

ICAR NEWS

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Conflict Analysis and Resolution

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

A Framework for Rebuilding Communities in Sri Lanka

By Maneshka Eliatamby, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate, deliatam@gmu.edu, and Johnny J. Mack, COO Realizing the Dream & Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, jmack@realizingthedream.org

From 1983 to 2009, the Indian Ocean island of Sri Lanka experienced a bloody and brutal civil war between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Experts claim that over 70,000 lives were lost, with hundreds of thousands more displaced during the three-decades of war. This war was



Maneshka Eliatamby, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate with returning Mallavi residents in Sri Lanka. Photo: Johnny Mack.

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termed the 'No Mercy War' by the International Committee for the Red Cross. Its impact is painfully evident in the affected communities, with the most tragic effects being the untold numbers of Sri Lankans who have been maimed, physically and psychologically. The war also took a devastating toll on the municipal and social

infrastructures that are meant to hold communities together.

While the recent victory by the GoSL has ended open warfare between the parties, the Herculean tasks of physically rebuilding the country and reconciling after almost thirty years of violence lies ahead. Understanding the importance of post-war peacebuilding and development, and acknowledging the opportunity for peace presented at this juncture, Realizing the Dream (RTD) is engaging with the GoSL and the people of Sri Lanka in their quest to

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Commentary

Path-Breaking International Masters: Forging a Partnership Between ICAR and the University of Malta

By Richard E. Rubenstein, Ph.D., ICAR University Professor of Conflict Resolution and Public Affairs, rrubenst@gmu.edu

Beginning in October 2010, George Mason University and the University of Malta will offer the first international master's program in the field of conflict resolution. Students completing the 13-month intensive course at the University of Malta campus will receive a Master of Science in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason and a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution and Mediterranean Security from the University of Malta.

The dual degree program combines the faculties of two renowned educational institutions: Mason's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR), the oldest and largest program of graduate conflict studies in the United States, and Malta's Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (MEDAC), which has been offering advanced degrees in diplomacy and has been building bridges between Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East for the past twenty years. ICAR and MEDAC will share teaching responsibilities, and will engage in collaborative research, conferencing, and peacemaking activities.

Students in the program will hail from all over the globe, but most will come from Europe and the Mediterranean, including North Africa, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. The international master's requires full-time intensive study for thirteen months, the so-called Bologna Model commonly offered in Europe. The fifteen-course curriculum culminates in a dissertation researched and written by students working under faculty supervision during the summer term.

Malta is a natural location for such an enterprise. Located some 60 miles south of Sicily and 175 miles north of Tunisia, the island republic (which includes the islands of Gozo and Comino) has, for centuries, been a place where civilizations meet and interact. In modern times, the Maltese have been instrumental in helping to negotiate multi-national agreements like the Law of the Sea treaty, and hosting important meetings like the 1989 summit between George H. W. Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev that ended the Cold War. Recent international conferences have covered vital topics like global climate change, trans-national migration, environmental negotiation, Euro-Med regional development, social capital in practice, and religious perspectives on conflict.



St. Joseph's Parish Church in Malta's picturesque city of Msida, . Photo: William Shewring, Wikimedia.

Maltese culture reflects a long history of rule by foreign powers, including the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Sicilians, Aragonese, Fatimids, French, and British (The Maltese gained their independence from Britain in 1962). The language of instruction for the international master's program will be English, a language spoken by almost all Maltese. The Maltese mother tongue has Arabic roots, and Italian is also widely spoken. Now a member of the European Union, the nation is experiencing a period of rapid economic growth, including the development of high tech industries, and is becoming an important center for international education.

Malta is a densely populated place with some 400,000 people inhabiting 123 square miles of land. Most Maltese are Roman Catholics, and are famous for their religious interests and popular festivals. They are also home to a number of World Heritage Sites, including seven megalithic temples dating from 3500 B.C. — the largest and most important collection in Europe — and the fortified capital of Valletta, a remarkable collection of 16th and 17th century urban buildings erected after the Ottoman invasion of 1565. Maltese politics are lively and occasionally intense, with the Nationalist Party (currently in power) vying with Labour for control of the Parliament and administration.

The establishment of the international master's program with Malta represents the fulfillment of plans nurtured by George Mason and ICAR to make their programs available to students outside the US, to work closely with international colleagues, and to participate in global education. ■

network

EGGP Expands its Vision: A Hub for Genocide Prevention Training and Engagement

By Tetsushi Ogata, Ph.D. Candidate at ICAR and EGGP Program Director, togata@gmu.edu

CAR successfully concluded another Engaging Governments on Genocide Prevention (EGGP) workshop in New York City from March 8–12, in collaboration with the Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity (AC4) of Columbia University. The most recent EGGP cohort included representatives from: Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Greece, the Netherlands, Niger, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Switzerland, and Yemen.

EGGP is a week-long training designed for representatives of UN member states that coordinates the implementation of actionable early warning and genocide prevention methods. Dr. Andrea Bartoli and his colleagues initially launched EGGP after many years of teaching genocide prevention through the Center for International Conflict Resolution (CICR) at Columbia University. Initially, no one knew whether the initiative would be sustainable, but with six sessions successfully concluded, and 81 representatives from 77 countries trained since 2007, it continues to gain momentum. EGGP is also gaining wider recognition from the genocide prevention field and ICAR is at the focal point of this increasing attention.

EGGP has proven to be an effective platform for three primary reasons: First, it successfully engages governments in the sensitive conversations around genocide, conducting those conversations within an academic environment. Second, the pedagogy has been effective. While seminars taught by experts provide relevant knowledge, the interactive curriculum enables busy state officials to remain engaged throughout the week. Third, strategic partnerships have been developed with institutional

actors in the field: such as the UN Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide; the Genocide Prevention Task Force at the US Institute of Peace; the Regional Fora on Genocide Prevention by the Swiss, Argentinean and Tanzanian governments; the Genocide Prevention Advisory Network (GPA Net); the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS); and the Hungarian initiative to institute the Budapest Centre for International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities.

Over the years, EGGP has evolved from a training event to an ongoing commitment that is fundamentally connected to the larger network of key actors involved in genocide prevention. This ongoing conversation ensures that its activities remain politically relevant and continue to strengthen our position in the field. In June 2010 EGGP will convene the meeting of GPA Net, an international network of experts on the causes, consequences, and prevention of genocide and other mass atrocities, at Point of View. Recently, EGGP staff coordinated with the Swiss government to facilitate the editing and publishing of *Politorbis*, a Swiss journal dedicated to genocide prevention. Additionally, we are planning the first regional training on genocide prevention in Barbados, targeting 14 member states of CARICOM, to be convened in late 2010. EGGP is also exploring with the Swiss government and others an opportunity to partner with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) for Genocide Prevention to identify focal points at the regional level and provide trainings on genocide prevention before a series of eight national and parliamentary elections scheduled to take place in 2010-11.

At this point, EGGP is embarking on a new phase of development during which it will continue to build on its experience with training, creating new ways to disseminate skills and knowledge through regionally based centers and institutions, and to facilitate the encounters of diplomats at the UN who come together to explore how to prevent genocide. This represents a shift from 'EGGP as a week-long seminar' to 'EGGP as a hub' connecting people and governments. It is also a shift from EGGP, as an occasion to bring states together, to EGGP as the secretariat through which those engagements are sustained. ■

initiatives



EGGP's March 2010 Cohort. Photo: Ehren Joseph Studio.

Protecting Those Most Vulnerable

ICAR Certificate Program Hosts Development Discussion

By David Alpher, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate and Adjunct Faculty, dalpher@gmu.edu

EVENTS

International development work has undergone a series of changes in recent years—not since the signing of the foreign assistance act, in 1961, has so much happened so quickly. Most acutely felt is the shift towards “country ownership” of development funding—a change that puts recipient countries in a position to direct development programming within their own borders. This is a vital shift, and far too long in coming, but in its current conception it contains great difficulties. On April 1st, ICAR's Certificate Program hosted an event bring-

ing together Certificate, Masters, and Ph.D. students which was itself a shift in format—convened around a question rather than an issue—and which produced a robust dialogue around those difficulties.

The definition of “country” within “country ownership” is currently to be read as “the national government of a country,” and thus we are presented with an acute problem: How do we protect vulnerable populations within the recipient countries when the national governments’

relationship with those populations may range from apathy to antagonism? This question speaks to process and a cross-cutting implementation of conflict resolution thought and methods on two fronts: for the benefit of those vulnerable populations and within the dialogue around policy direction here at the source.

Jeremy Konyndyk of MercyCorps, a US-based NGO, presented the viewpoint of development implementers, drawing on long experience from projects across Africa. Todd Shelton, of InterAction, spoke to policy and politics on the domestic side. The picture that emerges is both fascinating and daunting—the role of the NGO is to protect those most vulnerable, and the local populations; but who feels marginalized by what appears to be entirely situational. Gender-based violence programs in Sudan are approved of by the national government, but resisted by local governments as a source of shame. Programs in Northern Uganda are resisted by the government, while those in the South are not. Aid documents in Haiti are written in French while the country's neediest population speak only Creole.

Development implementers make every attempt to be apolitical, but it is the nature of the work to be inherently political. Relationships with power structures at national, local and community levels must be maintained in order to allow continued presence in-country. The benefits of development work alter power and relationships on the ground, as well as within and among communities. What a particular community sees as being in their best interest may be seen by the national government as an erosion of their sovereignty. Thus, even working on behalf of vulnerable populations isn't free of risk, as that work may increase the risk from other quarters and potentially cause disruption within the community itself.

The question posed at this event was, therefore a pressing concern, reflecting on more “classical” conflict resolution work as well as on the development implementation at hand—we are tool users, and involved with the same manipulation of power in the field. The mechanisms may differ but the fundamental issue is one that both fields must face.

Mr. Konyndyk pointed out that many NGOs

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Upcoming ICAR Community Events

Monday, April 26, 2010

CRDC Event

Interfaith Peacebuilding: Creating a Narrative of Peace
7:30 pm, Truland Building, 555

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Town Hall Meeting

7:30 pm - 9:30 pm, Truland Building, 555

Thursday, April 29, 2010

Min Zaw Oo Dissertation Defense

From Democratic Transition to Consolidation: The Analysis of 115 Cases of Democratic Transitions in Eighty-six Countries From 1995 to 2007
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

Friday, April 30, 2010

Wallace Warfield Festschrift

1 pm, Truland Building, 555

Monday, May 3, 2010

Vandy Kanyako Dissertation Defense

Donors and Civil Society Interaction in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, Truland Building, 555

Monday, May 10, 2010

22nd Annual Lynch Lecture Featuring Dr. Andrea Bartoli

Conflict Resolution: Transitioning Innovation
6:30 pm Reception, 7:00 pm Lecture
Arlington Original Building, Room 329

Saturday, May 15, 2010

43rd Annual GMU Commencement

10:00 am, Fairfax Campus, Patriot Center

Saturday, May 15, 2010

ICAR Graduation Convocation

2:00 pm, Fairfax Campus, Dewberry Hall
Graduates please arrive by 1:00 pm

<http://icar.gmu.edu/events.htm>

2009-2010 Dissertation Defenses

Congratulations to the following ICAR Ph.D. Candidates who have or will be defending their Doctoral Dissertations during the 2009 - 2010 academic year:

Pamela Creed, "Myth, Memory and Militarism: The Evolution of an American War Narrative," August 31, 2009. Committee: Daniel Rothbart, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Dennis Sandole, Ph.D., ICAR, John Dale, Ph.D., GMU.

Krista Rigalo, "The Politics of Ritual: Exploring Discourse Regarding the Use of Ritual in Northern Uganda," October 2, 2009. Committee: Terrence Lyons, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Susan Hirsch, Ph.D., ICAR, Linda Seligmann, Ph.D., GMU.

Talha Köse, "Re-Negotiating Alevi Identity: Values, Emotions and the Contending Visions on Future," October 20, 2010. Committee: Kevin Avruch, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Sara Cobb, Ph.D., ICAR, Daniel Rothbart, Ph.D., ICAR.

Silvia Susnjic, "Historical Remembering and Attitudes Towards the 'Other': A Cross-generational Inquiry," December 1, 2009. Committee: Dennis Sandole, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Ho Won Jeong, Ph.D., ICAR, Mills T. Kelly, Ph.D., GMU.

Joshua Fisher, "The Ecological Correlates of Armed Conflict: A Geospatial and Spatial-Statistical Approach to Conflict Modeling," April 19, 2010. Committee: Agnieszka Paczynska, Ph.D. ICAR (Chair), Solon Simmons, Ph.D., ICAR, Dann Sklarew, Ph.D., GMU.

Janice McRae, "Identity Delegitimization and Eco-Enterprise: A Comparative Study of the Process of Disenrollment in Native American Communities," April 19, 2010. Committee: Karina Korostelina, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Daniel Rothbart, Ph.D., ICAR, Susan Trencher, Ph.D., GMU, John Hunt Peacock, Ph.D., Maryland Institute College of Art.

Jessica Felix-Romero, "Harvesting Peace: Permaculture as Peacebuilding," April 22, 2010. Committee: Susan Allen Nan, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Richard Rubenstein, Ph.D., ICAR, Jessica Heineman-Piper, Ph.D. GMU.

Min Zaw Oo, "From Democratic Transition to Consolidation: The Analysis of 115 Cases of Democratic Transitions in Eighty-six Countries From 1955 to 2007," April 29, 2010. Committee: Dennis Sandole, Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Solon Simmons, Ph.D., ICAR, Monty Marshall, Ph.D., GMU.

Vandy Kanyako, "Donors and Civil Actors in Post Conflict Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone," May 3, 2010. Committee: Andrea Bartoli Ph.D., ICAR (Chair), Kevin Avruch, Ph.D., ICAR, Jack Goldstone, Ph.D., GMU. ■

Recent ICAR Articles, Op-Eds, Letters to the Editor

Happy Independence Day Wishes From a Palestinian: Although Palestinian and Israeli Narratives are Different, Our Vision for the Future Can be One.

By Aziz Abu Sarah, CRDC Director of Middle East Projects
The Jerusalem Post, April 19, 4/20/10

Hezbollah's Triumph

By Rawhi Afaghani, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Al Arabiya News Channel, 4/13/10

Cyprus, OSCE, and Conflict Resolution

By Alfred A. Frarugia, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
The Malta Independent, 4/12/10
Cyprus Mail, 4/12/10

Who will be the Next Prime Minister of Iraq? Analysis of the 2010 Iraqi Parliamentary Elections

By Marina Ottaway and Danny Kaysi, ICAR B.S. Alumnus,
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 4/5/10

Mixed Reaction to Myanmar Opposition Party Boycott

By John Dale Ph.D., ICAR Affiliate Faculty and Assistant Professor of Sociology and Anthropology at GMU
Associated Press, 3/30/10

Passover for Non-Jews and 'the Bread of Affliction'

By Roi Ben Yehuda, ICAR Ph.D. Student
Sojourners: Faith, Politics, Culture, 3/29/10

Restarting Relations With Venezuela

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Washington Times, 3/26/10

Americans Find a Rash of Contradictions in Venezuela

By Michael Shank, ICAR Ph.D. Candidate
Roll Call, 3/24/10

Religion, Conflict, and Peacebuilding Toolkit

By Marci Moberg, ICAR M.S. Alumna
USAID, February 2010

Recovering Sargent Shriver's Vision for Poverty Law: The Illinois FamilyCare Campaign and the Insight Approach to Conflict Resolution

By Jamie Price, Ph.D., ICAR Faculty and Director of the Sargent Shriver Peace Institute
Clearinghouse Review: Journal of Poverty Law and Policy, January - February, 2010, Volume 43, Numbers 9 -10

press

ICAR Alumna Honored: The Honorable Deborah A. P. Hersman, GMU's Alumna of the Year

By Lori-Ann Stephensen, ICAR M.S. Student and ICAR News Editor, lstephea@gmu.edu

icar spotlight

On April 14, 2010 the Mason's Alumni Association hosted the Celebration of Distinction in Dewberry Hall on the Fairfax Campus. This year's event—attended by ICAR Director, Dr. Andrea Bartoli, Associate Director for Administration, Julie Shedd, and Graduate Admissions and Student Services Director, Erin Ogilvie—was even more of a celebration for the ICAR community than usual, as two ICAR Alumni received awards honoring their accomplishments. The Honorable Deborah A. P. Hersman, Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, received the University's highest alumni acknowledgement, Alumna of the Year, marking the first time that an ICAR alumnus has received the honor.

Ms. Hersman received a B.A. in political science and a B.A. in International Studies from Virginia Tech and graduated from ICAR's Masters program in 2000. After graduation, she served as a staff member and a senior legislative aid to US Representative Bob Wise (D-West Virginia) and then as a senior professional staff member of the US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation where she was responsible for a number of transportation issues. Ms. Hersman became an NTSB board member in 2004. During her five years on the Board, she has been the lead member at 17 major accidents across the nation, including the collision of two Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority trains last summer.

In June 2009, Hersman was nominated by President Obama to serve a two-year term as Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board. She was subsequently confirmed by the US Senate and



The Honorable Deborah Hersman, GMU Alumna of the Year with ICAR Director, Dr. Andrea Bartoli at Mason's Celebration of Distinction. Photo: Laura Sikes.

sworn in on July 28, 2009. Hersman is the youngest person to ever fill that post, and is concurrently serving a second five-year term as an NTSB Board Member.

In keeping with her generally hands-on approach to life, Ms. Hersman is HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Standard) certified. She is a Child Passenger Safety Technician and holds a commercial driver's license with endorsements for passengers, school bus, and air brakes. She also has a motorcycle endorsement and a pilot's license is next on the list. Ms. Hersman is married to her high school sweetheart, Niel Plummer, and is the mother of three busy boys ages eight, six, and three. In her "spare" time she runs triathlons! ■

Dr. Lisa Schirch, Receives ICAR's Distinguished Alumni Award

Dr. Schirch, a former Fulbright Fellow, is a professor of peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. She is also the founding director of 3D Security Initiative, which promotes and links civil society perspectives and efforts with US security policy makers, particularly from the perspectives of conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and human security.

Dr. Schirch holds a B.A. in International Relations from the University of Waterloo, Canada. She received her Masters degree at ICAR in 1994, and then continued on at ICAR to earn her Ph.D. in 1999. Schirch is the author of five books on peacebuilding and conflict prevention, and has trained and facilitated in more than 25 countries. She also lectures publicly and comments regularly on US foreign policy in the media. Her current efforts are focused on Afghan and Iraqi civil society. Dr. Schirch is a member of the ICAR Community Network and Forum. ■



Dr. Lisa Schirch. Photo: Eastern Mennonite University.

Building A Framework for Sri Lanka

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build positive peace in the island nation.

Realizing the Dream, Inc., is a non-governmental organization based in the US, with a global mission to foster peace through nonviolence. Founded by Martin Luther King III, son and namesake of the great twentieth century champion of nonviolence, RTD has been engaging the Government of Sri Lanka since November 2009. RTD views nonviolence as: First, a philosophy that renounces violence in all its forms, while actively responding to it. Second, as a way of life, that is transformational. Third, as a tactic, that is a transactional process, based on principle with specific objectives to be attained. Fourth, as a process for achieving social change through active, peaceful means. Fifth, as a means whose end is community, where each person is empowered to realize their greatest potential.

“Nonviolence is a means whose end is community where each person is able to realize his or her greatest potential.”

—DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Understanding the important roles of post-war development and reconstruction relative to peacekeeping and peacebuilding, RTD commissioned an international team to conduct two assessment missions on the island in November 2009 and January-February 2010. During the second of those missions, Martin Luther King III and the RTD team visited some of the former LTTE strongholds within the Vanni area. RTD’s Chief Operating Officer, Johnny Mack, and Manager of South Asia, Maneshka Eliatamby, returned in March 2010, to continue the evaluation. Based on their evaluation, RTD identified Mallavi, a village in the Northern Vanni region of Sri Lanka, as a location that requires urgent post-conflict development work.

At the end of open warfare in Sri Lanka, nearly 300,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were housed in camps run by the Government of Sri Lanka in the North of the country. While the GoSL has been return-

ing IDPs to their lands, a process that RTD was able to witness firsthand during their visits, many have returned only to find that their homes, roads, schools, hospital clinics, and other infrastructure have, in most cases, been destroyed. There are currently over 11,000 individuals in Mallavi alone who are living in makeshift tents of plastic and polythene, and in partially destroyed structures. There is no running water or proper sanitation, resulting in a number of cases of Dengue fever. Additionally, there is a severe food shortage, and a lack of clean drinking water.

While the GoSL provides all of those leaving the IDP camps with dry rations for a six-month period, there are numerous problems related to the implementation of such projects. A number of local villagers mentioned that while they thought they would receive dry rations and funds to get themselves back on their feet, they either did not receive these goods, or the goods and money were not enough to get by. Additionally, Mallavi is traditionally an agrarian society, and while local farmers hope to return to their lands, the issue of land mines needs to be addressed before that can happen.

Rebuilding the lives of individuals, families, and communities begins in large measure with physical reconstruction and sociocultural reconciliation. Such efforts may be achieved through the employment of non-violent philosophy and principles that lead

to the empowerment of the Sri Lankan people, in this case a form of community empowerment. Some of the projects that RTD hopes to engage in are; Rebuilding Mallavi One Home at a Time; The Road to Mallavi Project; Humanitarian and Military De-mining; Wells and Water Sanitation Project; Eradicating Dengue Mosquito Net Campaign; Mallavi Hospital and Dental Clinic; Educating Mallavi—Rebuilding the School; Taking Mallavi into the Information Age Computer Lab Project; Tools for Mallavi; and the Northern Empowerment Institute. RTD believes that the situation in Mallavi presents itself as an opportunity to demonstrate how nonviolence principles can be employed in the reconstruction and reconciliation process.

In anticipation of rebuilding any community, infrastructure must be established that supports and maintains the quality of life. This is true of both physical and social communities. RTD’s programmatic strategies promote investment in a Community Empowerment Infrastructure, the empowerment subset of civil infrastructure. This approach strengthens the community’s capacity and promotes the development of an internetwork among the community, public, and private sectors. Using such an infrastructure, stakeholders can identify problems, stake positions, and determine strategic solutions. Through



Coauthor, Johnny Mack conducting nonviolence training at the University of Jaffna in Northern Sri Lanka. Photo: M. Eliatamby.

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Building A Framework for Sri Lanka

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the collaborative efforts of government and nongovernmental organizations, citizens can acquire the tools to rebuild their lives individually and collectively.

Community-based and community-serving organizations are uniquely positioned to help realize the dream of an empowered community. Through their efforts for reconstruction and reconciliation (community development and community building), the powerless can find the personal and social capacity to acquire tangible resources that will aid in the transition from poverty to prosperity. The powerful can find the personal and social capacity to acquire the moral growth that bridges the divide from mere prosperity to full civic life. Both are transformed to become the place Dr. King called the “Beloved Community.”

RTD hopes to partner with the Foundation of Goodness (FOG), which rebuilt an entire village in the South-West of Sri Lanka that was destroyed in the December 2004 tsunami. FOG, is an NGO based in Seenigama, a small village on the south-west coast of the island, which exemplifies the framework of leadership, vision, mission, services, and collaboration necessary for a vibrant and robust empowerment model. RTD is collaborating with FOG and its founding visionary, Kushil Gunasekera, to replicate this model in the Vanni district. The partnership will focus on the Northern Empowerment Institute and the rebuilding of homes and livelihoods. ■

Certificate Event

Continued from page 4

target their efforts toward times of transition, providing the best chance of building productive change within a structure. We are in the same transitional time here—it’s rare that a window opens within which a discourse as massive as that of foreign assistance can be significantly shifted—but that window is open now. As the discourse moves forward, vulnerable populations worldwide will feel the effect, and for their sake it is vital to move quickly building the discourse and methodology as we seek answers to the question posed. Questions such as this are pressing, and help to illuminate a process through which the needs of the recipients may stand or fall.

Through these speakers, ICAR is provided with a line to policy makers at USAID and on the Hill, as well as to implementers in the field. The immediate advantage to ICAR’s involvement in questions such as this is our ability to see outside both the policy and implementation viewpoints, integrating and expanding upon them. We are not constrained by a particular programmatic specialty, as development implementers tend to be. Our work, as it translates into that field, is most often one which overlays all programmatic sectors, officially or unofficially; we are in a unique position to make use of that open window, and we are looking forward to continuing that interaction. ■



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