

# A Spirited Journey!

Issue #1 – October 2009



## Welcome Message from the Board of Directors

Dear Fellow R&R Volunteers,

It is indeed a pleasure to communicate to all the volunteers through this newsletter. We would first like to thank all the volunteers who joined the R&R by enrolling on the website over the past three months. As of October, we have a total of 56 R&R volunteers.

In October, R&R became a legal entity in California. As required by the Articles of Incorporation, an initial Board of Directors constituting nine members was appointed by the Incorporators. The names of Incorporators and Directors are listed at the end of this Newsletter.

As envisioned in our vision statement, R&R Network is committed to work across ethnic and religious boundaries to foster mutual respect, trust, and friendship among all communities in Sri Lanka and its Diaspora in order to make a better future for all its citizens.

As stipulated in the Articles of Incorporation, the R&R journey has a ten-year horizon and will take an active and sincere support from all our volunteers to reach the destination. Our journey will not be an easy one, and will have many bumps along the way, but by dedicating ourselves to uphold the virtues of peace, equality, compassion, magnanimity, dignity and harmony, we will get to our destination! Our focus will be on the people, to improve lives one person at a time.

Let us embark on our spirited journey together with hope and optimism!

**The Board of Directors**

## Project Updates

Our focus thus far has been on creating the corporate identity, and building the organizational and administrative infrastructure. We are now ready to embark on projects that will help us work across ethnic and religious boundaries in Sri Lanka to improve living conditions of people in need.

Based on a needs-evaluation, we were able to identify our very first project to support 2500 students at the Menik Farm in the IDP camps, who are sitting for their

O-Level examination in December 2009. As an initial endeavor, we supplied a range of stationary material at a cost of Rs. 661,475. As an extension to this initiative, we are also looking at the feasibility of providing nutritional drinks to these students close to the commencement of the examination.

We are also working on launching an ‘Inter-Ethnic Family Partnership’ where-by volunteers will be writing letters, and assisting communities impacted by the ethnic conflict or poverty. We are also exploring projects to aid wounded soldiers and rehabilitate former combatants.

The R&R approach will be to collaborate with established organizations in the country to undertake joint projects with the R&R spirit built into them. If any of the volunteers have ideas to initiate and lead such collaborative efforts, please do so – remember, the R&R spirit is to support all of us to do what each of us could do best. If you have any specific ideas, please email any of the R&R volunteers or call 650-283-5107 in California or 9411-2573895 in Sri Lanka.

## Web Based Resource Center

In order to build a network to collaborate across the globe to undertake project in Sri Lanka, the R&R vision is to develop a website which will function as a Resource Center for the volunteers. We expect to have a more fully functioning website before the end of the year.

## Donation and Funding

As we are an early stage organization run by volunteers, there are no substantial funding needs in the coming weeks. However, as we ramp up our collaborative efforts with established organizations our project funding needs will expand.

We expect our first year of project funding requirement at 5 to 50 million Rupees. If you wish to contribute to this effort, please send checks payable to: Reconcile and Rebuild. The mailing address is P.O. Box 784, Palo Alto, CA 94302, USA. We have not received tax-exempt status in California yet, but expect to receive that certification in the coming months. We expect to have a bank account established in Sri Lanka in the coming weeks to receive donations in rupee denominations.

*Reconcile and Rebuild Sri Lanka – Together We Can*  
[www.ReconcileandRebuild.org](http://www.ReconcileandRebuild.org)

*Please Join Our Journey to Bring Lasting Peace, Prosperity, Equality, and Dignity to All Our People*

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## How Can I Help?

You can help achieve R&R goals in many ways, and here are a few thoughts.

1. Talk to your children about the proud history of all our people in Sri Lanka and our rich traditions.
2. Talk to your children and friends about the diversity as well as the commonality of our people, culture, language, and religion, and how to derive strength from diversity.
3. Invite friends and acquaintances from different ethnic communities to your home and have an open and honest conversation about your thoughts about the ethnic conflict, how you think we got here, and how you think we can reconcile and move our country forward.
4. Think of a project your family and friends could initiate and lead in Sri Lanka in the spirit of R&R – remember the entire R&R Network will stand with you and assist you!
5. Check-in with other R&R volunteers how you could help with their initiatives. By the end of the year, the web based resource center will assist you in this regard too.

## Joint Symposium on December 4th

The R&R Network members in Washington, DC, in collaboration with the American University, are planning a symposium titled: Reconciliation and Development in a Post-Conflict Era. This event, in its early planning stage, is expected to be simultaneously hosted in Sri Lanka with a communication link-up with the DC venue.

If you are interested to participate, please email [r&rsymposium2009@reconcileandrebuilt.org](mailto:r&rsymposium2009@reconcileandrebuilt.org) or call 301-613-6657. More information of this event will be posted on our website.

## Administrative Update

### Acknowledgments

In addition to the volunteers who signed up to be part of R&R, we also have had numerous well wishers who have expressed their support for the R&R initiative. You know who you are, and we thank you for your support!

A special thanks is in order for Michael Lee and Chris Scheithauer from McDermott Will & Emery LLP for their pro-bono legal work with the incorporation and their continued legal support for R&R.

All this support and well wishes bring real strength to R&R and we thank the Lord for guiding us along.

### List of Incorporators & Initial Directors of R&R

We have had many volunteers sign-up from Sri Lanka and all around the globe during the past three months, and thank you all for joining the R&R Journey!

For administrative purposes, twenty one persons provided keen input in the creation of R&R and signed-off as Incorporators in the document we filed with the state in early October of this year. The names of these 21 Incorporators are listed below. These 21 Incorporators in turn appointed 9 Directors to manage the organization. These 9 initial Directors were also Incorporators, a “\*” next to the name denotes a Director.

If you are interested to actively participate in guiding R&R operations and activities at the grassroots, please contract one of the Directors.

1. Anura De Alwis
2. Arjuna Swaminathan \*
3. Ganesan Anurundran
4. Jeevika Ranaweera, Dr. \*
5. Lavi de Silva \*
6. Maneshka Eliathamby de Silva \*
7. Mano Sekaram
8. Murali Manickavasagar \*
9. Naushard Cader \*
10. Piraba Swaminathan, Dr.
11. Ranjan Shiva Swaminathan \*
12. Ravi Arulanatham, Dr.
13. Ravi Pathman
14. Ravi Wijayaratne
15. Sakunthala Sivasubramaniam, Dr.
16. Stephan Vidthiyani
17. Tennyson Rodrigo \*
18. Tyrone Weerackody
19. Usha Welaratne, Dr.
20. Vijenderan Somasundaram \*
21. Vinitha Rodrigo

So long, until we meet in the next issue of ASJ! Tell us how your spirited journey is progressing!!

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