

# *A Spirited Journey!*

Reconcile & Rebuild Sri Lanka Newsletter #3 – April 2010



## **Note from the Board of Directors**

Dear fellow R&R volunteers and well-wishers,

Wish you a peaceful Sinhala & Tamil New Year!

Our first event of 2010 was the Reconcile & Rebuild (R&R) Sri Lanka Valentine's Day charity ball in the San Francisco, Bay Area. We would like to thank our R&R California Network volunteers and supporters for organizing this event, which was designed to publicize the R&R Vision and raise funds for planned initiatives.

After completing the IDP Camp O/L Student Supplies project in Vavuniya and the Lahiru Pre-School Children's Supplies project in Seenigama last year, we are now focusing our efforts on developing and implementing a pilot project of the Reconciliation & Rural Empowerment Network initiative. We are working in close collaboration with the Sarvodaya Movement and have designed a project that we believe will help rural youth expand their knowledge base and improve their access to local entrepreneurial and employment opportunities across ethnic lines.

We urge fellow volunteers to actively participate in R&R initiatives by leading projects and participating in our Network monthly calls held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 10:00 p.m. US Eastern Time (7.30 a.m. Friday Sri Lankan time). For additional details, please contact [secretary@reconcileandrebuilt.org](mailto:secretary@reconcileandrebuilt.org).

Thank you for your continued support and work in reconciling and rebuilding Sri Lanka.

Best Wishes,

R&R Board of Directors

## **Project Update: Reconciliation and Rural Empowerment Network**

The objective on this initiative is to empower rural youth to collaborate across ethnic lines to pursue entrepreneurial ventures in their respective communities. Through wider access to knowledge & incentives for collaboration among youth across ethnic lines, we envision creating an environment conducive to rural development and reconciliation.

The pilot project we are currently in the process of developing in collaboration with the Sarvodaya Movement is planned for Trincomalee and Hambantota. To learn about the details of this initiative, please visit [www.reconcileandrebuilt.org](http://www.reconcileandrebuilt.org) and click on "Projects".

We welcome you to support us implement this first-of-a-kind initiative as follows:

**1. Serve as a Mentor** to rural youth during a 4 month training program and guide them to start a small business in their community. Desired characteristics of a mentor include:

- i) Passion to work with rural youth across ethnic & religious lines to empower them to become self employed.
- ii) Willingness to commit approximately 2 hours/week for 4 months to cultivate a strong mentoring relationship with rural youth in Sri Lanka. Communication would take place via e-mail, Skype, and/or phone.

**2. Finance part of the pilot initiative.** There are possibilities to:

- i) Make a general contribution towards the pilot initiative.
- ii) Finance the first phase of entrepreneurial ventures of participating youth estimated at \$50 - \$200.
- iii) Sponsor inter-ethnic teams of youth for the duration of the program estimated at \$1200/team.

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

# *A Spirited Journey!*



Reconcile & Rebuild Sri Lanka Newsletter #3 – April 2010

### **3. Serve on the initiative Advisory Board.**

Desired characteristics of Advisory Board members include:

- i) Broad experience in business and entrepreneurship.
- ii) Experience working on development and/or reconciliation projects.
- iii) Experience working at the grassroots level in Sri Lanka.

We anticipate demonstrating the effectiveness of this initiative through the pilot program in the second half of 2010. Success of the pilot program will enable volunteers to secure additional resources to roll out the initiative throughout Sri Lanka.

## **Network Updates**

### **Valentine's Day Charity Ball**

R&R Network members in California organized a Valentine's Day Charity Ball in Palo Alto, California on February 13, 2010, which was attended by over 125 enthusiastic supporters. The event helped publicize the R&R vision and its projects, and helped raise funds towards those projects. We thank OmniPro Systems ([www.omnipro.com](http://www.omnipro.com)) for their whole hearted support to make this event a success.

### **Upcoming event in Washington DC: *Role of the Sri Lankan Diaspora in Rural Development & Reconciliation***

The Washington DC area volunteers are organizing a seminar on the role of the Sri Lankan Diaspora in rural development & reconciliation. The event will take place at the American University in Washington, DC on Saturday, April 24 at 4:00 p.m. Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, the founder of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement will be the keynote speaker. We encourage Sri Lankans and friends of Sri Lanka interested in rural development & reconciliation to participate in this seminar. For further information about this event, please contact: [secretary@reconcileandrebuilt.org](mailto:secretary@reconcileandrebuilt.org).

### **Tribute to Sri Lanka Unites**

We applaud our friends at *Sri Lanka Unites* (SLU) for striving to cultivate the spirit of understanding and mutual respect among the future leaders of Sri Lanka. SLU ([www.srilankaunites.org](http://www.srilankaunites.org)) is a non-profit, non-partisan, multi-religious and multi-ethnic organization made up of a dynamic group of young Sri Lankans from various academic and professional backgrounds, representing all ethnicities and religions of Sri Lanka. Please follow the below link to read about the Sri Lanka Unites documentary "Road to Reconciliation":  
<http://srilankaunites.blogspot.com>

### **How to Initiate an R&R Project and Implement It**

The R&R approach is to collaborate with established and reputed organizations in Sri Lanka to undertake joint projects with the R&R spirit built into them. If you wish to contribute to the above-mentioned projects or have ideas to initiate and lead such collaborative efforts, please let us know. Remember, the R&R spirit is to support all of us to do what each of us can do best.

If you have any ideas, please contact R&R volunteers or e-mail us at [info@reconcileandrebuilt.org](mailto:info@reconcileandrebuilt.org). You may also reach us at +1 650-440-1736 in the US or 94 11-2573895 in Sri Lanka.

### **Donations and Funding**

If you wish to contribute to R&R projects, please send checks payable to: Reconcile and Rebuild, P.O. Box 784, Palo Alto, CA 94302, USA. R&R is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation and has applied for U.S. federal tax-exempt certification.

### **How to Contribute to the Newsletter**

If you have thoughts or articles to share, please email: [editor@reconcileandrebuilt.org](mailto:editor@reconcileandrebuilt.org)

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