Journalism
SLILG	Sri Lanka Institute of Local Government
SPICE	Supporting Professional and Institutional Capacity Enhancement
SSRM	Social Science Research Methodology
SuRG	Supporting Regional Governance Program
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
TV	Television
UCO	Urban Council Ordinance
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
UWLP	University Women Leadership Program
WIN	Women In Need
WRDS	Women's Rural Development Society

INTRODUCTION

In March 2008, ARD, Inc. was awarded Contract No. 383-C-00-08-000501-00 to implement the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Sri Lanka Supporting Regional Governance Program (SuRG). The initiative was designed to build on USAID/Sri Lanka's democracy and governance efforts to address development needs resulting from the 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

“It was a strict and hard project with many procedures. However we feel that it was easy for us to track the project in a timely manner and travel on the correct path. It was a well-planned project and we were able to complete it on time. We received SuRG staff support at every point and could improve our project quality too. [SuRG] staff conducted so many meetings and discussions with us, such as quarterly review, monthly review and audits which helped a lot to improve our capacity too. A well planned, structured and detailed budget was given which supported us to keep track of the expenses at every time. SuRG staff visited our office and checked all the documents and reviewed our project in a timely manner which helped a lot to accomplish the project with higher standards. This project opened up our mind and view toward gender equality and mainstreaming.”

**SuRG PARTNER PROJECT STAFF AT
END OF GRANT REVIEW MEETING**

dialogue) with crosscutting activities that reinforce governance improvements around the betterment of human 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 targeted initiatives in the Northern Province.

In December 2010, USAID extended the contract base period from February 2011 to June 2012. A modification to Section C of the contract and the budget was signed in July 2011. The modification to Section C reflected 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 (WIN) 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. An additional contract modification to extend the duration of the project until August 31, 2013 was signed in June 2012.

This quarter SuRG wound up most of its activities and began to focus on assessing and documenting impact and lessons learned and closing out the

program. Qualitative assessments were conducted on a range of SuRG programming areas. The Trincomalee office was closed at the end of May and a full program close-out plan was developed and submitted to USAID in early June.

This report details SuRG and grantee activities during the period from April 1 – June 30, 2013, along with progress on ongoing contract implementation. Highlights for the quarter include:

- Thirty Muslim female university students completed the Women's University Leadership Program. (AU).
- One hundred sixteen staff and eight elected members from 44 LAs in the Eastern Province and Polonnaruwa completed training in revenue management and developed a set of guidelines on revenue management for PSs. (EML)

- Twenty-one elected members and 16 staff from the Eastern Provincial Council attended a workshop on the Importance of By-Laws and Facilitation of Approval Process and developed and agreed to an action plan to approve 50 standards by-laws for the province by the end of 2013.
- One hundred ninety-one members (50 male, 141 female; 179 Tamil, 12 Muslim) of 42 community-based organizations (CBOs) were trained in management and finance.
- Thirteen SuRG scholarship recipients graduated from the SLCJ 2012 Journalism Diploma Programme.
- Youth (18 male, 11 female) from Jaffna participated in a Sinhala New Year Festival organized by youth from Trincomalee. It was the first time most of these youth had ever participated in a Sinhala festival. Eighty-nine (41 male, 48 female; 47 Sinhala, 42 Tamil) people attended the event.



Members of Indian NGO, welcome the participants of the Sri Lanka Civil Society Study Tour.

- Seventeen representatives (8 male, 9 female; 6 Sinhala, 8 Tamil, 3 Muslim) from 10 partner organizations completed a two-phase Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) training program on community mobilization and PRA.
- Eighteen five-minute radio stories developed by SuRG women media trainees in Trincomalee were broadcast on Thendral FM, and two investigative pieces written by trainees were printed in Sudar Oli and Thinakkural. (SuRG)
- Nine women journalism students from Trincomalee completed a six-month practical training program on radio and print journalism. (SuRG)
- The GBV Desk Oddamavady conducted five training sessions to strengthen the capacity of its referral system, including Divisional Secretaries (DSs), Assistant Directors of Planning, Administrative Officers, *Grama Niladbaris* (GNs), Women Development Officers, Child Protection Officers, Probation Officers, Police Officers, NGO workers and community leaders from CBOs such as Women's Rural Development Societies (WRDSs) and Rural Development Societies (RDSs). A total of 181 (89 male, 92 female) participated in the workshops. (SuRG)
- Twenty-seven women (18 Sinhala, 4 Tamil, 5 Muslim) from vulnerable villages in Polonnaruwa and selected by a SuRG partner completed a leadership training program and took part in an exposure visit to another SuRG partner in Batticaloa to learn about community mobilization, CBO management and income generation. (SuRG)
- Fifteen civil society leaders (8 male, 7 female; 5 Sinhala, 5 Tamil, 4 Muslim, 1 Burgher) traveled to India for a study tour.

I.0 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

I.1 SOCIAL EQUITY

Social Equity (SE) grant activities wound down this quarter, with all ongoing grants concluding. A new grant was also awarded to a SuRG partner to complete a feasibility study for a practical training program on international law.

SuRG direct implementation of activities this quarter included training programs for the GBV Desk in Oddamavady's network and a series of activities with a SuRG partner in Polonnaruwa. Technical assistance was also provided to this SuRG partner as they implemented training and awareness-raising sessions to women and youth from 10 vulnerable villages.

In order to assess overall lessons learned from the SE component, the SE team conducted rapid assessments in key activity areas. Additionally, an outstanding end of grant (EOG) review was held with a SuRG partner in Batticaloa.

The highlight of this quarter was the SuRG-sponsored study program to India, for 15 civil society leaders.

I.1.1 GRANTS

ARD068

In December 2012, a SuRG partner was awarded a grant to implement a project. It was intended to build on its previous SuRG-sponsored project by continuing capacity building efforts with 24 WRDSs in the areas of community engagement, issue identification and addressing gender-based violence (GBV). The project comprises two components:

- capacity building of WRDSs; and
- linking communities with their local authorities.

Eight PRA trainings, one organizational management training and two gender trainings were conducted with a total of 288 participants. Further, eight monthly advocacy working committee meetings were held with 102



Tetra Tech ARD/SuRG
A SuRG partner mentored WRDS member explaining her coir weaving business during the SuRG Exposure Visit to Batticaloa.

participants present. One of these meetings took the form of a celebration of International Women's Day. Thirty-seven members from the WRDSs participated in the program. The women present at the meeting spoke of the challenges they faced as women, and how they had begun to overcome these to become more involved in community development. Ten women representatives also met with 10 *Pradeshija Sabha* (PS) members (all male) to discuss two issues they had identified during the PRA training as priorities; namely, the need for drinking water facilities and a proper drainage system for people.

Certain activities which had been planned, including additional meetings with the local authorities and the GBV task force, could not be carried out due to heavy rains in the target villages as well as a lack of cooperation on the part of the members of the GBV task force. One of the targeted PSs was also dissolved in April. In order to address this, the SuRG partner was granted a one-month no-cost extension which extended the implementation period into this quarter. Nonetheless, the SuRG partner was unable to carry out these activities as they could not overcome the challenges listed above. Despite this, staff noted at the EOG review that the program itself had borne several valuable outcomes. The PRA trainings in particular had built on successes of the previous SuRG grants and helped the participants look at their villages with fresh eyes and clearly prioritize issues that had previously been neglected. Following these trainings the women approached the PS and submitted their requests on paper with their letterheads. This is a significant improvement since the days they had not even recognized the need for registration as a CBO. They also made representations and argued with officials at a public forum. The PS had noted the strength of the SuRG partner working committee and included some of the members in its development committee. The chairman visited the women and made this request in person. The Provincial Development Committee has also begun liaising with members of the SuRG partner committee as they were identified as active members in the community.

The women have also taken responsibility for evening classes for children who require catch-up education. They watch over the children who come to the evening school and coordinate with teachers. They have also begun to manage the local library. Following the GBV trainings, some of the women have become part of the GBV Desk referral mechanism and now play an active role in identifying and referring victims of GBV to the Desk.

ARD072

A grant was awarded to a SuRG partner in April to complete a feasibility study for a practical training program on international law. The study is intended to ascertain the prospects of building the capacity of NGOs and civil society actors to utilize international law. Through a series of interviews with leading members and organizations of the Sri Lankan human rights community, including lawyers, academics, law students, NGO workers and activists, the SuRG partner will identify committed individuals in Sri Lanka who could potentially utilize international law, determine the exact training requirements for these individuals to be able to utilize the full range of international law instruments; and based on these findings, determine if a suitable and viable training program can be devised.

The interim progress report submitted by the SuRG partner in May, which laid out the findings, noted that English language competency was one of the primary challenges that a program such as this could face, followed by the inability to get participants to commit to a long-term program away from their families and jobs. A majority of those interviewed showed preference for part-time or weekend study, based within their home districts or nearest.

Following the submission of the interim report, the representatives of the SuRG partner met with SuRG and representatives from the Swiss Embassy with regard to the potential of funding the training program itself based on the findings of the report. Nonetheless, while there was consensus at the meeting that the idea behind the trainings was indeed of importance for advocacy vis-à-vis Sri Lanka, the SuRG partner had not put forward sufficient information with regard to the structure of a potential program, the modalities of operationalizing such a program and commitments both from partners who were willing to carry out the trainings as well as participants. The SuRG partner responded to these questions with a request for more time

to provide a sample model upon which a clear decision with regard to further support could be made. The sample model will be included in the final feasibility study to be submitted early next quarter.

1.1.2 OTHER ACTIVITIES

SuRG Partner / Polonnaruwa

In May 2013, a SuRG partner began implementing a series of activities targeting youth, women leaders, and widows from 10 villages (7 Sinhala, 1 Tamil, 2 Muslim) in Polonnaruwa District. The activities were designed to address needs as prioritized by the SuRG partner and the participating villages as well as to serve as a platform through which SuRG could provide technical assistance.

The first activity conducted was a one-day training workshop on reproductive health for 50 female youth (36 Sinhala, 8 Muslim, 6 Tamil) 13-18 years old. Unsafe sexual relations are a common occurrence in the area, especially among youth, and an increasing number of youth, particularly girls, marry at a very young age resulting in a myriad of health and social issues. The training helped raise awareness about reproductive health and provided a space for the participants to openly discuss taboo topics and re-think some of the existing social norms. After the training, several of the participants shared what they had learned with their friends and other family members.

The SuRG partner organized a follow-up training for 66 youth (35 male, 31 female; 49 Sinhalese, 11 Muslim, 6 Tamil) on the topic of gender. The session provided an opportunity for the participants to understand the biological differences and societal perceptions of men and women and learn about the concept of gender. For most of the participants, this was the first time they were asked to think beyond the traditional roles men and women play in a household and in their communities. They proved eager to clarify doubts and share their personal experiences during the training.

As there are no formal village-based women's groups in the area, the SuRG partner identified the need to mobilize a group of women to rise up as leaders in their communities, establish women's societies and work together to address community issues. As such, the SuRG partner selected a group of 27 women (18 Sinhala, 4 Tamil, 5 Muslim) to participate in a leadership training and an exposure visit to another SuRG partner in Batticaloa. The women were selected based on their active involvement in their communities and enthusiasm and promise towards addressing community issues. The SuRG partner then organized a two-day exposure visit to Batticaloa for these women where they were able to meet 20 WRDS members (all Tamil) who were mentored through another SuRG partner. The WRDS members had worked closely with this SuRG partner and helped mobilize communities in Batticaloa to identify and advocate for their essential legal documentation needs. Prior to their work with the SuRG partner, they, too, were in a similar position as the women from Polonnaruwa – often confined to their homes and largely inactive within their communities. During the exposure visit, SuRG partner staff shared how they mobilized WRDS members to provide legal



Tetra Tech ARD/SuRG

Youth from Polonnaruwa participate in a poll to assess their level of knowledge about gender at the SuRG partner Gender Training for Youth workshop.

“This was the first time we had gone to Batticaloa. We didn’t go before as there were LTTE problems. We learned a lot about how to start up a women’s organization. We didn’t have the knowledge on how to face a challenge before, but we were able to get that knowledge during this program and help implement that in our own women’s organizations.”

**SINHALA WOMAN PARTICIPANT,
EXPOSURE VISIT**

documentation support to community members. Additionally, the WRDS members shared how they started their organizations and manage them efficiently and effectively, their income-generating methods, and the various social services they provide. The event gave the women from Polonnaruwa an opportunity to see how other women have utilized their leadership skills, have fought through similar obstacles, and worked together in bringing about women's organizations that serve the needs of the community. Following the exposure visit, participants took initial steps in forming small women's groups in their communities and are now working with the SuRG partner to register them as official CBOs in the area. For most of the women from Welikanda, this was the first time they had visited Batticaloa. They interacted easily with the WRDS members and forged new relationships across ethnic and religious lines.

The final activity conducted this quarter was a Women's Empowerment Training targeting widows. The session aimed to build participants' self-confidence, inform them of their individual and collective rights as women, and inspire them to take charge of their lives despite their difficult circumstances. A total of 57 women including 33 Sinhalese, 17 Muslims and seven Tamils participated. The training also provided an opportunity for the participants to voice personal stories and to realize that they were not alone and that their troubles were felt and heard by many others. The women actively participated in group activities, and readily engaged in group discussions. Early next quarter, the SuRG partner will conduct a follow-up training for these women on Personality Development and Coping Strategies.

Oddamavady GBV Desk Divisional Task Force Training Workshops

The strategic planning process for the Oddamavady GBV Desk that SuRG supported in May - June 2012, stressed the need for GBV Desk staff and its extended network to view referral mechanisms as well as victim support from a rights-based perspective. The findings also emphasized the need to provide persons involved in victim support with training on how to deal with victims in order for them to begin to better trust the system.

In this regard, the Desk organized five training workshops for their divisional task forces to reconvene in order to improve community outreach. The five one-day workshops targeted the areas of Koralai Pattu South (Kiran), Koralai Pattu (Valaichchenai), Koralai Pattu Central (Valaichchenai), Koralai Pattu West (Oddamavady), and Koralai Pattu North (Vaharai).

A total of 181 participants took part in these workshops. They included Divisional Secretaries, Assistant Directors of Planning, Administrative Officers, GNs, Women Development Officers, Child Protection Officers and Probation Officers, Police Officers, NGOs workers and community leaders from CBOs such as WRDSs and RDSs.

The overall objectives of the program were to:

- Strengthen the capacity of the GBV Desk at the Base Hospital in Valachchanai to deliver effective services for victims of GBV and better address the root causes of GBV;
- Strengthen the referral systems in the region; and
- Introduce a rights-based approach amongst stakeholders.

As such, the trainings focused on conceptual elements such as gender equality and empowerment as well as practical aspects such as better village-level networking, case identification and management, and effective liaising with the GBV Desk.

A local gender expert and supporter of the GBV Desk facilitated the first three trainings. The idea was that GBV Desk staff could, after the first three trainings, take over and conduct the remaining two on their own. SuRG, however, found the first three to be of a much higher standard than the subsequent two that were conducted by GBV Desk staff alone. Furthermore, it became apparent, that the one appointed administrative staff member of the GBV Desk had received little support from the doctors or other staff at the hospital to

mobilize the participants or manage the program. She was also not up to handling the tasks she had been assigned, both programmatic and administrative. Thus, calling into question the GBV Desk's ability to manage programs of this nature on its own in the absence of external consultants despite training and support already provided. If the Desk is to function independently in the future, additional steps need to be taken in order to address these gaps.

SRI LANKA CIVIL SOCIETY STUDY TOUR TO INDIA

This study program was designed to allow for exchanges between Sri Lankan civil society and civil society groups in India. Fourteen members (8 male, 7 female; 5 Sinhala, 5 Tamil, 4 Muslim, 1 Burgher) of Sri Lankan civil society were chosen for the program after carefully reviewing 26 applications. The group was made up of individuals from diverse backgrounds and included activists, NGO workers, lawyers, theatre artists, journalists, among others. The participants also represented all the regional and ethnic identities within Sri Lanka. In addition, SuRG invited a member of the USAID SPICE project to join the tour in order that they might be able to facilitate follow-up activities.

In Gujarat, the group met with a number of inspiring individuals who shared their views, experiences and personal journeys. The participants also visited organizations working on a range of issues including development, social justice, reconciliation, gender and human rights.



Participants of the Sri Lanka Civil Society Study Tour visit a slum.

The various people I met gave me enough material by way of sharing personal experiences, action oriented programmes, personal motivations, hard battles fought against establishments, sustaining the inner power for moving ahead against all odds, etc. This is an enriching experience and lives with me to reflect and pray.

STUDY TOUR PARTICIPANT, FINAL EVALUATION

Several participants noted that the program had not only provided them with an opportunity to share experiences and learn from the people they met but had also provided them with a space to reflect, both individually and collectively, about the work they do and what continues to drive them. They noted that they had learned several lessons which applied directly to what they do and how they do it. One of the strongest points articulated in this regard was a reflection on the need for a shift from program or project-based work to movements with a long-term vision.

I.1.3 EVALUATIONS

Lawyer Training Program

As part of its internal evaluations, following the implementation of the first two substantive modules in 2010 and 2011, SuRG staff met with lawyers and, informally, with judges to gauge the efficacy and relevance of its training. Findings of these evaluations greatly influenced the design of subsequent programs and materials. This quarter, following the completion of all of the training programs, SuRG staff conducted a final round of evaluations which served to illuminate the overall impact of the programs on the legal community in the North and East. To this effect, staff met with a sample group of lawyers who had undergone the trainings in all targeted districts. Staff also met with judges in order to extract their views on the impact of the trainings

on the proceedings in their court rooms. Finally, staff spoke with the resource persons who had been part of all the SuRG trainings on their impressions and experiences with the program.

The observations and findings of the evaluation were overwhelmingly positive as participants noted that the trainings were highly responsive to their needs. Moreover, although SuRG was precluded from conducting more than one training for judges, the substantive information was conveyed to them through the lawyers, who introduced new cases and concepts in oral argument. SuRG also made extra copies of the training materials available to the judges and magistrates in the North and East. The impact of these trainings has been uniformly observed in the types and volume of cases being filed as well as the capacity of local lawyers to handle these cases independently.

While subjectively judges were also reporting improvements in the practical skills of participant lawyers, any impact on the outcomes of cases would require a more intensive expert review of individual cases. Nonetheless, the popularity of SuRG trainings among junior lawyers has led some bar associations to facilitate additional trainings. To this extent it was heartening to note that SuRG's training program can be credited with having stimulated efforts to provide continuing legal education for legal practitioners.

“The junior lawyers are showing remarkable improvement. I have noticed that they are very ardent. Document marking in particular is better—previously lawyers would be passive and not make objections, but then would raise issues on appeal, hoping to cover their mistakes. Now they pay attention to raise objections at the proper time.”

DISTRICT JUDGE, JAFFNA

Human Rights Courses

In February 2012, the SE team carried out a rapid review of the human rights courses conducted by SuRG partners in Trincomalee and Ampara during previous years. This quarter, SE staff conducted additional interviews with graduates of subsequent course batches in order to put together a consolidated report on the findings. Staff met with recent graduates of the Human Rights Course from the SuRG partner in Trincomalee and the final batch of graduates from the SuRG partner in Ampara. Staff also met with selected individuals who had taken the Integrated Skills Course offered by the Trincomalee partner.

The objectives of the review remained the same as those described in previous reports, i.e., to evaluate the practical utility of the courses for participants and whether courses of this nature serve to promote increased understanding, discussion and protection of human rights at a broader level.

Findings once again point to a very high degree of satisfaction amongst the students of the courses, both in Trincomalee and Ampara. Further, while the Trincomalee partner has found means to continue its course following the exit of SuRG, the Ampara partner regretted that there were no other such courses planned for the near future for the people of Ampara, as it did not have the requisite resources.

The SE team is finalizing the overall findings from both rounds of the review; these will be available early next quarter.

1.2 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION

The CEaT team continued to provide technical support and monitoring to AU, KCP and other partners as their grants came to an end this quarter. End of grant reviews were held for these grantees as well as other partners whose grants ended last quarter to assess project implementation, impact and challenges and to provide input regarding implementation and impact for grantees' future programming and sustainability.

Also this quarter, SuRG supported three partners to organize a follow-up exposure visit to Trincomalee for youth from Jaffna, and conducted the second phase of the two-part training program on participatory rural appraisal and community mobilization for representatives of 10 partner organizations.

I.2.1 GRANTS

ARD047

American University completed its project in May. The project was intended to build the capacity of a local SuRG partner to become a national-level organization that works with various Muslim stakeholders in the country. Initially awarded as a 12-month grant for US\$279, 127, due to implementation issues including a slow start-up, unexpected delays in operational funds expected from other sources and persistent difficulties with hiring and maintaining staff, the project time period was extended from 12 to 18 months and then later for an additional 4.5 months. AU in consultation with SuRG, also adjusted program activities and plans throughout the course of the project to reflect ongoing learning about local operational capacity, effectiveness of programming and in response to the changing operational environment. Last quarter, based on the project burn rate, funding was reduced to US \$247,314.

The project included a series of trainings and activities targeting the local SuRG partner SFM itself as well as the broader Muslim community around four primary objectives:

- Enhancing the local partner's organizational capacity and leadership development;
- Developing capacity in research and knowledge management;
- Developing expertise in advocacy; and
- Engaging with other stakeholders.



Participants visit a Buddhist temple during their field visits to multi-religious places of worship during the "Understanding Religion, Culture and Conflict: A Dialogue with Youth from All Communities" workshop.

The chart below lists major activities undertaken over the life of the project.

AU 2011-2013

Workshops	Dates	Number of Participants			Target Beneficiaries
		Total	Gender		
			Male	Female	
Organizational Capacity Building: Work Plan Meeting	7 – 8 Dec 2011	8	6	2	Local partner Board and staff
Project Planning and Budget Training	9 – 12 Dec 2011	10	9	1	Local partner Board, staff and former regional staff of another SuRG partner
Social Science Research Methods Course - I	19 – 22 Jan 2012	15	10	5	Young Muslim researchers
National and Regional Advocacy Training	24 – 29 Feb 2012	20	17	3	Civil society activists representing CSOs from all provinces
Women Advocacy and Policy Formulation	5 – 8 Apr 2012	25	3	22	Women representing CSOs
Social Science Research Methods Course - II	25 – 27 Apr 2012	11	5	6	Young Muslim researchers
Land Consultation - North (5 Districts)	25–27 Apr 12	29	20	9	Civil society, political party representatives and religious leaders

Workshops	Dates	Number of Participants			Target Beneficiaries
		Total	Gender		
			Male	Female	
Land Consultation – East (3 Districts of East and Polonnaruwa)	1–3 June 12	35	31	4	Civil society, political party representatives, teachers, lawyers and religious leaders
Social Science Research Methods Course - III	28 – 29 Sep 2012	5	2	3	Young Muslim researchers
Radio Drama as a Tool for Advocacy - I	05 – 07 Oct 2012	25	18	7	Young graduates and journalists
Radio Drama as a Tool for Advocacy - II	12 – 14 Oct 2012	25	18	7	Young graduates and journalists
SSRMC Symposium	22 Oct 2012	36	30	6	Young Muslim researchers
Radio Drama as a Tool for Advocacy - III	16 –18 Nov 2012	22	15	7	Young graduates and journalists
University Women Leadership Program (UWLP) I (Basic Course)	23 – 28 Nov 2012	30	0	30	Female university students from (Peradeniya, Colombo, Kelani, Eastern and South Eastern Universities and National Institute for Social Development - NISD)
Advocacy Manual Development	14 –16 Dec 2012	26	12	14	Participants of advocacy workshops
Counseling and Family Mediation Workshop I	11 – 16 Jan 2013	28	20	8	Quazis, family councilors, teachers and Mosque Federation members
Strengthening Muslim Majlis at Universities – A Gender Perspective	1 – 2 Feb 2013	27	26	1	Muslim Majlis members from Peradeniya, Colombo, Kelani, Eastern and South Eastern Universities and National Institute for Social Development
Board Retreat	17 Feb 2013	7	5	2	Board members
Counseling and Family Mediation Workshop II	22 – 27 Feb 2013	32	24	8	Quazis, family councilors, teachers and Mosque Federation members
UWLP – Follow-up with NISD Muslim Majlis	6 Mar 2013	19	8	11	NISD Muslim Majlis members
Counseling and Family Mediation Follow-up Workshop in Galle	23 Mar 2013	20	12	8	Teachers, family counselors, clergy
Counseling and Family Mediation Follow-up Workshop in Kinniya	13 – 15 Apr 2013	42	31	11	Teachers, family counselors, clergy
University Women Leadership Training II (Advanced Course)	30 Mar – 04 Apr 2013	29	0	29	Female university students from Peradeniya, Colombo, Kelaniya, Eastern and South Eastern Universities and NISD
Understanding Religion, Culture and Conflict: A Dialogue with Youth from All Communities	14 – 19 May 2013	32	16	16	Youth clubs and associations

Although, as mentioned above, start-up was slow, implementation picked up considerably, particularly in the last six months, and by the end of the program, the local partner had reached out to a wide range of Muslim stakeholders including Jammiathul Ulama, Mosque Federations, the Quazi Courts, Mediation Boards, teachers, lawyers, CSOs, journalists, university students, family counselors, religious organizations and youth councils/clubs. Additional achievements and outputs over the grant period include:

- The formation of a strong network throughout the country with community members, religious leaders, universities, youth, media and other non-governmental organizations.
- Research reports developed under the Social Science Research Methodology (SSRM) course were published and disseminated to Muslim political leaders, CSOs and the international community. Reports covered the following topics:
 1. Impact of Post-Tsunami Livelihood Recovery Activities on Tsunami Victims.
 2. Impact of Dowry on Lower Middle Class Family's Socio-Economic Condition.
 3. Impact of Slum Settlement on Primary Education: Slums, Children, and Primary Education.
 4. Muslim Marriage Practice in Mawanella.
 5. The Impact of Unskilled Mother Migration on Girl Child's Education in Trincomalee.
- An Advocacy Manual was developed through the advocacy workshops. The material was based on the actual experience of participants. It was published in Tamil and English for national and regional participants.
- Fifteen radio dramas on Muslim issues were developed through the series of workshops on audio radio drama and broadcast on Sri Lanka Radio; the full 25 dramas developed through the workshop were published on a CD to be used in future advocacy work and shared with CSOs.
- The development of a funding proposal which was sent to the Swiss, Norwegian and Canadian Embassies. The local partner also held conversations with USAID to identify other potential funding opportunities and are planning applications for upcoming State Department and SPICE call for proposals.



Participants recording radio dramas they wrote at the "Using Radio as a Tool for Advocacy Workshop."

The future for the local partner remains tenuous. Although the grant was designed to aid in building a foundation for its organizational sustainability, it is still unclear as to whether this has been accomplished. Management, administration and reporting were ongoing challenges throughout the grant period. In some cases, this was a direct result of communication issues and processes that required the local partner and SuRG to deal with AU rather than directly with each other. Furthermore, the physical as well as the contextual difference from Washington D.C. to Colombo often hampered AU's ability to provide the local partner with direct technical assistance and capacity building envisioned in the grant.

Moreover, the local partner is still weighed down by issues, mistakes of its precursor. And, while Board members insist on the need and relevance of the organization, most are connected to or identified with organizations which they continue to prioritize above this organization. This is evidenced by the difficulty in convening meetings. Two retreats were scheduled to be held over the life of the project; only one took place and it was reduced from two to one day. This has and will continue to affect the organization's long-term ability to hire and keep qualified staff and fundraise.

Nonetheless, the activities implemented were overall very well received and clearly tapped into a need, especially regarding youth and women. They also helped the local partner reach out and build meaningful ties with a range of Muslim stakeholders. Additionally, the partner is beginning to engage in more public advocacy. If the partner can draw on its learning and successes to date, build on the contacts developed through training programs and other activities, and move forward in an innovative, yet at the same time strategic and directed manner, it should be able to, even in this climate of decreasing donor support, obtain funding and provide much-needed support and service to the Muslim community.

ARD069

The SuRG partner's project aimed to promote community advocacy in Batticaloa District as a follow-up to its previous SuRG grant. The SuRG partner worked with 57 new CBOs (WRDSs, RDSs, and Fisheries Societies) conducting training on laws and legal documentation, leadership, office and program management, and financial management. The SuRG partner also continued work with the 33 CBOs it supported during its previous SuRG grant by following up with their community advocacy initiatives.

This quarter, 191 people from 42 of the new CBOs were trained as detailed in the table below, bringing the total number of people trained throughout the project to 580.

Name of Training	No. of Trainings Conducted	Gender Breakdown	Ethnic Breakdown (Tamil/ Muslim)	Total
Financial Management	07	36 M, 93 F	123 T, 06 M	129
Organizational Management	03	14 M, 48 F	56 T, 06 M	62

As a direct impact of the training on laws and legal documentation that CBO members received during the last quarter, they worked with their communities to help individuals apply for and obtain their missing legal documents.

Eighty-three documents (including birth and death certificates) were thus obtained for those whose applications lacked the necessary supporting documentation so had been previously rejected at mobile clinics held during the SuRG partner's previous grant.

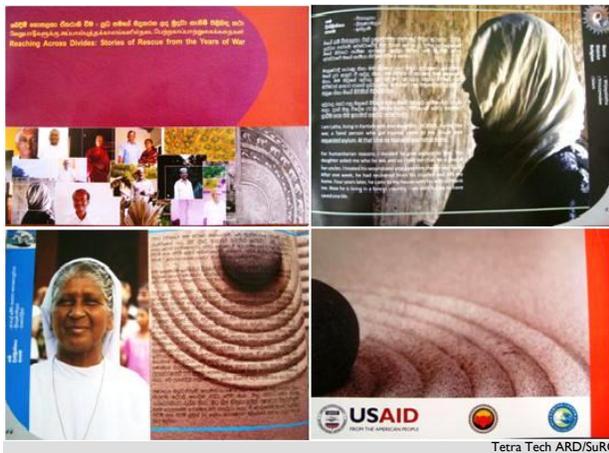
In addition, CBO members identified 50 new legal documentation cases (31 late birth certificates, 16 late death certificates and 3 marriage certificates) for which they helped community members file applications at the Registrar.

Under the follow-up of the community advocacy initiatives component of the project, the SuRG partner linked CBOs with World Vision which agreed to provide support for five of the 11 proposals developed during the last project. These proposals request educational support, transportation facilities and renovation of internal roads. The SuRG partner worked with the CBOs to polish these five proposals and submit them to World Vision and will continue to look for support from other donors for the remaining six proposals which mostly entail livelihood and larger infrastructure needs. Three CBOs prioritized transportation facilities for school children in the area for advocacy and submitted an official written request to the DS this quarter. The DS in turn asked the SuRG partner whether they could support this request. The SuRG partner provided a bus to the area and asked the CBOs to cover the fuel, driver salary and maintenance costs of running the bus which they agreed to do. The SuRG partner had also planned to conduct two coordination meetings during the project between the CBO members and relevant stakeholders such as the DS Office, Zonal Education Office, Fisheries Department and other NGOs. However, the SuRG partner was unable to complete these activities within the project period due to unseasonal weather and the difficulty in scheduling

meetings with relevant government officials. It should also be noted that early on in the project period, the SuRG partner obtained significant funding for unrelated activities from other USAID projects. Although SuRG convened a meeting with the SuRG partner and the other project representatives to map out the SuRG partner's commitments and ensure there would be no duplication of efforts and that the SuRG partner would have the human resources and overall capacity to meet all its commitments, it was clear by the end of their SuRG project that the SuRG partner's priorities lay with their new projects and that staff was stretched too thin. This no doubt also contributed to the SuRG partner's inability to complete its final project activities.

ARD048

As reported last quarter, KCP completed the activities of its "Inter-Religious Cooperation for Community Development and Social Empowerment in Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts, and Padaviya Division"



"Reaching Across Divides: Stories of Rescue from the Year of War," a booklet promoting inter-faith harmony through stories of rescue from all major religions in Sri Lanka, was published by KCP.

project in March 2013. The project came to an end in April with the publishing of 1,500 booklets titled "Reaching Across Divides: Stories of Rescue from the Years of War" which include stories of rescue intended to promote inter-faith harmony, and the completion of the 30-minute video documentary filmed over the course of the project which documents the full range of program activities. These publications will be distributed to district schools, education centers, libraries, CBOs, NGOs and government institutions.

This quarter, KCP also completed its final evaluation to assess the level of impact the project had on its participants and the broader community. Evaluation tools including written surveys, semi-structured interviews, impact interviews and significant change stories conducted throughout the project were utilized. The evaluation revealed that religious leaders'

attitudes changed substantially as a result of their participation in the program. Many revealed having dismantled previously held stereotypes about other religious groups, having reduced fear or anxiety while interacting with members of other faiths, and having developed an increased sense of acceptance, respect, and/or understanding of other faiths. Additionally, it was revealed that religious leaders were far less likely to blame other religions for community problems as a result of the program, and that they were feeling more courageous and comfortable not only within the structure of the organized program, but also in their travels and interactions within the broader community.

The evaluation revealed that the religious leaders who participated in the program have developed greater understanding of the sources of conflict and skills for bridging divides between themselves and among their communities and that they have been using many of the models and skills that they learned during the project in their community-based peacebuilding and awareness-raising projects. Additionally, it was revealed that the religious leaders have taken their role as social change agents seriously: they have developed three ongoing district-level inter-faith councils to continue community-based interfaith projects and publicly model interfaith collaboration. In the Hoivopatham area of Padaviya and in the Kantale area of Trincomalee, Muslim and Buddhist religious leaders have formed interfaith committees in collaboration with local government and police to address rising Buddhist/Muslim tensions.

The evaluation also revealed that the community projects have had a clear effect in increasing mutual understanding and restoring trust at the community level; but that for the most part, this was accomplished through joint activities and "awareness and peacebuilding programs," rather than stand-alone dialogues.

While the religious leaders gained tremendous insight from their own dialogue experiences and incorporated dialogue-like discussions into community programs—particularly those with youth—these discussions were not the kind of in-depth dialogues the religious leaders themselves engaged in as part of their training. As in-depth dialogue requires experienced facilitators, especially when the topics are sensitive, the religious leaders had chosen wisely the kinds of activities they could manage and their communities would be ready to receive as a first step in rebuilding relationships. The evaluation thus revealed that one of the expected results of the project—that religious leaders would facilitate inter-religious or inter-ethnic dialogues in their communities—was overly ambitious and that it would have been more appropriate for a future phase of the project, both for the religious leaders and for their communities.

The beneficiary-led project designing process utilized for the community development projects greatly influenced the successful implementation of the 47 projects as it created a sense of ownership among the religious leaders who took upon themselves the task of promoting inter-faith harmony at the community level. During the end of grant review held in May, the local partner staff noted that it would have been beneficial if the participating religious leaders were involved in the initial designing and planning stages of the project as that would have helped create even more ownership of their inter-faith work.

This was the first time the local partner staff had engaged in inter-faith work of this magnitude with religious leaders. They mentioned the importance for greater cultural and religious sensitivity among staff in order to properly work with religious leaders who require a level of respect that is different to that needed by lay people. They also noted that it would have been helpful had a resource mapping exercise been conducted during the planning stages of the project to get a sense of inter-faith work that is already occurring in the area. There already was an active inter-faith group in Batticaloa; however, the project staff only learned about it during the latter stages of the project.

ARD066

In mid-April, the SuRG partner completed its five-month project which built on its initial SuRG grant working with youth groups and WRDSs in six Sinhala and Tamil villages in Trincomalee District. Activities held this quarter included a monthly meeting for the leaders of the youth groups and WRDSs, follow-up community advocacy work and a New Year Festival for youth.

During the project, the SuRG partner conducted a series of activities that targeted youth, including a youth workshop, *Thaipongal* home stay, exposure visit to Jaffna, and a three-day residential youth camp in Seruvila. These activities helped create new and strengthen existing relationships across ethnic and religious lines by fomenting cultural sensitivity and mutual respect among the participating youth. Youth from Sinhala and Tamil villages are now seen visiting each other's homes, inviting each other to events and keeping in touch over the phone.

Culminating the activities for youth, in mid-April, the SuRG partner planned a New Year Festival which was a cultural exchange highlighting the traditionally Sinhala rituals and games conducted during the New Year. Honoring the request made by the youth who participated in the exposure visit to Jaffna which occurred in February, the SuRG partner, with the support of the WIN staff, invited the youth from Jaffna to join the event as well. The New Year Festival was entirely organized and implemented by youth, but also from the

“It was about our religion, our race and us [at first]...After the training program experiences, there was belief that unity among us would bring greater stability...At a program in a hotel in Dambulla, all the religious leaders had their meal seated together. People who saw us thought that there was a problem and gazed at us in a funny way, as if it was very strange that people of all religions were seated together. This gave us a special message...By our example, we can change the conditioning of peoples' minds and lead them to be more open-minded.”

IMAM AND YOUTH MEMBER OF HIS MOSQUE WHO PARTICIPATED IN LANGUAGE CLASSES, A SHRAMADANA AND A SPORTS FESTIVAL (KCP FINAL EVALUATION)

other SuRG partner project villages, and included a display of Sinhala and Tamil New Year rituals, 12 games such as *kottapora*, *baniskema*, *aliyata aba thabeema*, and *kirimuttiyatagasima*, Tamil and Sinhala dances and songs, and a distribution of prizes.

The WRDS members helped to prepare food for the event and conducted Sinhala and Tamil New Year rituals such as lighting the oil lamp, boiling milk, and offering food. The Jaffna youth also contributed to the day's activities by performing a comedy drama. At the end of the event, those who participated in and successfully completed the capacity building workshop series and language classes the SuRG partner conducted during its original grant received their certificates. A total of 89 people, including 48 females, 41 males and 42 Tamils and 47 Sinhalese, participated in the event.

The SuRG partner also organized a two-day exposure visit this quarter to the Sevana Women Farmers' Organization, located in Anuradhapura District in order to provide an opportunity for the WRDS and youth group members to see how a CBO can function effectively and efficiently and bring about change in a community. The 37 participants (16 Sinhala, 21 Tamil; 23 women, 14 men) saw first-hand how the Sevana organization, which started with 11 members in 1998, grew into an organization owned and governed by 80 local women with a budget of Rs. 40,000,000. They discussed and saw how the women from the Sevana Women Farmers' Organization addressed similar challenges to those they face in Seruvila. Upon return, participants eagerly applied similar strategies in their own organizations. For example, one WRDS established a new welfare scheme to provide Rs. 5,000 for their members during a funeral.

Building on the community advocacy work done during its initial SuRG grant, the SuRG partner provided a service delivery training followed by five advocacy initiatives in which participants advocated for community needs with relevant officials and followed up on those requests. Meetings with the Divisional Secretary and PS Chairman resulted in a new bus service, the repair of street lamps, and name boards put up at the important junctions. Additionally, the Divisional Secretary, encouraged by the meeting held in his office with youth group and WRDS members, started mobile visits at the village level to inquire about and address people's problems.

The five CBO monthly meetings held during the project brought together the leaders of the WRDSs and youth groups providing a space for them to prepare for the meetings with the DS and PS Chairman, share their organizational best practices with each other and plan for events such as the New Year Festival. After the meeting with the DS, the participants were asked to collect information on *Samurdhi* recipients including those who should and should not be receiving assistance. Leaders from a youth club and WRDS were afraid to do so due to the fear of being blamed by those who should not receive assistance. They raised this issue during a CBO monthly meeting and discussed with the other participants how to overcome it. It was decided that they will conduct a comprehensive survey of the village, gathering demographic and livelihood information on top of the necessary *Samurdhi* details. Following the CBO meeting, participants gathered the necessary information and presented it to the DS who promised to take the necessary action.

During the previous grant, CBO members had identified the need to raise awareness in the community about gender-based violence (GBV) which is a pressing community issue. Therefore, during this project, the SuRG partner conducted four awareness sessions on gender equity and GBV for community members from all six



Tetra Tech ARD/SuRG

Youth from Jaffna engage in a traditional Sinhala New Year game at the New Year Festival held in Trincomalee.

project villages. Participants who were from multiple age categories and included married and unmarried people readily shared their personal experiences allowing them to understand the various aspects of gender and GBV as relevant to them. A total of 209 people (149 women and 60 men), including 102 Tamils and 107 Sinhalese, participated.

At the mobile clinic held during the SuRG partner's initial grant, a total of 52 birth certificate applications were filed which were followed-up on during this grant. Thirty nine of those birth certificates were received by the applicants during this project. The SuRG partner will continue to monitor the progress of the outstanding applications to ensure the documents are received.

Though the implementation of activities was delayed during the initial stages of the project due to severe flooding in the area, the SuRG partner was able to successfully implement all activities by the end of the project. These activities helped solidify a sense of civic engagement among the youth group and WRDS members who now have a greater awareness about issues in their own and neighboring communities and are advocating for solutions with relevant stakeholders. The project has also helped create a greater sense of inter-ethnic and religious harmony among the Sinhala and Tamil villages. The SuRG partner is currently in the process of requesting support from the USAID/SPICE program to conduct further community advocacy and reconciliation work in the area and to expand project activities to neighboring villages.

1.2.2 TRAINING AND DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION

Participatory Rural Appraisal and Community Mobilization Training

The second phase of the two-part training program conducted by a SuRG partner on “Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Community Mobilization” for partners was conducted from May 9–13 in Trincomalee with the participation of 17 representatives (8 female, 9 male) from 10 organizations.

The program included two field days during which participants conducted a PRA to gather the data required to develop an integrated village development plan. About 40 community members were present at each of the



Participants engage community members and implement the PRA tool ‘Venn Diagram’ during their field visits at the “Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and Community Mobilization” workshop held in Trincomalee for SuRG partners.

chosen locations on both days. The participants engaged the community members in conducting the PRA while the resource persons observed their work, intervening only when absolutely necessary, thus allowing the participants to learn first-hand the difficulties of implementing the concepts and tools they had learned in March. Not only did participants have to apply the tools properly, but they also had to get all community members to participate while keeping their own energy levels high throughout the day. After each day in the field, the resource persons provided feedback to participants using photographs taken throughout the day, which helped participants to better understand and correct their mistakes.

After the field visits, participants prepared two reports (one in Tamil and the other in Sinhala) providing the background research necessary to develop an integrated village development plan by utilizing the data and information gathered during the PRA. The participants

also learned how a village development plan is structured and how one can be created following a PRA.

Participants mentioned that the skills and knowledge they gained from the training would directly benefit their current and future project work. For example, they explained how they now know how to collect

accurate data from a community and better understand community needs prior to planning projects and writing proposals for funding and how to create an exit strategy during the initial stages of a project.

Since the participants represented all the major ethnicities and religions in the country, they also appreciated the opportunity to learn how to work as a team with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds and who speak different languages.

“The knowledge I gained from the PRA training can be applied in future projects...I can use the tools in village level problems identification, CBO strengthening and youth development.”

PROJECT MANAGER, SuRG PARTNER

Exposure Visit for Youth from Jaffna

In April, SuRG supported a four-day exposure visit to Trincomalee for 29 youth (11 female, 18 male) from Jaffna organized by three SuRG partners in close collaboration. This was a follow-up to a visit made by

“We are very happy to see all of you here [in Muthur] today. We rarely get such an opportunity. The youth from Jaffna can see how we as Tamils and Muslims work together, and they can share what they learned back home.”

PRESIDENT, YOUTH FOR PEACE FORUM

Trincomalee youth to Jaffna in February organized by two SuRG partners. During their visit to Trincomalee, the Jaffna youth participated in a New Year Festival where they were able to, for the first time for most of them, witness and participate in traditional Sinhala New Year rituals and games. They reconnected with their friends, participated in all the games, winning half of them, and performed a comedy drama.

The Jaffna youth also met 20 Youth for Peace Forum members. They learned how the Youth for Peace Forum

was formed, the challenges they faced, and the work they have done and plan to do. The Jaffna youth were especially impressed to see such a diverse group of Tamil and Muslim youth representing three religions—Hinduism, Islam and Christianity—working towards promoting harmony and justice in their communities. The Director of a SuRG partner gave a motivational presentation during the event and encouraged the Jaffna youth to do similar work in their communities. The youth also contributed to the event by performing a drama on gender and GBV which showcased their exceptional dramatic skills and awareness of the subject matter.

I.3 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The SuRG LG team completed its training and technical assistance program this quarter with final workshops on revenue management for LAs and the importance and facilitation of by-laws approval for PC members and staff, followed by workshops to review application of learning and the overall impact of the training series initiated last quarter for LAs in the Eastern Province.

During the quarter, SuRG’s 11 partner LAs conducted 22 Participatory Governance Forum (PGF) and 22 Working Group meetings. Although SuRG’s monitoring and support of this process ended this quarter, the CLG’s office in Trincomalee indicated that it will continue to monitor the process as well as standing committees’ performance.

EML worked throughout the quarter on a compilation of all materials developed for the LG training program over the life of the SuRG project. It will be finalized, printed and disseminated next quarter.

I.3.1 TECHNICAL TRAINING

Eastern Province Training Workshops and Participants, April – June 2013

Workshop	Date	Total	Male	Female	Tamil	Sinhala	Muslim	Elected	Staff
Importance of By-Laws and Facilitation of Approval Process	04 – 06 April	37	33	04	17	07	13	21	16
Revenue Management (2 batches)	06 – 10 April 26 – 30 April	124	101	23	59	24	41	08	116
Technical Training Review (2 batches)	15 – 17 May 18 – 20 May	133	119	14	52	30	51	17	116

Importance of By-Laws and Facilitation of Approval Process

In June and July 2012, SuRG conducted workshops on the importance of by-laws for PSs and facilitated the drafting of 36 standard by-laws by participants. Those drafts were then reviewed and revised and submitted to the CLG for approval and submission to the Provincial Council (PC).

There are two types of local government by-laws effective in local authorities:

1. Governing legislation such as the Municipal Council Ordinance (MCO), Urban Council Ordinance (UCO) and Pradeshya Sabha Act (PSA) which are drafted and approved by the central government and the parliament;
2. Standard by-laws which are drafted by and approved by the PSs and the PC.

To date there are no standard by-laws approved for PSs in the Eastern Province. At SuRG's workshop on by-laws for PSs, participants recommended that SuRG provide training to the PCs to help them better understand the importance of by-laws for effective service delivery by the LAs as a means to encourage the passage of their by-laws. Without by-laws, PSs are unable to regulate, control, administer, and supervise activities affecting the health and sanitation of its constituency. They are also unable to legally issue trade licenses and obtain the required information for levying trade taxes, business taxes, service charges and the like, thereby depriving PSs of much income.

In April 2013, SuRG held a workshop for PC members and key staff to enhance their understanding of the by-law approval process and to support institutionalization and the facilitation of the process. The EP Chief Minister, Chairman of the Council, and Agriculture Minister joined 23 elected council members and the 16 provincial ministry secretaries and local government department officials (provincial ministry secretaries of agriculture, local government, road development and fisheries, the assembly secretary, CLG, ACLGs, legal officers and the chairperson's secretary) at the workshop.



(From left to right) Hon. A. Nazeer Zainulabdeen, Agriculture Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council; Hon. Najeeb A. Majeed, the Chief Minister of the Eastern Provincial Council; Hon. Chandradasa Galappaththi, Acting Opposition Leader of the Eastern Provincial Council; Hon. Ariyawathi Galappaththi, Chairperson of the Eastern Provincial Council, and Hon. R. M. Anwer, Member of the Eastern Provincial Council light the traditional oil lamp at the inauguration of the "Importance of By-Laws and Facilitation of Approval Process" workshop held in Habarana for Eastern Provincial Council members and staff.

The workshops covered the following topics:

- Importance of by-laws for local authority administration;
- Types of local government by-laws and scope of by-laws;
- Power to make by-laws under MCO, UCO and PSA and standard by-laws;
- Approved processes and institutionalization of the process for efficiency;
- Implementation processes and adaptation of standard by-laws;
- Duty of the councilor in relation to approval of by-laws;
- Ideas for the improvement of the process of approval of by-laws; and
- Approval process for new by-laws drafted by LAs.

At the end of the workshop, the action plan outlined below was prepared and all participants agreed to extend their full support to implement the plan. The Chief Secretary and the Chief Minister's Secretary cum Eastern Province Local Government Ministry Secretary agreed to take responsibility for stewarding the approval process. The subject was added to the agenda of their monthly progress review meeting. Currently, 50 sets of by-laws (of which 36 were drafted at the SuRG 2012 workshops) are under review by the legal team of the Eastern Provincial Council.

Eastern Provincial Council Action Plan for the Approval of Standard By-Laws

Action No.	Action	Timeframe		Responsible Officer	Supervising Officer
		From	To		
01.	Obtain recommendation of the CLG for all received by-laws	2013. 04. 10	2013. 05. 15	CLG –	Secretary of Ministry of LG
02.	Obtain recommendations of the Secretary to the Ministry of Local Government	2013. 05. 16	2013. 07. 31	Secretary to the Ministry	Chief Secretary
03.	Obtain approval for by-laws from the Provincial Minister of Local Government	2013. 08. 01	2013. 08. 15	Secretary to the Ministry	Chief Secretary
04.	Publish the approved by-laws in the Gazette	2013. 08. 16	2013. 08. 31	Secretary to the Ministry	Chief Secretary
05.	Refer those gazetted by-laws for the confirmation by the Provincial Council	2013. 09. 01	2013. 11. 01	Secretary to the Assembly	Chief Minister, Chairperson of the Provincial Council
06.	Publish notification in the Gazette on the confirmation by the Provincial Council	2013. 11. 01	2013. 11. 15	Secretary to the Assembly	Chief Secretary
07.	Issue circular instructions by CLG to adopt above standard by-laws to LAs	2013. 11. 20		CLG	Chief Secretary

Revenue Management for Local Authorities in the Eastern Province

In April, two workshops were conducted on revenue management for 124 LA staff from 44 LAs in the East and Polonnaruwa. The workshop was designed to increase participants' understanding of the legal provisions regarding levying taxes, rates and issuance of licenses; underscore the levying of rate, tax and license duties by local authorities; provide skills development required for effective revenue management; and explore opportunities for revenue generation in LAs. The workshop also provided the basis for the development of a set of guidelines on revenue management to be included in the LG resource package being developed by EML for dissemination next quarter.

Key topics covered in the workshop were:

- Review of current statuses of levying revenue;
- Revenue classification of LAs;
- Legal provisions relating to revenue administration;
- Levying of rates, taxes, licenses duties, etc., and preparation and statutory assessment of revenues;
- Enhancement and recovery of revenue in LAs;
- Accounting of revenues;
- Monitoring and evaluation of revenue collection and continuous improvement;
- Identification of new revenue sources;
- Tools and techniques for revenue management; and
- Preparation of guidelines for revenue management.

Technical Review Workshops

Two technical review workshops designed to assess the results of the technical training workshops implemented over the last six months were held in May for 133 officials representing 33 LAs. Each LA was represented by a team of participants including officers of different levels and participants at varying SuRG training programs. In addition, recently appointed graduates also attended the workshop so as to gain exposure to the key areas covered and participate in each LAs self-review and planning process.

The workshops were intended to assess the application of learnings from training in each LA; to understand constraints, issues and challenges; to share experiences and lessons learned across LAs; and to develop action plans for ongoing application of learning, skills and techniques. The chart below details each LA team's assessment of the level of application of learning/achievement in their LA.

Application of Training and Achievements of LAs (April – May 2013)

Achievement - Action	No. of LAs (out of 33 LAs)	Percentage	Remarks
Appointment of a Public Relations Officer (PRO)	32	97%	
Improvements in leadership (Chairmen's contribution)	32	97%	Refers to Chairmen's interest and willingness to include citizens in LA activities. Measured primarily through citizen participation on advisory and standing committees and PGFs. Also refers to level of cooperation between Chairman and LA staff
Identification of new sources of revenue	32	97%	Untapped revenue sources identified include parking charges, unused land taxes, tourism hotel taxes, building permit taxes, advertisement sign board taxes
Facilitating identification of project ideas from the community and obtaining approval by the planning committee with representation from the community	32	97%	

Achievement - Action	No. of LAs (out of 33 LAs)	Percentage	Remarks
Formation of advisory committees with 50% citizen participation and assigning them real responsibilities	31	94%	For Pradeshiya Sabhas only
Preparation of Citizens Charter with input from the citizens	31	94%	
Conducting council meetings according to the rules/guidelines setup	31	94%	
Procurement management and contract administration systems are in place	31	94%	
Debriefing after training to other councilors and other staff members	31	94%	
Overall improvement of the revenue management system is in place	31	94%	
Preparation of participatory plans	31	94%	
Setting up institutional and operational arrangements for community participation	31	94%	
Commencement of participatory planning process that is currently successfully operational	31	94%	
The process of developing project proposals through participatory mechanism is in place	31	94%	
Introducing computerization of office management related work	31	94%	
Preparation of by-laws	31	94%	
Obtaining citizen input in the preparation of budgets	30	91%	
Holding regular committee meetings (standing or advisory) with proper record keeping and follow-up to facilitate council decisions	30	91%	Only for Pradeshiya Sabhas
Development of action plan to modify the procurement procedure	30	91%	
Implementation of action plan approved	30	91%	
Development of project proposals	30	91%	
Identification of appropriate new by-laws	30	91%	
Preparation of annual budget in accordance with the legal provisions	29	88%	
Establishment of a Participatory Governance Forum or some form of citizen participation opportunity	29	88%	
Establishment of a communication network	29	88%	
Monitoring, reporting and evaluation of LA's activities.	29	88%	
Development/implementation of revenue generation projects	29	88%	
Establishing partnerships with private sector	29	88%	

Achievement - Action	No. of LAs (out of 33 LAs)	Percentage	Remarks
Identification of need for enhanced monitoring, evaluation and reporting	29	88%	Community Development officers from CLG and ACLG offices are working on M&E
Designing and operationalizing new office design	28	85%	Some PSs are under reconstruction, so the layout is still not implemented
Taking steps to demarcate boundaries of the buildup areas for the purpose of imposing assessment rates	26	79%	
SuRG accounting software in use and improving process	32	97%	
Timely submission of final accounts	33	100%	

Participants noted much improvement but also pointed out the many challenges involved in implementing new methods and sharing ideas from the training. Challenges include:

- If elected members had not participated in any of the SuRG workshops, it was very difficult for staff to convince them that change should be adopted.
- It is not uncommon for there to be a lack of understanding between the chairman and council members, regardless of whether they represented the same party. In such cases, monthly working group meetings proved a useful forum to resolve such problems.
- LA leadership continues to be hampered by a lack of understanding of the legal framework for LAs, and the council's role, responsibilities and procedures. This often leads to decision making based on political considerations.
- The public continues to be wary about working with LAs. Participatory planning processes and the PGFs have helped to build trust with the community but it is a slow process.
- Approval from district and provincial officials is often slow or lacking which undermines LAs' ability to provide effective and efficient service.
- The issue of regular staff transfer is an ongoing challenge.

At the end of the review sessions, each LA was asked to create an action plan for follow-up including tasks/activities, time frame and responsible officers. Each LA staff team developed their own action plan. Most of the plans included ongoing annual actions such as ensuring participatory processes in budget preparation, developing proposals, participatory planning, and holding standing committee and PGF meetings. In order to raise awareness in the community about LA activities and services, a number of LAs included street dramas with the participation of the divisional secretariat, cooperative society, community centers, civil organizations, retired workers, and religious leaders. Almost all participating LAs included a follow-up workshop for their colleagues to show them the importance of a review process and to encourage LAs to conduct reviews each year.

I.4 OPEN DIALOGUE

SuRG completed its programs to support aspiring journalists, including scholarships to 15 students attending the Sri Lanka College of Journalism (SLCJ) 2012 Journalism Diploma Programme and a training program in print and radio for young women in Trincomalee, this quarter.

I.4.1 GRANTS

ARD070

SuRG scholarship recipients attending the SLCJ 2012 Journalism Diploma Programme completed their 18-month course in May and graduated on 25 June 2013. Scholarship recipient, Mr. Rasalingam Raviragu, was awarded the trophy for the highest marks in the Tamil section. Three scholarship recipients graduated with merit, six with distinction, two with credit, and two with a pass. One scholarship recipient dropped out of the course in the final semester and one did not pass the final exam. The 13 graduates included four specialized in print, four in TV and five in radio.



SuRG scholarship recipients and their classmates graduated from the 2012 SLCJ Journalism Diploma Programme on June 25, 2013 at a ceremony held in Colombo.

I.4.2 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

SuRG's six-month training program for young women journalists in Trincomalee wrapped up this quarter with an exposure visit and certificate awarding ceremony in Colombo from May 16 – 18, 2013. Although the program started with 12 participants, only nine qualified for their certificate. One participant dropped out to attend the Law College in Colombo, another to work at a Trincomalee-based television station and the third to take a job at a financial institution.



The young women journalists who participated in the six-month Media Training Program in Trincomalee received their certificates at an awarding ceremony held in Colombo in May 2013.

The overall program was designed in response to a request from the graduates of the SuRG-funded six-month diploma program conducted by a SuRG partner for aspiring women journalists in Trincomalee. It included three two-day trainings on print journalism, one three-day training program on radio journalism and investigative reporting assignments which required each student to research and write two newspaper articles and develop and record two radio stories with support and editing from program resource people throughout the process.

The training program provided participants an opportunity to further hone their skills and deepen their understanding of journalism in a practical and hands-on manner. Participants

were able to build a network among themselves as well as with media contacts in their home districts and nationally. Although still young and with much more to learn, the participants are finding significant local interest in their efforts:

- Four trainees, along with the Director of a SuRG grantee working on women's political leadership and sponsor of two participants and a SuRG Program Officer who was the coordinator for the training program, were interviewed about the training by Sagaram, a Trincomalee television station.

- The editor of a local paper, Malaimurasu, invited participants to join the paper as trainees for three months, after which they would become eligible for paid positions.
- One of the trainees from Muthur has been hired by Sudar Oli as an area reporter and another has had stories published in Sudar Oli and Tamil Thanthi.

I.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

The M&E team continued to work with grantees and partners this quarter, with a focus on verifying data as most grants closed and in preparation for final SuRG reporting. Data quality assessments and program file reviews were conducted with three SuRG partners this quarter. Overall, it was determined that all grantees visited have maintained effective systems for accurate reporting and no discrepancies were observed in numbers reported. The team also worked with another SuRG partner to develop procedures and tools to monitor their activities, and provided support and advice throughout the quarter to ensure they provide accurate and timely quantitative reporting.

Data received over the course of the project to be included in the SuRG final report was also verified and cross-checked with source documents for current PMP and previous PMP indicators. Specific emphasis was placed on the verification of data related to legal documentation.

As indicated in Section 1.2.3 above, the M&E team worked with SE staff to develop, disseminate and analyze a post-training evaluation questionnaire for a final post-program evaluation of the lawyers training.

SuRG commissioned two local consultants to conduct a rapid assessment of partner advocacy efforts. The assessment is intended to shed light on the tools and strategies communities and CBOs are employing to access services and claim their rights at the community level. The consultants are reviewing program and partner documentation and will conduct field research with four partners. Their report will be finalized early next quarter.

I.6 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

On 31 May, Tetra Tech ARD closed the Trincomalee office. A representative from Tetra Tech ARD Burlington traveled to Sri Lanka to assist with the office close-out and work with the Grants Officer in Trincomalee to ensure that documentation for field grants was completed and prepared for shipping back to the home office at the end of the project. Assets and equipment were transferred to the USAID/SPICE project and local partners. In order to complete the remaining field activities, contracts were extended for one Program Officer, and Driver, through 3 July 2013. In addition, the contract of the Communication and Outreach Assistant was extended until 19 July 2013 in order to support ongoing documentation and reporting efforts.

A final program close-out plan detailing administrative tasks to be implemented in order to shut down the Colombo office and all in-country activities was submitted to USAID on 3 June. Implementation of the plan will begin upon approval from the COR.

SuRG engaged a consultant to help with the preparation and writing of the final report. She will review project documentation and interview staff, partners and beneficiaries. In addition, she joined the technical staff at a meeting held in May in Habarana to analyze program impact, achievements, challenges and lessons learned.

U.S. Agency for International Development/Sri Lanka

44, Galle Road, Colombo 3

Sri Lanka

Tel: +9411-249-8000

Fax: +9411-247-2850

www.usaid.gov