Final Evaluation:
The Sri Lanka Transition Initiative (2003-2007)

Social Impact, Inc
Enhancing Development
Effectiveness

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Cover Photo: DAIC499 Community Discussion at Lunugumwehera

ACRONYMS

AED	Academy for Educational Development
ANE	Asia/Near East
CBO	Community Based Organization
CESCOI	Ceylon Social Cooperative Initiative
CFA	Cease Fire Agreement
CHA	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies
CHF	Community Habitat and Finance
COP	Chief of Party
CMM	Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation
CTF	Community Trust Fund
DAI	Development Alternatives International
DART	Disaster Assistance Response Team
DCHA	Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DG	Democracy and Governance
EG	Economic Growth
EGAT	Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture & Trade
EPF	Environmental Protection Foundation
ERRO	Eastern Rehabilitation and Relief Organization
ESF	Economic Support Funds
FCSK	Fisherman's Cooperative Society Ltd
FOG	Fixed Obligated Grant
FSN	Foreign Service National
GA	Government Agent Office
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GM	Grant Manager
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
ISGA	Interim Self Governing Authority
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
KVTC	Kawatissa Vocational Training Center
LSCMMO	Lanka Shakthi Creative Mass Media Organization
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NESED	North East Socio Economic Developers
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
NICU	National Integration Coordinating Unit
NYSC	National Youth Services Council
NUYC	Nawa Udawa Youth Club
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives

OTI/SL	OTI Sri Lanka
OTI/W	OTI Washington
PB	Peace Building
PDO	Program Development Officer
PM	Project Manager
PPR	Program Performance Review
PTOM	Post-Tsunami Operation Management
RNGOO	Ruhunu NGO Organization
SDRO	Social Development and Research Organization
SERDO	Socio Economic Rehabilitation and Development Organization
SISLT	Social Impact Sri Lanka Team
SIT	School for International Training
SLBC	Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation
SLCRS	Sri Lanka Red Cross Society
SLFP	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLMM	Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission
SLTI	Sri Lanka Transition Initiative
SOCRD	Surekema Organization for Community Resource Development
SOW	Scope of Work
SWIFT	Support Which Implements Fast Transition
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TDA	Total Development Association
TDY	Temporary Duty
TI	Transition Initiative
TYDUP	Team of Youth for Development, Understanding and Progress
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VOVCOD	Voluntary Organization for Vulnerable Community Development
YES	Youth Enlightenment Support
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

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We appreciate the detailed comments on the first draft of this report. We have made every effort to correct errors of fact, and be responsive to different interpretations of the effectiveness and impact of the program. We are, of course, solely responsible for the analyses and conclusions presented in this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID Sri Lanka Transition Initiative (SLTI) program, managed by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), began in February 2003, following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE) in 2002. OTI will close out its office in March 2007, transferring the balance of funding and its contract with its implementing partner, Development Alternatives International (DAI), to the USAID Sri Lanka Mission. Over the four-year life of the OTI program, it has obligated just over $32 million for 645 grants in all but three of Sri Lanka's 25 districts, including $1.3 million to Internews to provide training and local radio program production in Tsunami effected areas. Operational costs were $16.7 million, for an operations-to-program cost ratio of 35 percent to 65 percent.

The main objective of the program was to build support among the Sri Lankan population for the Peace Process. OTI's focus at the local level was largely a product of the overall USAID strategy, which had other programs operating at the decision making and government levels in Colombo. OTI's main role was to build support for a negotiated peace at the local level, with the hope or expectation that local level support for peace would become a factor in helping or encouraging national level leaders to take the difficult political steps toward a negotiated settlement. To do this, OTI started with three main objectives: 1) demonstrating the benefits of peace (through local community infrastructure and livelihood support projects); 2) informing citizens about the peace process and building attitudinal support for it; and 3) bringing diverse groups together to work for the common good. Community Impact (infrastructure and livelihoods), Media, and Conflict Management grants made up the primary types of grants, although many other types of grants were also issued. Most grants incorporated some form of participatory decision making and peace-building training into the grant decision process. After a decision was made as to the type of grant, SLTI staff assumed responsibility for managing the grant expenditure and procurement process. Nearly all grants were in-kind rather than cash grants.

As stated in the evaluation Scope of Work, the strategy for achieving the overall objective included promoting attitudinal change regarding how people in different communities perceived each other, more relevant and accurate information about the progress of the peace process, and behavioral change toward greater cooperation and collaboration between different groups formerly either in conflict, or potentially so. Part of the OTI mandate was to promote linkages between different grantees and groups that would, in turn, result in advocacy for peace at higher levels.

Nearly two years into the OTI program, the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) had stalled, and the hopefulness and optimism of the first two years were waning. Then, in December 2004, Sri Lanka's Eastern and Southern shores were struck by the Tsunami that began off the coast of Sumatra following an earthquake. Over 35,000 lives were lost, along with housing and infrastructure. In response, the US government and Congress set up the Tsunami Relief fund, of which OTI received $20 million, in addition to several million in Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) funds for immediate cleanup after the Tsunami. Because OTI was already operating in the hardest hit areas, it was in an excellent position to make effective use of the

special funds, even though the additional $20 million meant a five fold increase in budget, which had to be obligated within two years. More staff was needed, a third regional office was opened, and eventually OTI strategy and procedures for grant making were reoriented toward spending the funds.

OTI made an enormous effort to provide Tsunami relief and rehabilitation while retaining its emphasis on building support for peace. For a brief time, it was hoped that the Tsunami would bring all sides together again to manage the relief and rehabilitation effort, thereby rekindling hope and trust necessary for the peace process to get back on track. This did not happen, and eventually the need to obligate Tsunami funds for physical infrastructure, livelihoods, and rehabilitation became the dominant theme for OTI in the closing six months of its tenure in Sri Lanka.

General Conclusions

1. The OTI program in Sri Lanka, by making 645 grants throughout most of the country under the control of the Sri Lankan government, did serve to demonstrate and reinforce the US Government's foreign policy commitment to support a negotiated peace settlement. By its location in many conflict affected zones, OTI demonstrated an "on the ground" presence and ability to promote understanding of the requirements of a negotiated settlement, produced more favorable attitudes towards peace at the local level, and provided a wide variety of material benefits to populations woefully underserved by their own government or by foreign donors. Moreover, OTI gave the US Embassy valuable knowledge and understanding of local conditions in the areas where it worked, a value that could not be provided by any other US entity. In terms of OTI's mandate to 'be political,' these benefits to US policy may be sufficient enough to justify the program and no further evaluative comment may be needed. OTI did what it does best – moved quickly, made grants in precarious environments, and promoted participation and peace, while avoiding the risk of grantee financial impropriety and fraud. When the Tsunami hit, OTI was there. Although Tsunami relief and rehabilitation with Supplemental Funds forced OTI into a very different mode of operation, it was able to adjust and carry out the US commitment to provide direct assistance and rehabilitative support to the affected areas. No other US organization was in a position to do this.

2. Grants are the key means by which OTI expects to have impact. The grant obligation rate, or "burn rate" is an important measure used by OTI to monitor its own performance. For this reason, there is considerable pressure to make grants, especially when the OTI budget increased substantially due to the response to the Tsunami. This pressure falls on all levels of OTI organization, but especially on the Program Development Officers (PDOs), whose job it is to find suitable grantees and develop the terms of each grant. As shown in the findings, PDOs felt that the pressure to make grants made it difficult to develop a more studied and interactive dialogue with promising grantees. OTI needs to consider ways to balance the pressure to make grants with a more programmatic or strategic approach to achieving its objectives.

3. The OTI program in Sri Lanka has produced important benefits to the language of peace, and to the development of assets for peace in terms of trained personnel, strengthened leadership groups, and demonstrable attitudinal and behavioral change among the thousands of persons affected by the 645 grants at the national and local level. The most visible impacts have occurred in those communities where OTI managed to vertically focus its grant activities into an integrated and multi-faceted grant partnership. In addition to these changes, OTI's contribution to livelihoods, local infrastructure, and in some cases, local quality of life has been substantial.

4. OTI responded to the challenge of the Tsunami and the post Tsunami rehabilitation period with commitment, ingenuity and the effective use of its unique capacity "on the ground" in the hardest hit areas. Constrained by the terms of the Tsunami Supplemental appropriation, OTI did its best to retain its original mandate. Ultimately the need to program Tsunami funding resulted in a major redirection of OTI's program.

5. In its limited capacity and role OTI can not be successful in building a 'critical mass' of political support for peace sufficient to prevent the deterioration of the peace process. Nevertheless, despite the negative trends that were emerging by 2004, during the second year of the OTI program, its local level grant making and national media and cultural campaigns certainly planted future seeds as well as supported other local forces who worked toward peace and resumption of genuine negotiation

6. OTI did not invest great efforts or planning in building or linking together viable networks and coalitions of leaders at the local level who were prepared to give voice to what almost all agree is a widespread desire for peace on the part of most Sri Lankan residing in the OTI zones of influence.

7. OTI did not succeed, or pay much attention to promoting advocacy or building support for "pressuring" elite decision-makers to provide the political support to a negotiated settlement. An open question is whether a "bottom-up" approach to peace building could have had much impact as conditions in Sri Lanka deteriorated. Much of the evidence gathered in this evaluation points to causal factors that reside with policies and vested interests at levels quite beyond what could be touched by OTI's programs. Similarly, most interviewees and OTI respondents do not believe that local hostility is currently the cause of sectarian conflict. A substantial majority of OTI staff, 68 percent, either agree or strongly agree that "the only solution to the conflict is some sort of federal or decentralized structure that gives autonomy and local self governance to the Tamil areas." Unless the political and governmental leadership on both sides returns to the premises of the CFA, it is unlikely that any foreign donor program, including OTI, can have much impact. After all, OTI is the *Office of Transition Initiatives.*

   Where there is no "transition," OTI's initiatives cannot be expected to turn the tide.

I. The Purpose of OTI's Sri Lanka Program

The Sri Lanka Transition Initiative (SLTI) program was launched in February 2003, with the purpose of supporting peace talks between the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The United States Government (USG) was supportive of the peace process through multiple agents, of which the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) was an important implementer. Among the United States' foreign policy interests in Sri Lanka were fighting terrorism, helping Sri Lanka move to a more stable and developed society, and reducing the potential for intra-state conflict in the region. US policy also forbade any contact with members or affiliates of the LTTE, a USG designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.

OTI's objective for SLTI was to generate greater support at the local level for a negotiated peace settlement to end the longstanding internal conflict. From the program's inception, OTI's ability to provide on-the-ground, rapidly dispensed grant assistance and hands-on management was a crucial factor in the ability to focus OTI's effort at the local level. This focus had special emphasis on conflict affected areas, especially where conflict had promoted local level communal and sectarian violence in the previous decades. Other programs were in place to provide support to US policy at the national political and governmental level, including The Asia Foundation (TAF) and the Academy for Educational Development (AED) programs, both supported by USAID.

II. Background

SLTI began on February 22, 2003, following the historic signing of the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) between the GoSL and the LTTE with the goal of ending more than 20 years of civil war in Sri Lanka. From the early 1980s until 2003, this territorial and political conflict had claimed the lives of 65,000 people and had spawned intractable economic, political, and socio-cultural institutions that perpetuated destructive dynamics. The complexity of the Sri Lankan conflict prohibits any simple characterization of its actors, issues, or proposed solutions. The current and root causes of this conflict are multifaceted and in some ways have become part of the intractable dynamics of distrust, alienation, and disproportionate allocation of resources. For the purposes of this evaluation and to contextualize OTI's program in Sri Lanka, it is helpful to identify certain features of this conflict that impact any efforts to address it.

The nationalization policies of the 1956 Sinhalese-dominated government are considered one of the roots causes of this conflict. They were enacted in response to the claim that the Tamil minority had disproportionate influence in government and society. The result of these policies was the creation of a "Sinhala majority state." The centralized economic, political, religious, and cultural institutions were created and maintained to ensure the domination of a "majority identity."

The militarization of the conflict by both the government and LTTE has produced a sub-culture of political violence and insecurity in all aspects of life. Politics of fear has become a norm in the public sphere in Sri Lanka (marked by human rights violations, calls for emergency regulations, widespread censorship, etc.). After 20 years of active civil war, there is a reality of

"ethnic separation," especially in areas with the highest levels of conflict namely the North and the Northeast.

Another difficulty facing peace-building efforts is the intra-group conflicts and schisms among the three major Sri Lankan identity groups – the Sinhala (the majority), the Tamils and the Muslims. For example the Sinhala majority is divided along political ideologies, urban versus rural identifications and between factions of the traditional ruling elite. The Tamils are divided by caste, religious differences, regional divisions (i.e. the North and East divide), and between pro-LTTE/separatists versus integrationists/pro-government. Lastly, the Muslims face residential loyalties between the North, East and South, as well as sectarian and clan differences. These intra-group differences have placed serious challenges for cross community mobilization and systematic involvement in democratic processes as well. The segmentation of these communities is often manifested in a high level of communal violence, which is often triggered by elections, allocation of development resources, among other reasons. Considering the aforementioned root causes and consequences of the conflict, it is obvious that it will take more than one peace or ceasefire agreement to transform these conflict institutions into democratic and participatory frameworks.

Nevertheless, the CFA, the initial rounds of talks with Norway's third party facilitator, and the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission[1] (SLMM) generated optimism, and even a euphoric environment among the people on all sides of the conflict. As a result, thousands of Southern Sinhalese managed to visit the Northern and Eastern territories for the first time, major road blocks and checkpoints were removed, and the violence between the LTTE and GoSL significantly declined.

Unfortunately, this public and official optimism and perceived commitment to peace and negotiation began to deteriorate by early 2004 as ceasefire violations increased and the official talks failed to progress significantly toward a comprehensive peace agreement. Then after the sixth round of talks in Hakone, Japan on March 21, 2003, the LTTE suspended its participation. The breakdown of the negotiation and LTTE's Interim Self Governing authority (ISGA) proposal triggered President Chandarika Bandaranaike Kumaratinga to declare a state of emergency, dissolve the government and call for new elections. On April 8, 2004, the new coalition government, including the ultra-nationalist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), rejected the LTTE proposal and took a more critical position toward peace negotiations.

A further factor that demonstrates the difficult environment for peace-building occurred in 2004, and raised the degree of violence in Sri Lanka. Former LTTE Colonel Karuna started a splinter group and began publicly operating in the predominantly Muslim and Tamil Eastern province. Despite the speculation on the economic or personal reasons for this division, the all out military confrontation between LTTE and Karuna in April 2004 resulted in the defection of hundreds of former LTTE fighters from Karuna's group, and Karuna withdrew with a small group of soldiers. Collateral damage from the confrontation led to further displacement of Tamils and Muslims in the area. The Karuna paramilitary group continues to operate in the Eastern area, in spite of

[1]Norway led the SLMM in 2002, but comprised (until very recently when EU members proscribed the LTTE) by other Scandinavian countries e.g. Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. It had two major mandates: to monitor ceasefire violations and address related issues on all levels. (See Asia Foundation Report: Aid, Conflict and Peacebuilding 2002-2005).

LTTE's demand to for it to disarm. This split has contributed to growing levels of extortion, human rights violations, kidnapping, and increased recruitment of child soldiers in the area, especially among the Tamil communities. However, during the interviews for this evaluation, Muslim leaders expressed their concerns that attacks by the Karuna groups on their communities had increased as had the level of instability and insecurity in the area. The Karuna faction's strong presence in Batticaloa and Trincomalee has obviously affected the nature of OTI programming activities.

Then, with the backdrop of the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka, on December 26, 2004, a gigantic Tsunami hit the Sri Lankan shores causing massive loss of life (more than 35,000 people killed) and the destruction of property and the livelihoods of 200,000 people. Muslim and Tamil communities in the conflict zone area of the Northeast – from Mullaitivu down to Amparai – were among those most affected by the Tsunami.

The Tsunami's impact on the country was so destructive that it forced OTI to dramatically alter its strategy for SLTI, according to most of the OTI respondents interviewed. Indeed, much of the discussion in this report will refer to pre- and post-Tsunami programming as illustrative of the event's magnitude and of the subsequent responsibilities (and funding) OTI accepted.

Initially, the Tsunami triggered joint communal responses and generated cross-community relief efforts. However in later developments, due to a process that can be called "ethnicization of the Tsunami" (politicization of Tsunami relief according to sectarian or ethnic groups), Muslim politicians and communities in the East felt excluded from the relief programs, Tamils in the East and North accused the GoSL of reacting slowly in comparison to relief delivered in the South, and the Southern and interior Sinhalese claimed that the East and North was receiving a disproportionate amount of relief aid.[2] The Tsunami relief and reconstruction efforts brought hundreds of new International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) to operate in North and Eastern provinces, which increased competition, added confusion to local communities' priorities, and presented new challenges for OTI's operation in these areas.

The GoSL and the LTTE reached an agreement on joint post-Tsunami Operation Management (PTOM) in June 2005, which was a joint structure for government and the LTTE to administer, coordinate, and receive foreign funds. Afraid that this agreement might lead to interim self-governance and the secession of Tamil Eelam, the JVP left the government in protest of the agreement and legally challenged it through the Supreme Court. In July 2005, the Supreme Court rejected the PTOM agreement based on certain constitutional provisions.

In addition to the disruption caused by the Tsunami, the political climate for OTI's effort to support the peace process was changing. Some observers stated that as early as the governmental elections in April 2004, the momentum for a negotiated settlement had stalled. The elections in November 2005 brought a new President, Mahinda Rajapakse, to power. His victory was attributed to two major factors: 1) JVP support of the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), and 2) LTTE enforcement of an election boycott. The new government did not

[2] The terms ethnicization and politicization of the Tsunami refer to: "Each party saw the Tsunami as an opportunity to strengthen their legitimacy through the control and distribution of resources." (See Asia Foundation Report: Aid, Conflict and Peacebuilding 2002-2005-p.99).

withdraw from the peace talks, but a more hard-line military strategy was adopted. This strategy was based on the assumption that "a harsh counter terrorist campaign, combined with aerial supremacy and conventional ground forces, could seriously weaken the LTTE."[3] Military and paramilitary responses to LTTE attacks (45 government personnel were killed in November and December 2005) took place. In Trincomalee in January 2006, five Tamil students were killed on the beach, and in Batticaloa a pro-LTTE paramilitary leader was killed in a church. Despite these killings, talks in Geneva on cease fire arrangements were renewed in February 2006, even as fighting continued in the East during 2006 and early 2007. The conflict resulted in an additional 150,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), which added to the hundreds of thousands who were affected by the Tsunami.

As a result of the continued deterioration in security and the collapse of the peace talks, OTI faced new realities on the ground as early as the beginning of 2005, especially in Batticaloa, Trincomalee, and Amparai areas. For example, in Trincomalee the build up of tension broke out in violence in April 2006 following an LTTE bomb in the market that killed five people. At least 19 Tamils were killed and businesses were burned by the different Sinhalese riot groups and an LTTE suicide bomber blew herself up in the entrance to the military camp. The Sri Lankan Air Force responded in its first air strike since 2001 in the Eastern Sampoor region. The fighting and bombardment continued in the Trincomalee area, even during the field visit of the evaluation team. It is obvious that the above conditions have implications for staff safety and program design and implementation, and made it very challenging for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs and INGOs, both peace and development) to operate in this area.

The current environment, as reported by the interviewees, is characterized by further deterioration in human rights (abductions and political killings), and increased attacks on and suspicion of NGOs and INGOs that publicly support peace and/or negotiations. Blacklisting journalists and peace activists was cited as a fear-generating tool used by certain elements in the South and North. By the end of 2006, the public opinion and space to work for peace, security, and human rights had significantly contracted and many NGO representatives reported difficulties organizing activities that support peace.

Finally, while the United States was firmly committed to supporting the peace process, the listing of the LTTE as a terrorist organization made the policy dialogue almost impossible. For OTI, this prohibition made strategic programming extremely difficult at the grassroots level, as the LTTE controlled many local communities. Because if this, OTI had to ensure that its grants were not providing benefits to the LTTE, while at the same time attempting to bring diverse groups together. Furthermore, LTTE infiltration of the Tamil population in Trincomalee and elsewhere made it hard for OTI's staff to be absolutely certain they were in compliance with US policy. Ultimately, this difficulty forced OTI to withdraw from grant making efforts in districts controlled directly by the LTTE or, where the movement of goods for grants in Jaffna controlled by the Sri Lanka Army, had to pass through LTTE controlled territory.

[3]"Sri Lanka and the Failure of the Peace Process." International Crisis Group. Asia Report No 124. November 28, 2006. pg 10

III. Scope and Nature of OTI Programs

This section describes the nature and scope of the OTI program in Sri Lanka.

The SLTI Implementation Process

In Sri Lanka, in-kind grants to national and local civil society organizations was one of OTI's primary means for achieving its goals and objectives. Recipients included established NGOs, as well as a variety of Community Based Organizations (CBOs). The grant relationship was initially developed by OTI's Sri Lanka implementing partner (IP), Development Alternatives International (DAI) and their field staff. These staff members are a key component of the OTI program and include Program Development Officers (PDO) who identify and develop the grantee relationship; Grant Managers and Specialists who oversee and engage with the grantee to help implement the project; and the Procurement Officers, responsible for procuring goods and services and making sure these are appropriate and delivered in a timely fashion. The Sri Lankan staff members who filled these jobs were the ones who had the greatest amount of exposure to on-the-ground conditions, and were OTI's interface with grantees and local participants in grant activities.

Although it is difficult to capture one agreed upon model of grant making for SLTI because of its large and complex operation, there are common characteristics of the grants that were identified by both staff and grantees. They include the following:

Photo 1 OTI Grant DAIC572 Performance

- Grants include a process, whereby the grantee and local community participate in identifying and prioritizing needs at a minimum, and also develop the project budget and timeline together; [4]
- Many of the grants comprised community infrastructure components (though to a lesser extent in post-Tsunami grants), i.e. a community gathering, often a Shramadana celebration as a form of mobilizing volunteer labor to clean up, tear down, prepare for construction, or simply celebrate the initiation or completion of a project; and
- Educational or awareness raising efforts, such as media, art, theater, interethnic encounters and trainings. (See above picture).

Furthermore the general OTI operation in Sri Lanka aimed to introduce multiple dimensions of peace-building processes in various forms. When there was a concrete project involving

[4] For an in-kind grant, once the budget and timeline are agreed on, the purchase of supplies, materials, and management of sub contractors is the responsibility of OTI and IP staff. Vendors are paid directly by the IP against receipts and vouchers.

community infrastructure or livelihood, OTI encouraged the incorporation of thematic peace activities such as workshops in conflict management, plays or films as part of the process. For grants that centered on conflict management and peace-building the grant activity often included exchange programs for diverse groups, peace and conflict management training workshops, cultural events, and national festivals.

Prior to the Tsunami, OTI worked mostly with Sri Lankan NGOs and sometimes newly formed CBOs. Grants to INGOs during pre-Tsunami period were infrequent, especially compared to the post-Tsunami grant activity.[5] In this later period, there were many grants to INGOs that were largely connected with the grants made under the Tsunami Supplemental implemented in part by OTI. Most OTI projects were formulated to be implemented quickly, usually within three or four months of grant clearance.

"In kind" grant making

Although there were exceptions in Sri Lanka, especially in the post Tsunami period, cash to implement projects was not given directly to the grantee. In some cases, a Fixed Obligated Grant (FOG) was made whereby OTI would reimburse a vendor against a verified receipt; but for the most part, OTI internalized the management of the grant process. This approach permitted OTI to move quickly without the time usually necessary to follow the protocol of a direct cash grants within a competitive grant making process. In-kind grants also reduced greatly the risk associated with cash grants (especially with regards to financial accountability of the local partner). A third benefit is that it maximized the opportunity for a continuous relationship between the OTI field staff and the grantees. Many grantees liked the in-kind process, saying they were pleased with the quality of what OTI bought and that it relieved them of burdensome grant management responsibilities, and increased the sense that they were in more of a partnership with OTI.

However, during the group interviews and discussions, some grantees expressed concerns regarding the in-kind mechanism. These concerns included the following:

- A sense of undeserved distrust between OTI and the grantee;
- The grant provided no "indirect" for the grantee's overhead costs;
- Grantees had to work with uncoordinated Grant Managers and Procurement Officers;
- OTI failed to deliver goods in a timely manner (especially with agricultural livelihood projects);
- The costs of some goods were too high when bought in Colombo;
- The failure of contractors to listen to or work with local community members; and
- Some of the projects revealed shoddy workmanship, over which the grantee had no control.

Overall, respondents from CBOs were more likely to be pleased with the OTI system; while respondents from more established NGOs were more likely to raise issues and express their

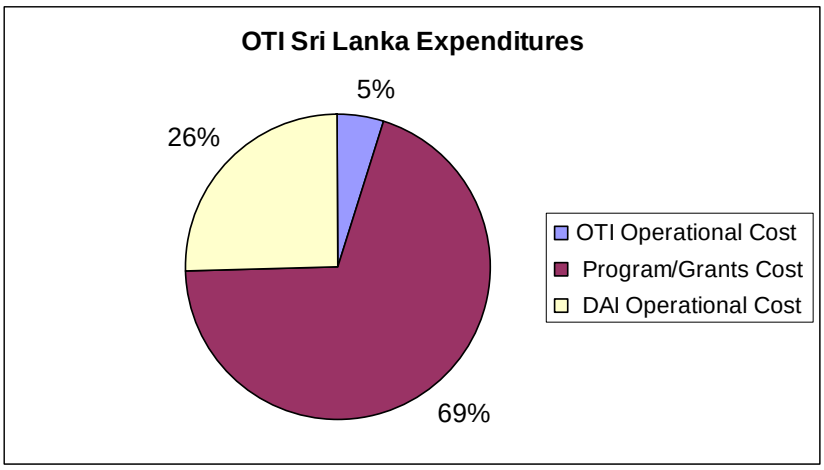
[5] However, two of OTI's first three grants were with international orgs/agencies (IOM and a branch of the School for International Training SIT); British Council and CHF were also pre-Tsunami grantees.

displeasure. One issue that came from both national and local NGOs was that payments to vendors who provided goods and services to the grantee were late or delayed. The grantees complained that they were on the receiving end of the vendor's grievances, when it was not their responsibility.

OTI Sri Lanka Budget

OTI's program in Sri Lanka started in February 2003 with a budget of $6.2 million to generate greater support for a negotiated peace settlement. DAI was and continues to be the primary IP. The SLTI comprises a small-grants program and includes OTI offices in Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital, the eastern towns of Trincomalee and Amparai, and, since the Tsunami of December 2004, in Matara along the southern coast. DAI was awarded two USAID contracts; the first contract was issued under the SWIFT[6] Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC) mechanism (February 2003 to the end of September 2004). This covered roughly the pre-Tsunami phase of SLTI and had a funding ceiling of $6.1 million, of which $5.78 million was expended. The total value of grants made during this contract was $3.7 million, or about 64 percent of the total costs. The second DAI contract runs until March 2008, one year longer than OTI was originally supposed to be in-country. OTI estimates that program expenditures total $16,289,261, through October 2006, of which $10.3 million is for grants under contract. The ratio of grant (or program costs) to operational costs for this contract to date is 63 percent. The contract with Internews Network, which started in February 2006, concludes in mid-August 2007. The total obligation for Internews is $1.3 million. Based on a total of approximately $49 million in funds obligated through January 2007, the overall ratio of grant (or program costs) to operating cost is 65.91 percent. Breaking this down by DAI contract, in the pre-Tsunami phase the ratio is 64 percent and in the post-Tsunami phase, including the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and Supplemental Funds, the ratio increases to 69 percent. This increase could be explained because of the increased average size of post-Tsunami grants. The SLTI budget is illustrated below.

Graph 1: OTI Sri Lanka Total Expenditures 2/25/2003 – 6/30/2007



[6] SWIFT is a pre-competed IQC contract used by OTI to issue Task Orders to one of several awardees, including DAI.

As noted by OTI in their communications with the evaluation team, OTI recognizes that the in-kind grant process does impose additional costs for managing the grants, but they believe the benefits of speed, relatively low financial risk, and the opportunity to have a continuous interaction with the grantee warrants the increased costs.[7]

Distribution of Grant Activity: Pre- and Post-Tsunami

The OTI program can be divided into two general phases: 1) pre-Tsunami with 269 grants totaling $5,900,557 million; and 2) post-Tsunami, including Tsunami relief funds, "Flexible Funds"[8] (Transition Initiatives funds combined with Economic Support Funds or ESF) and Tsunami Supplemental funds accounting for 372 grants for $17,665,829 million.

In SLTI's first phase (February 2003 to October 2004, covering almost the entire period of pre-Tsunami operation), OTI was operating under the three original objectives:

- demonstrate tangible benefits of peace;
- increase the exchange of accurate, balanced information on peace issues; and
- reduce or prevent incidents of violence in conflict-prone communities.

As a result of the mid-term assessment in October 2004 and the internal monitoring and evaluation conducted by OTI staff, the "tangible benefits of peace" objective was dropped largely due to the fact that the Sri Lanka peace process was deadlocked. At this time, the reality on the ground shifted to the point where it became very difficult for OTI and its grantees to make the linkage between their projects and the peace process, which was increasingly being perceived as stuck or failing. Another shift in programming that was adopted in the pre-Tsunami period is related to targeting key public and community leadership positions and investing in an in-depth rather than broad approach that characterized their grant making in the initial phase. This proposed change was due to the findings and recommendations of both the mid-term assessment in October 2004 and an internal monitoring and evaluation report. Both reports proposed this change in order to increase the possibility of "accumulated direct impact" on certain areas of operation and refocus grant making strategies. However, this shift in objectives and strategy was to be carried out with the same type of activities (peacebuilding, livelihood, infrastructure, and media and information dissemination). Obviously, the Tsunami that followed the mid-term assessment altered, at least temporarily, the implementation of these changes in programming in terms of reallocation of funds.

Table 1 demonstrates how grants were distributed by district pre- and post-Tsunami.

[7] Communication with OTI Washington staff, week of February 26, 2007.

[8] These funds are considered "flexible" in comparison to the Tsunami Supplemental funds, which were tied to very specific objectives and program types.

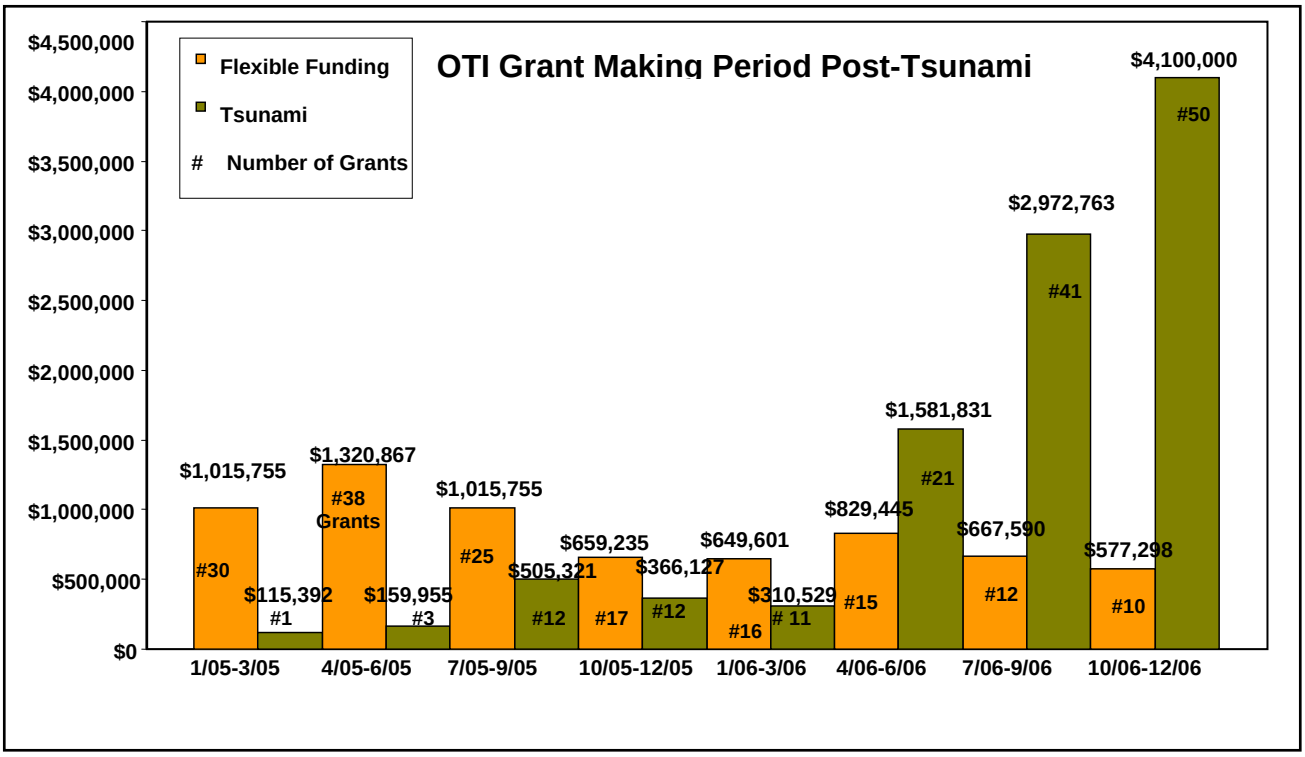
Table 1: Pre- and Post-Tsunami Grants by District

	Pre-Tsunami OTI Grants Disbursed by District		Post-Tsunami OTI Grants Disbursed by District	
District	**# Grants**	**Est. Grant Amt.**	**# Grants**	**Est. Grant Amt.**
Ampara	52	$603,979	82	$2,807,703
Anuradhapura	14	$162,647	22	$743,733
Badulla	4	$73,735	9	$211,999
Batticaloa	22	$241,802	28	$1,021,233
Colombo	N/A	N/A	8	$136,795
Galle	13	$218,369	57	$2,375,750
Gampaha	N/A	N/A	1	$1,973
Hambantota	29	$812,102	70	$2,876,576
Jaffna	21	$675,279	2	$12,656
Kalutara	1	$13,464	3	$14,055
Kandy	1	$15,531	N/A	N/A
Kegalle	1	$5,672	1	$1,689
Kurunegala	N/A	N/A	3	$11,213
Mannar	N/A	N/A	1	$1,689
Matara	28	$425,960	56	$1,925,485
Moneragala	16	$254,119	16	$342,225
National	29	$677,482	31	$1,961,091
Nuwara Eliya	N/A	N/A	1	$1,689
Polonnaruwa	3	$34,018	2	$5,855
Puttalam	18	$381,276	6	$73,659
Ratnapura	8	$212,735	3	$10,329
Trincomalee	66	$966,827	86	$3,225,692
Vavuniya	6	$122,646	3	$74,374
Totals	**332**	**$5,987,643**	**491**	**$17,837,463**

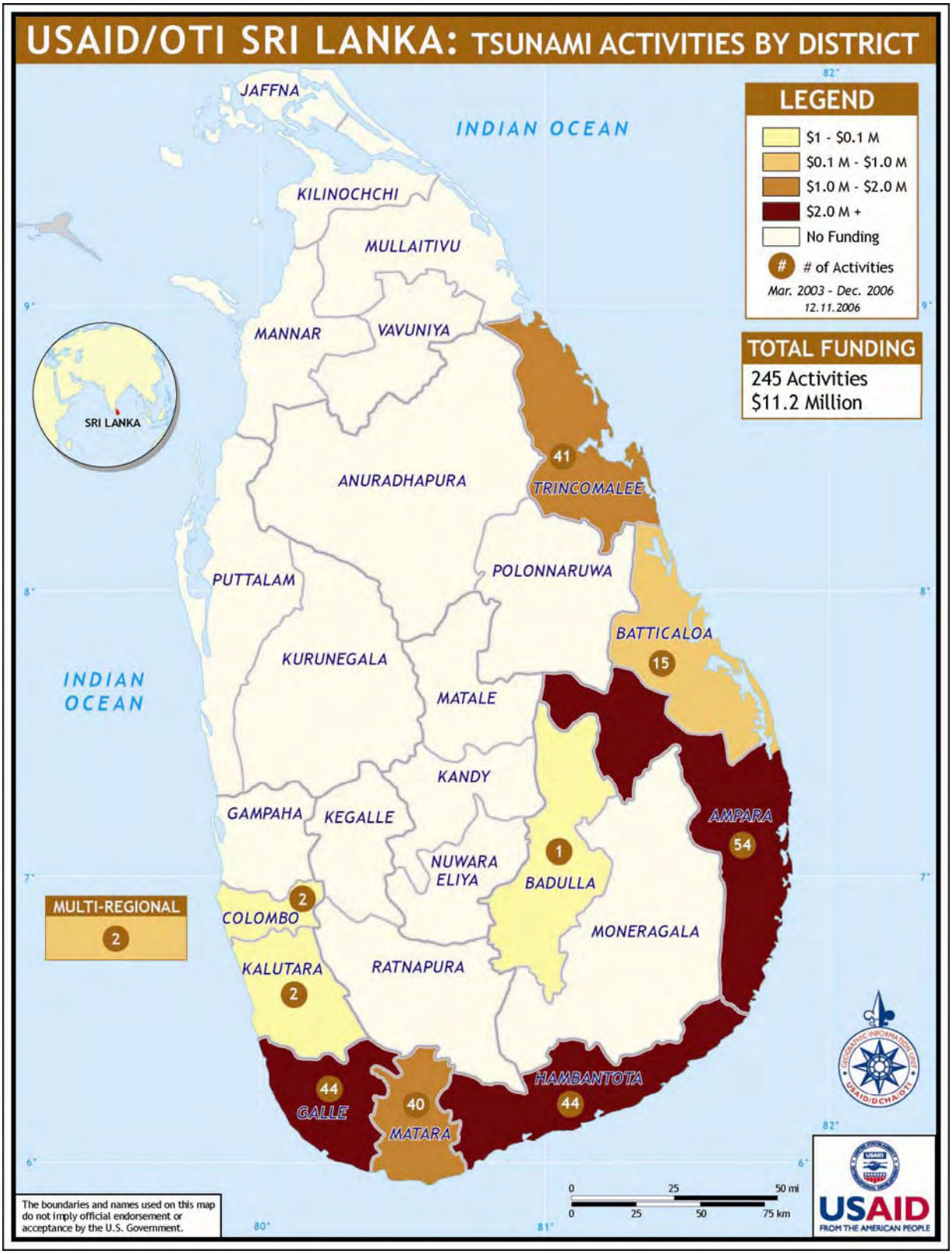
NB. According to the OTI Grant Database as of the end of December 2006, pre-Tsunami grants are defined as grants cleared on or before 12/26/2004. Additionally, the number of grants is double or triple counted for multi-district grants, but the money allocated is divided by the number of districts.

Following the immediate Tsunami relief efforts (March 2005), OTI grant making increased over 2003-2004 levels, but remained focused on using "flexible funds" rather than the Supplemental funds that became available in July 2005. As noted in Graph 2, this pattern continued until June 2006 when a new work plan, employment of infrastructure engineers, additional staff, and a clearer grant making strategy was put in place. As stated by the DAI Chief of Party, a target of $1 million per month in new grant commitments was established. Moreover, as illustrated in Graph 1, with these changes the obligation of funds accelerated dramatically. Map 1 offers a visual complement with the Tsunami funds distributed by district.

Graph 2: OTI Grant Making Post-Tsunami Period Jan 2005 to December 2006



Map 1 – USAID/OTI Tsunami Grants by District



After the Tsunami, OTI was faced with major challenges. First, it wanted to preserve the two objectives it had established at the end of 2004, both relevant to the overall goal of supporting the peace process. Second, it had taken on a four-fold increase in funding, earmarked for different aspects of Tsunami rehabilitation. Furthermore these extraordinary funds that were appropriated by the US Congress had to be spent on rehabilitation and livelihood efforts in the immediate zone of Tsunami impact. Despite these challenges, OTI wanted to retain the integrity of its peace promotion program, for which it still had TI and ESF funds taking on a much larger task of making good use of Tsunami funds not intended by the US Congress for the peace process. Accomplishing these somewhat divergent tasks was very difficult.

As a result, OTI realized that it had to increase staff and add one more field office. Thus the Matara office was operational by May 2005, and an OTI/DAI senior manager was brought from Ache, Indonesia, the epicentre of the Tsunami, to offer consultation on how to speed the implementation of Tsunami funds in October 2005. Finding new staff with appropriate backgrounds for the Matara office, as well as replacing those who left, was very difficult because of the hiring competition with other INGOs.

The expenditure pattern illustrated in Graph 1 for 2005 and early 2006 demonstrates that OTI continued to emphasize grants funded by Flexible Funds, rather than the Tsunami Supplemental. Although the spending rate increased from the pre-Tsunami period, it fell far short of what was needed to meet the requirements of the Supplemental.

Following the previous consultation, the DAI Ache manager arrived in early 2006 to assume control. OTI Sri Lanka Country Representative described the strategic re-direction that took place:

> "A six-month work plan approach was conceived during this period but did not get introduced until February 2 in a full staff meeting with the new DAI Chief of Party. It was at this meeting that the staff revised strategic locations, disallowing any in which Tsunami supplemental funding could not be spent (i.e. inland locations with no ties to the Tsunami through, for example, displacement or economic links, such as Central Camp in Amparai) with the lone exception of Anuradhapura for the Colombo office. Also at that meeting, it was stated by OTI directors that funding straight for Tsunami recovery activities with no obvious peace building link was acceptable. This turned out to be a major strategic statement that was described by the director as an "incredibly liberating pronouncement that bordered on blasphemy for those among the staff who were well versed in the OTI mandate."[9]

By the middle of 2006, the new work plan, combined with the above statement, and the hiring of professional engineers, allowed the OTI staff and offices to begin making significant progress in the obligation and spending rate. However, for many of the staff that were interviewed, it was clear that the assumptions made by OTI regarding the possibility of fully combining peace-building or "OTI processes" with Tsunami relief work were not feasible.[10] In addition to the

[9] Communication from OTI Country Representative for Sri Lanka contained in OTI Comments on the Working Draft of the Evaluation Report, February 26, 2007.

[10] As stated by OTI senior officer:: "some of the assumptions we made in accepting Tsunami earmarked funding just did not hold, most notably the following: 1) that the ceasefire agreement would be respected, and that a joint

deterioration in security, collapse of the peace process, and other factors, there was a new reality in which OTI competed with hundreds of INGOs and billions of dollars that were allocated for the Tsunami aid and relief campaign in Sri Lanka, especially in the conflict affected area.

An average of 50 percent of all SLTI funds in most Tsunami areas (Amparai, Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Galle, and Hambantota) was spent on infrastructure, with the exception of 28 percent in Matara. Infrastructure projects were often more costly in comparison to educational or awareness raising projects. In Colombo, 97 percent of funds were spent mainly on information dissemination due to the fact that access to national and regional media outlets could mainly be operated from the capital area. However many of these media and information dissemination programs were also directed to cover conflict areas and other parts of the island (i.e. television production programs, history of conflict book, etc.).

IV. OTI's Theory of Change

Theoretical Assumptions Underlying the OTI Program

As stated in the Scope of Work for this evaluation, OTI's general purpose in Sri Lanka was to build support at the local level for the Peace Process. OTI's task involved four major elements: 1) build citizen confidence in the peace process; 2) promote changes in the way members of different communities perceived and acted toward each other; 3) help create coalitions and networks of active engagement in cooperative activities that would benefit and reinforce attitudinal and behavioral change toward peace at the individual level; and 4) to create visible and influential networks and expressions of support for the peace process to higher level governmental and political leaders.

According to OTI directors, their activities and strategies were designed to focus on the grassroots and community levels due to the fact that the USAID Mission and several of its partners had already targeted the top elite political decision makers. An assumption of complementarity was made in this case, along with several attempts to coordinate with the partners who worked on Track I and II diplomacy to advance negotiations. In Sri Lanka, the integration of OTI into the already existing USAID Mission (which was supporting other programs on Tracks I and II), led to focusing most of OTI's programmatic attention at the local level, sometimes known as the Track III level of peace-building support. OTI's national programs were defined more as multi-district cultural and media efforts to strengthen public discourse for peace, rather than programs targeting national decision-makers and national level institutions.

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mechanism between the GoSL and LTTE would resurrect and propel forward a stillborn peace process; 2) that USAID would, like other donors and implementers, ultimately adopt a "district-wide" definition of "Tsunami-affected," allowing OTI to spend earmarked funds anywhere within the six districts including and between Trincomalee and Galle; and 3) that DAI would have until the end of its contract, in March '08, to finish programming the Tsunami money. The additional complicating factor here is the clear feedback from OTI/W after the May 2005 program performance review, and the earnestness with which the OTI/SL team accepted the challenge, to ensure that the Tsunami earmark was being spent in a way that not only supported recovery but also had a tangible impact on OTI's core peace-support mandate. The continued expenditure of flexible funding during the second half of 2005, some of it in locations well off the coast, demonstrates the ultimately ineffective effort to "do it all."

Following the abovementioned modification of objectives after the October 2004 program performance review, OTI continued to implement and fund similar types of activities (infrastructure and livelihood, etc.) as before the assessment. However, instead of explaining them as a "peace dividends," the OTI Country Representative explained that they began placing the emphasis "on participation and collaboration across group lines to identify shared priorities and jointly manage projects addressing the same, i.e. devolved/decentralized decision making and resource allocation in action." The same review also led to a reduction in diffuse grant making and a tighter focus on multiple grants in selected strategic areas.[11] (See Annex 1 for the OTI program timeline for an overview)

After the Tsunami disaster of December 26, 2004, and following the urgent need to provide relief and cleanup in the first months of 2005, OTI maintained its revised strategic objectives that were decided in October 2004, and attempted to maintain a peace and empowerment driven grant making strategy well into 2006. Whether this was feasible given other pressures (i.e. the new Tsunami reality) will be discussed in the findings and conclusions section of this report.

With regards to the theory of change or framework that guided the OTI work in Sri Lanka, very few representatives were able to articulate a clear rationale for strategic intervention, the nature of activities carried out, and how the relationships made through the various grant making mechanisms affected change in local, regional, or national levels. The evaluation team was able to gather from the interviewees who articulated their views on this issue of framework for change in Sri Lanka several program assumptions and hypotheses that are interrelated. They also underscore OTI efforts of cross-community relationship building corresponding with its strategic objectives.

It should be noted that due to the context of the Tsunami, the collapse of the peace process, and the nature of the Sri Lankan conflict, OTI constantly adjusted its objectives and priorities in an attempt to be responsive to the reality on the ground. This "evolving strategy" approach conveyed the perception that there was an absence of a single comprehensive theory of the OTI program in Sri Lanka. The following is an attempt to capture the basic assumptions – that evolved over time – derived from the interviews and documents.[12]

Five hypotheses make up the theory of change of OTI in Sri Lanka. First, the "bottom-up" hypothesis is that OTI's main contribution was to promote a positive public acceptance of peace, so that when and if there was even an opportunity, the Sri Lankan people would supply the political support necessary. This was referred to by some in OTI as the "eventual peace

[11] Several OTI Senior Staff respondents told us that they were concerned that 'they were not connecting the dots' through their 2003-2004 program, and although they were making grants in some obviously key areas such as Trincomalee and Anaradhapura, a more focused geo-strategic approach was needed.

[12] In comments submitted by OTI on the first draft of this report, OTI asserted several times that OTI is "tactical, not ideological." It is not clear whether "ideology" refers to a "theory of change", which is of course not an ideological statement but a set of assumptions and hypotheses about the most effective way to bring about a desired change. All foreign assistance projects, explicitly or implicitly, are based on a theory of change of some kind, i.e. if we do x, than y will happen. Another interpretation of the statement that OTI is a "tactical" organization is that "strategy" is decided on elsewhere, and, once established, it is OTI's job to use its "tactics" to meet the strategic objectives set by others. If OTI is purely tactical, then it need not bother with developing its own strategies.

referendum" hypothesis. This hypothesis was particularly relevant during the period of optimism surrounding the Cease Fire Agreement (CFA) in 2003 and early 2004.

The second hypothesis may be termed the "passive calming" hypothesis. Here the prediction was that through OTI programs, communities in previously hostility-prone areas would be much more reluctant to engage in violent sectarian violence when an incident occurs.

The third hypothesis is a step up from "passive calming" to "active containment." Here the prediction was that through OTI programs to promote linkages, there would emerge more or less organized networks, committees, and coalitions of local leaders who would act to mitigate conflict or to prevent it from spreading to a more general inter-communal fight.

The fourth hypothesis predicts that through OTI programs local people would be empowered to undertake further initiatives within and between diverse groups, and find ways to actively advocate by expressing support for peace to local and, given the opportunity, higher levels of governmental authority and political leadership. This hypothesis depended to a considerable degree on a perception of responsiveness and relevance of higher levels of authority to local concerns and voices.

The fifth hypothesis predicts that through OTI support for improving the quality, timeliness, objectivity and relevance of various media based information flows, people would be better informed and less prone to act on the basis of rumor, fear-mongering, or deliberate misinformation.

Each of these hypotheses is interrelated and, taken together, constitute different dimensions of a theory that would, or could, inform and *drive* OTI's grant making strategy.

Based on these hypotheses, OTI's grant making strategy would have the following elements and expected results:

- Empowerment of beneficiaries through open and participatory decision making consultations about the public goods/benefits that the grant will support;
- Favorable individual attitudinal and behavioral change toward other communities through face-to-face contact and interaction with members of other communities;
- Diverse groups collaborating together to produce a public benefit (material or cultural);
- Increased Awareness and Understanding of peace building/keeping requirements through training and dialogue practice;
- Coalition, Network or other forms of organized efforts to mediate, resolve or prevent outbreaks of sectarian conflict and violence;
- More responsive and committed local government through structured and constructive dialogue, training, and interaction with local government and political leaders on issues pertaining to peace and the public good; and
- Enhanced objective information and knowledge of issues and events pertaining to peace and conflict through more professional media reporting, presentation of alternative views, and localization of information flows.

The above might be perceived as an ideal type of framework for change through grant making, nevertheless it would allow program managers to consciously make the necessary linkages and articulate their assumptions about the desired changes through OTI's program in Sri Lanka. It also provides evaluators with a model against which to assess the actual effectiveness and impact of the OTI program. As outlined above, this "model" is consistent with the terms used to describe OTI's purposes, objectives and processes in the evaluation SOW (See Annex 2 for the model).[13]

V. Scope of Work and Methods

The evaluation team consisted of Dr. Richard N. Blue and Dr. Mohammed Abu-Nimer. Dr. Blue, the Team Leader, has extensive methodological, management and direct experience in evaluating USAID programs. He served as head of the USAID Office of Evaluation during his Foreign Service career. Since 1996, he has participated in more than 30 evaluations as an independent consultant. Dr. Abu-Nimer is a Professor of Peace Studies at American University. As the author of several widely read works on the subject, he is an internationally recognized expert in the field, and has been providing training and technical advice in Sri Lanka since 1996. He is also an experienced evaluator.

The evaluation contract and Scope of Work (SOW) were finalized December 11, 2006. Work began on December 18 in Washington, DC with interviews of staff of OTI and its implementing partner, DAI, along with other USG officials familiar with Sri Lanka.[14]

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[13] Based on the kind of strategic hypotheses described in Section III, we have prepared an 'ideal type' grant making 'checklist' that might be used to guide grant making in the Sri Lankan situation. Of course no actual situation will meet all the criteria set out, but such a model could be useful in training Program Development Officers and in assisting with the Monitoring and Evaluation process. See Annex 2.

[14] The timing of this evaluation was less than propitious both with respect to preparation and actual field work. Discussions between Social Impact and OTI about the Scope of Work had begun in November, with a suggestion that OTI Sri Lanka administer a questionnaire to random sample of grantees prior to arrival of the team. OTI rejected this. Then, with the Christmas holiday, it was difficult for OTI Sri Lanka to do much advance planning with the evaluation team. The team's arrival in early January imposed a considerable burden on all to schedule grantee appointments. OTI also states the schedule was presented to the evaluators "in a way that allowed them to participate in the decisions about where to go and who to see." This comment does not represent the reality. The team had sent advance lists of randomly selected grants prior to arrival. On arrival the team quickly understood that doing individual grantee interviews in situ could not be done for a variety of reasons. Instead, groups of grantees would be interviewed at secure locations convenient for the evaluation team. Because of the shrunken timeframe, the evaluation team lacked the site and grant specific knowledge to participate in the schedule, leaving the ultimate selection process to OTI. The team does not assert that there was any attempt to mislead the evaluation, but the haste in which the schedule was assembled, the security and bad weather combined produced a less than desired schedule from the evaluation point of view. Much of this was due to timing and to the time allowed. More advance work in November and early December would have led to more thoughtful schedule. With this time crunch in mind, a pre-evaluation survey led by the M&E officer could have been implemented through the field offices to receive more in-depth answers and better data. In fact, the M&E officer had already developed an approach which could have been replicated. In comments on the first draft, OTI said they assumed there was enough time given to the evaluation based on the field work done in an evaluation earlier of OTI Liberia. This was an unfortunate assumption. The OTI program grants in Liberia were uniformly replicated in Year II of the program in a country of 3.5 million people, of which a good percentage live in and around the capitol, making it possible to make inferences from a small sample of grants. The Sri Lanka program consists of 645 widely varying grants at the national and local level, operating in 20 districts in a country of 22 million persons. The program changed directions several times due to imposed external events and internal reviews, making it extremely difficult to generalize to the whole

Field work was conducted in Sri Lanka for 14 days beginning January 4 and continued through January 20, 2007. Ten of the 14 days were spent visiting OTI field offices and locations in Anaradhapura, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Amparai, Galle and Matara. The team also visited Internews Media Houses in Amparai and Matara.

The US Ambassador met with the evaluation team, as did the USAID Mission Director. An exit briefing was provided by the evaluation team for USAID Mission staff, including OTI, on January 17, 2007, and another for the OTI Washington staff on January 26, 2007. The draft report was submitted February 12, and the final on March 9, 2007.

The methodology used to answer the Scope of Work questions was a mixed method using a modified random over-selection of OTI grantees combined with extensive document review, analysis of the OTI Grant Database, key informant interviews with OTI staff and other stakeholders, and a structured questionnaire prepared by the evaluation team and administered to OTI PDOs and other field staff.

Photo 2 Grantee Group Interview 1/7/07

The team conducted interviews with approximately 140 grantees drawn from lists prepared initially by the evaluators and adjusted by OTI depending on availability and local security and travel conditions. (See Annex 3 for interview list) With some exceptions, most interviews comprised as little as four to a maximum of eight grantees, ranging in size from four persons to 23 in one instance. One-on-one interviews were not possible. To reduce the travel time for the evaluators, the grantees traveled to the team for meetings. Meetings were held at OTI field offices or other sites convenient for the evaluators. For group interviews, a common set of general questions was developed in an effort to give structure to the discussions. While preferred, rigorous focus group methods were not feasible. A few site visits to locations where OTI had provided material support were also made. The team benefited from the findings and analysis of the OTI Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer, who had developed a simple triangulation (three sources to confirm) approach to assessing impact. Had there been time to meet with each grantee separately, especially at the location of the grantee's OTI activities, it would have been possible to follow this approach.[15]

program, or to any well defined subset of programs. The evaluation team struggled to find a solution to this problem, including using the OTI Grant Database.

[15] In retrospect, it is possible that insisting on one-on-one site visits with the grantee and the local community or group of beneficiaries/participants, especially for community impact grants, would have been a better methodology. This would have resulted in a smaller number of evaluated grants, but would have vastly improved the quality of the information gained. More time for preparation would have permitted both OTI and the team to develop taxonomy of grants patterns, which would have permitted the use of a stratified random sampling of the most important

With the assistance of the OTI M&E Officer, a confidential survey was administered to a subset of 26 OTI/DAI field staff and to four OTI Regional Office Directors, to which 19 people, or 63 percent, responded. Seventeen of the 19 respondents were Sri Lankan nationals and the remaining two were expatriate field office directors. Twelve out of the 19 respondents, or 62 percent, had been employed at OTI/DAI for 18 months or longer. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: part I asked respondents to estimate the importance of key external factors in influencing the peace process; part II asked them to estimate the impact of OTI grants on changing attitudes and other behaviors relevant to building support for peace; and part III asked the respondents to rate each of the grants in their portfolio, past and present, in terms of the performance of the grantee and the impact of the grant (See Annex 4 for the SLTI survey responses).

With the assistance of the OTI Washington staff, extensive use was made of the OTI Grant Database, as well as the evaluation work and assistance provided by the OTI Sri Lanka M&E Officer. Budget tables for the final report were developed by the OTI Washington Program Office.

It is important to note that there are several important weaknesses in the evidentiary base for this report. Most of the first hand data is derived from qualitative answers in group interviews. The team was unable to conduct surveys using a random selection of grantees or beneficiaries, nor was the team able to make many actual site visits to where OTI grants were implemented. Comparative analysis except within OTI program categories and timeframes was not feasible, thereby making the attribution of observed changes to OTI efforts very difficult. Other weaknesses included lack of time to empirically verify assertions of impact and of positive or negative results provided by OTI grantees in group meetings.[16]

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of this evaluation was to determine the standards by which to judge the value of the OTI program, and the goals and objectives by which the program might be measured and held accountable. The team was guided by the language of the Scope of Work that makes the following statements about the purpose and objectives of the OTI program:

1. SLTI "started in February 2003 with ***the purpose of supporting peace talks…***"
2. "through ***generating greater support for a negotiated peace settlement…***"
3. OTI sought to: ***increase awareness and understanding on transition issues…***
4. ***…change attitudes sustaining the conflict through information dissemination, advocacy, dialogue and debate…***

categories. In 10 days of field work by two evaluators, it may have been possible to do 40 more in-depth assessments, rather than meeting with 140 grantees in large groups.

[16] OTI comments on the draft evaluation report raise serious questions about the validity and usefulness in this evaluation of the thematic categories used to organize grants in the OTI Grant Database. Also, OTI has questioned the utility or validity of findings from the questionnaire responses administered to Program Development Officers and Grant Officers employed by OTI's implementing partner, DAI. The team has used these data sources in an effort to offer findings that are more representative and systematic than are available from group interviews or from the relatively few local staff interviews the team was able to conduct. The alternative would have been to rely on information gathered from groups of grantees and from OTI leadership.

5. ***…mobilize and link peace constituencies through activities promoting inclusive, collaborative decision making and resource allocation at the local level.***

In presenting answers to the specific questions posed, the team kept the above purposes and objectives very much in the forefront while remaining fully aware that many external factors influenced what OTI did and was able to accomplish. These factors are taken into account in the evaluation. However, the standards set out by OTI of supporting the peace process, increasing awareness, changing attitudes and means for doing so, including harnessing media, cultural expression, promoting dialogue, debate and advocacy, mobilizing and linking peace constituencies constitute a clear expression of a strategy for utilizing OTI resources to support the peace process. It is these purposes and strategy that set the standards for this evaluation and against which OTI's performance must be evaluated.

Scope of Work Questions

The Scope of Work for this evaluation focuses on questions related to targeting, responsiveness to changing conditions, effectiveness and impact and are found in Figure 1. (See Annex 5 for full Scope of Work).[17]

[17] Additional Scope of Work questions for required Annex 6 are:

a) Did the program support U.S. foreign policy objectives? If yes, did it accomplish this by helping local partners advance peace and democracy?
b) Did OTI work on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs?
c) Did the program adapt, as necessary, to ongoing political developments/milestones relevant to the premises of the OTI program in Sri Lanka? Put another way, did OTI's program seizing critical windows of opportunity?
d) Did the program, within 18 months of start up, on February 25, 2003, have a clear strategy and plan for continuation of activities/actors that were relevant to the specific objectives of the OTI program in Sri Lanka?
e) Does the evaluation find significant impact in strengthening democratic processes and/or increasing momentum for peaceful resolution of conflict?

Figure 1: OTI Sri Lanka Scope of Work Questions

The evaluation should address the following questions:

1. Were areas of programmatic focus appropriate and effective for OTI? Below are a list of focus areas that should be addressed; however this question is not restricted to only these topics:
   - Geographic, such as which regions, which locations within each region.
   - Social strata, such as Track I/II/III, key people vs. more people, Colombo vs. districts.
   - Types of activities, such as media and info dissemination, conflict mitigation, community infrastructure, livelihoods.
   - Strategic framework, assessing the overarching goal and the two sub-objectives.
2. Was the program appropriately flexible and responsive to shifting political and contextual issues? The impact of the December 2004 Tsunami and OTI's response should be addressed.
3. In communities where numerous small-grant activities were supported over an extended period of time (i.e. strategic locations), is there evidence of a significant impact related to OTI's overall aims and objectives in Sri Lanka?
4. Were media activities used appropriately and effectively to further OTI's overall goals and objectives?
5. What elements of OTI's strategy can support or enhance the USAID Mission's ability to effectively design and implement conflict-sensitive programming?

VI. Findings

In this section, the team addresses the questions posed in the Scope of Work with some effort to refine and elaborate those questions where relevant. Before addressing the SOW questions, one general finding, the extent that SLTI supported the US policy commitment, should be noted.

US Policy Commitment Supported by SLTI

The OTI program was highly valued by the US Ambassador and other senior US Mission staff, including the USAID Mission Director. For the Embassy, OTI's positive grant making activities in conflict areas were a visible and sometimes dramatic manifestation of the US commitment to the peace process. Efforts in extremely difficult environments by OTI to program grants in Jaffna and Trincomalee, for instance, were unique and gave the US Ambassador an opportunity to see first hand the situation in the North and East, as well as to learn what was going from observing the OTI field operations.

Sub-Conclusion

By moving quickly and opportunistically, OTI established a US government presence where one had not existed. Through its grant program it opened up avenues of discourse and relationship building, as well as demonstrating the US commitment to peace in a way that materially improved the lives of many communities. In so doing, it served the US national interest effectively and appropriately.

SOW Questions

1. Were the areas of programmatic focus "appropriate and effective" for OTI?

To address the programmatic focus, it is important to note that during 2003 to 2004, OTI Sri Lanka had three objectives mentioned in previous sections and paraphrased here: 1) bringing the benefits of peace to citizens; 2) increasing awareness and understanding of transition issues; and 3) bringing diverse groups together to cooperate in the common good. To achieve the objectives, OTI engaged in a wide range of grant-supported activities. The thematic structure of OTI's grant making program as implemented by Colombo and the three other regional offices is shown in Table 2.[18]

Table 2: Number of Grants and their Values by Focus and Offices

	Colombo office		**Amparai office**		**Matara office**		**Trincomalee office**	
Focus of grant	# Grant	Value	# Grant	Value	# Grant	Value	# Grant	Value
Civil society support	7	$156,892	1	$59,486	12	$257,355	5	$314,549
Civil-Military Relations	1	$216,980						
Community Impact Activities	147	$5,397,114	128	$4,338,958	71	$3,916,980	80	$2,699,622
Conflict Management	28	$444,083	31	689,051	8	$176,469	33	$811,650
Election Processes	2	$10,845	3	$8,.216	3	$30,213	3	$134,402
Ex-Combatant Reintegration	1	$72,226					2	$2,198
Media	120	$2,332,715	15	$269,590	15	$269,590	3	$98,458
Transparency / good governance	40	$367,165	2	$35,296	2	$35,296	1	$44,715
TOTAL	346	$8,998,021	192	$5,274,645	111	$4,685,903	127	$4,105,594

Table 2 illustrates that of all OTI offices the most spending and largest number of projects involved community impact activities, which also included infrastructure and livelihood projects. Media was directed mainly from the Colombo office. At the national level, OTI mostly focused on information and media programs. Out of the 346 grants made in Colombo, 35 percent of these grants focused on information and media which were, for the most part, multi-district in nature and not targeting any one district.

[18] Unless otherwise noted, all tables and maps were constructed by the OTI Country Program Manager using the OTI Grant Database for Sri Lanka. The themes used by the database to organize grants are not perfect, and may mask multiple dimensions and are, to some extent, arbitrary, according to OTI. Hence, the information is presented with caution, but also on the assumption that someone knowledgeable decided that the theme selected for coding the grant represented the main or most important theme. OTI is working to make information in the database a more accurate reflection of the realities of each of its programs. Doing so will serve the interests of OTI management as well as those charged with evaluation of OTI programs.

Trincomalee, Amparai, and Colombo issued 92 grants (14 percent) for conflict management, while the Matara office, which opened after the Tsunami in May 2005, did relatively few grants (eight) on this theme. The election process was a theme that received only a few grants (not in Trincomalee) to assist in preparing the country for the presidential and the parliamentary elections. The transparency/good governance programs were mainly conducted out of Colombo with very little investment in this theme in the regional offices (1-2 grants each with average of $38,000). The programs on the relationship between civilians and the military were only done out of Colombo with one grant. The regional offices did not deal with this theme.

After the Tsunami, OTI's involvement with local government bodies increased largely as a result of the need to support larger scale infrastructure projects using Supplemental Funds. Interviews with municipal leaders in Kalmanai, Kathunkudy, and several smaller constituencies produced evidence that OTI's involvement was welcomed and appreciated, primarily because of the straightforward and relatively quick manner in which OTI operates. The main concern of these local political leaders was to produce material improvements for their citizens, some of whom were from diverse communities. When asked about their priority for future activities most interviewees identified economic development and infrastructure projects. For example in one community in Central camp (Amparai District) where OTI invested in building several bus stops and one station, a fence around the school, and a hospital renovation, beneficiaries and grantees confirmed that there were more infrastructure projects that needed to be done. When queried about the "peace-building" purpose of these grants, respondents indicated they were aware of OTI's interest, explaining that bus terminals, markets, community halls, etc, were used by people from all of the communities, therefore the rehabilitation of these facilities would continue to allow people from different communities to interact. In one community where OTI was funding the construction of a bus station and market rehabilitation, the Municipal Chairman mentioned that contributions to peace like this were largely passive. He said their next project would be a solid waste management project involving his town and a Tamil majority community nearby. Its success would depend on the two communities actually working together for a common benefit.

OTI leadership in the field reported that they had become increasingly concerned that the process of making grants during the 2003 and early 2004 period had produced much that was of value on a grant-by-grant basis, but whether these grants were actually "building support for peace" was an open question. "Were we connecting the dots?" was the description of one senior field person. As the M&E officer began to collect data on the impact of different kinds of grants, evidence began to mount that more work needed to be done to focus the program and concentrate resources. The intensive internal review in the fall of 2004 was followed by a new, more focused strategy in October 2004. This strategy sharpened the delineation of strategic areas, dropped the objective relating to "benefits of peace," and encouraged more in-depth clustering of grant activities within the strategic zones.

Sub-Conclusion

From 2003 to October 2004, OTI's program was opportunistic and largely indifferent to any particular kind of product produced by the grants; in other words, whether it was an irrigation ditch, a tank, or a tube well was not at issue. What was important was that grantees and participants underwent a "process" appropriate and effective with respect to OTI's objectives.

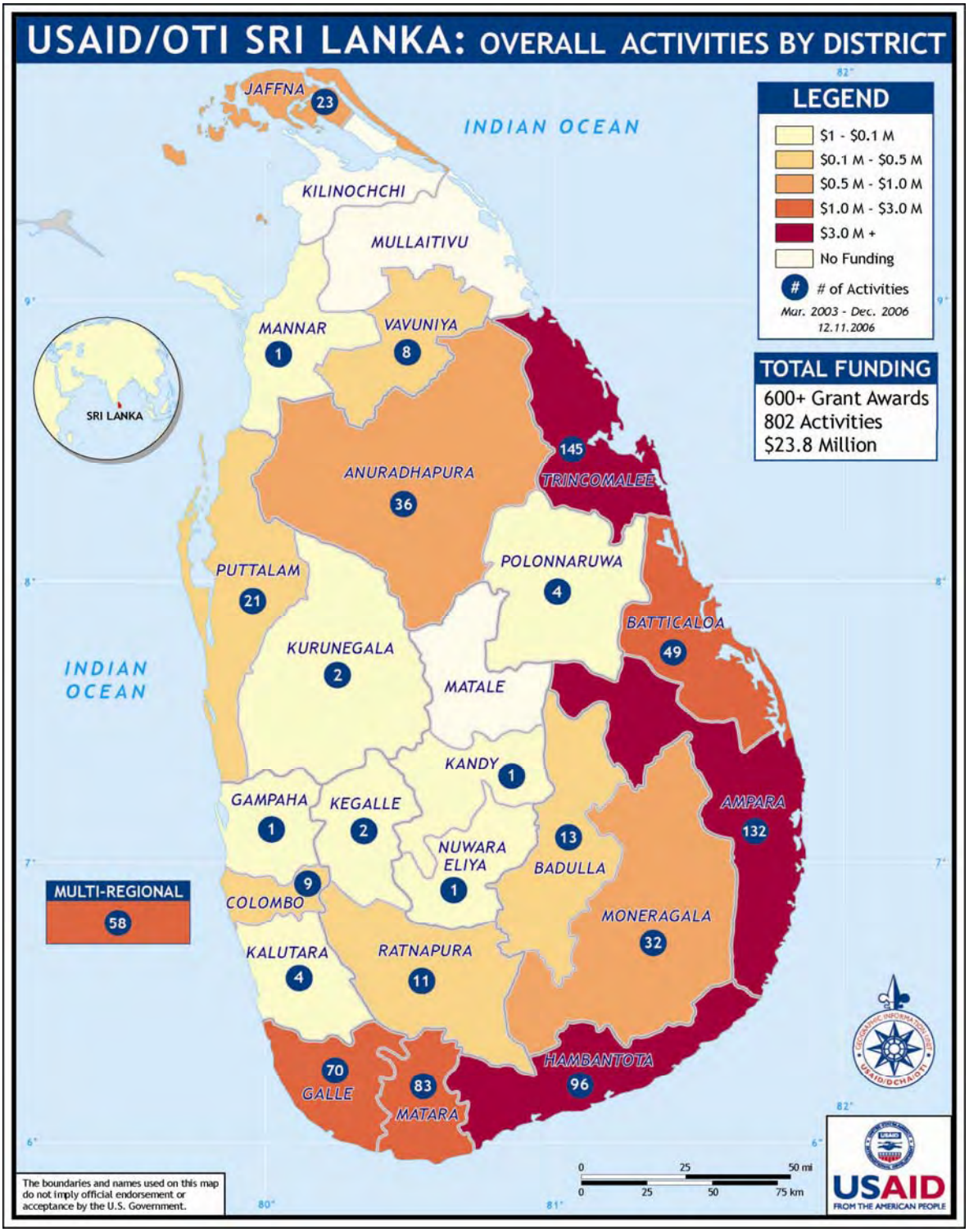
By October 2004, OTI leadership recognized that a more coherent, peace focused strategy had to be put in place. OTI staff concluded that while each grant had a process element, the grants were too scattered and not sufficiently clustered or linked to produce the kind of attitudinal, behavioral and organizational changes that were needed. By dropping the "benefits of peace" objective, adopting a more vertical concentration of effort in key strategic areas (see below), OTI hoped to be able to answer the question some were asking – "what does all this add up to?"

The evaluation team concluded that OTI grants were, in the main, appropriate as to the effort to engage communities in a process. Nearly 55 percent of all grants focused on community impact, involving decision making and peace processes combined with provision of both public and, in many cases, private goods. Media, the next most prominent theme, constituted 22 percent of the grant themes, indicating OTI's strong effort to promote public awareness and make information available. Grants that focused on the peace-building process exclusively, such as workshops, intra-community cultural events, peace training programs, constituted about 13 percent of the grants as recorded in the OTI Grant Database. These grants were viewed as appropriate, especially during 2003-2004; but as the more general climate for peace deteriorated, grantees reported increasing difficulties in implementing these kinds of programs.

The effectiveness of the OTI grant portfolio is addressed in greater detail in the following sections.

1.a. Geographic Focus

Map 2: USAID/OTI Sri Lanka – Overall Activities by District



The OTI program has made grants in all but three Sri Lankan districts as seen in Map 2. OTI's decision to open field offices did facilitate a concentration of grant making (422 of 645 grants in four east coast districts) in the areas of the Northeast and East. These districts had been the scene of intense ethnic conflict as well as extensive military activity over the life of the conflict. OTI was also active in other areas such as Puttalam and Anaradhapura that were either conflict areas or contained populations of IDPs who were possibly prone to or affected by conflict. It also attempted to influence attitudes and public perceptions in Sinhalese nationalist areas, most notably JVP stronghold areas.

As noted previously, in 2004 after an intensive review, OTI more precisely delineated 18 strategic areas that refined these general focus areas. These locations were selected based on several criteria, including inter-ethnic conflict, but also historical or symbolic importance. Thissamaharama and Tantarimale are examples that combine several of these criteria.

Because the Tsunami struck shortly after this strategic re-orientation, the new responsibilities assumed by OTI made it increasingly difficult to continue with the specific strategic zones delineated in 2004, and, with respect to grants made using Supplemental funding, the focus was abandoned in 2006. Nevertheless, the effort continued through 2005, and as noted by the OTI leadership, there was substantial overlap between the Tsunami affected zones and the OTI strategic locations.

With regard to the potential for communal violence in specific communities, many grantees claimed, rightly or wrongly, that there had not been communal or sectarian problems by people from *their particular area*. Respondents to the SLTI Staff Survey seemed to agree. When asked whether most of the violence comes from local people, 42 percent disagreed and 21 percent strongly disagreed with this statement. When asked whether there was more distrust and potential for conflict when people from diverse communities lived close to each other, again, 58 percent disagreed and 21percent strongly disagreed.

Interviews with grantees, particularly during site visits outside of major towns, found that the specific community in which the community impact activities took place frequently did not contain significant numbers of people belonging to minority or different groups. In these communities, meeting the objective of "bringing diverse groups together for collaborative work" proved to be difficult on the ground. For example, a fishing cooperative that received a post-Tsunami grant in Batticaloa was made up entirely of Sinhalese fishermen. They said there were Tamil fishing cooperatives, but they were somewhere else. In Gomarandkadwela, when asked whether there were Tamils, Sinhalese women who participated in a pre-Tsunami peace building workshop answered that they were in nearby villages and "we don't trust them." Muslim grantees from Pulmodai in northern Kuchchaveli showed little interest in working with Padavasripura, a predominantly Sinhalese colony, preferring instead to complain about how long it was taking for OTI to fix their leaky tank and drainage problem. Two of the 23 women officers of the OTI supported franchises in the Galle and Matara Town Business Cooperative, advised by OTI grantee Help-O, were Tamil and the rest Sinhalese. This is not surprising, in that it simply represents the demographics, social organization and settlement patterns of the different groups.

In larger communities, while ethnic-religious groups still separated themselves by neighborhoods, OTI did succeed in funding projects that engaged people from diverse groups. A good example is a post-Tsunami library project in Matara district, which was governed by a multi-ethnic Board elected from the several neighborhoods that make up the town. This group of young and enthusiastic men and women (Sinhalese, Muslim and Tamil), were excited about their responsibilities and looked forward to expanding their project to serve all their communities. There were other examples of this kind of cooperation that were related to the evaluation team.

For those grants that involved conflict management training workshops, Tsunami clean-up, activities related to national festivals, and cultural performances, it has been possible to bring together diverse groups in a more systematic and balanced way. OTI output reporting documents indicate that well over 1000 people were so mobilized. Amparai district respondents testified that they had brought together "a thousand or more" persons for various programs, but the exact number cannot be verified.

Finally, it should be noted again, as pointed out by OTI's local staff, there are multiple conflict dimensions in almost every community, large and small. In larger communities, particularly, factionalism within a predominant ethnic-religious group may play a greater role in creating disunity than intra-ethnic hostility. In Puttalam, for example, OTI had made multiple efforts to promote cooperation between large numbers of IDP and local people. As one OTI observer stated, the difficulties of working there were legion, not the least of which was the infighting among the IDPs themselves.

Sub Conclusion

At the macro-level, OTI's concentration of effort in Anaradhapura and the coastal districts of the East and Southeast made sense from several perspectives. By the fall of 2004, OTI leadership's growing concern about a tendency towards "scatteration" was recognized.[19] OTI took corrective action to more precisely focus the program in strategic locations.

At the micro or community level, the evidence for appropriate geographic focus suggests a more complex conclusion. First, given the complexity of the conflict map in most Sri Lanka communities, it is not easy to determine what kinds of conflict should be within the domain of OTI's strategy, and what should be left to others. Several program participants, especially married women, said that the most valuable lessons they got from "peace training" was how to deal with conflict within their own families. In other communities, the issue was factional conflicts within the same group. Second, neither respondents nor knowledgeable OTI field staff attributed inter-ethnic conflict to problems *within* the communities where OTI worked. Rather, respondents pointed to outside elements, or "up North" as the provocateurs.

From a macro policy perspective, one can ask why a peace building program would be focusing on communities that do not believe that there is communal conflict in their community. If the real source of the problem is "somewhere else," mainly at the level of national leadership of the two sides, then why spend time and money "preaching to the choir?" However, as indicated in

[19] At least one OTI observer objected to the term "scatteration." The term was used by another OTI senior staff person in an interview with the evaluators.

the section on theory of change and OTI assumptions in Sri Lanka, such investments in community level peacebuilding are aimed at generating support for macro peace processes, and empowering local communities to voice their concerns and needs.

Thus, the team does not conclude that all OTI community impact grants missed the mark. There are good counter examples, such as in Muttur, Seruwila, Puttalam and Kalpitiya, even Tantarimale, which together have received 63 grants and the attention of several of OTI's most experienced local PDOs.

The evaluation does conclude that many grants, particularly livelihood and even some community impact grants were not well targeted to serve the objective of "bringing diverse groups together," although other, more immediate material benefits were clearly appreciated.

1.b. Track II, III and Key People

Grants made by the Colombo office did engage OTI with social and cultural leaders, especially Buddhist Monks and other religious leaders. Of the 346 grants made by the Colombo office, many of those involved religious leaders in various relationships, especially within the largest category of community impact activities that were conducted with various religious leaders on certain religious holidays (especially during the Buddhist holidays in Anuradhapura). As noted in a written comment by one OTI local Program Development officer, "The grant with the involvement of the monks from the Galle district was one of the successful grants…during the last year. The involvement of the monks in community consultation process to identify the needs of the society could be considered as THE (emphasis added) major success of the OTI program, because Buddhist clergy play a major role in shaping the minds and lives of the majority of people in the Island."[20] On various occasions, like in Muthur, Colombo, Trincomalee, and Anuradhapura religious leader reported they had been active in mediation and other efforts to control violence in Trincomalee and Muthur. Other leaders engaged in interfaith peace-building activities that brought leaders from the four faiths together.

Sub Conclusion

OTI has engaged local and regional leaders with positive results at the local level. The benefit of this engagement, especially with religious leaders, was to help legitimize and shape a more tolerant and cooperative set of attitudes towards members of other groups. As noted later in the report, there is considerable evidence to suggest that that has occurred. It is reasonable to expect that by engaging leadership groups OTI would be able to help them articulate political support for the peace process, bringing pressure to bear, or providing a political safe haven for those leaders at the top who may want to engage in a negotiated settlement, but are afraid to say so. This issue is addressed below.

1.c. Colombo versus Districts

The evidence from the OTI Grant Database clearly demonstrates a significant level of effort that went into district level grant making. Colombo was both a regional office and a national

[20] Written communication to evaluation team from OTI PDO dated January 16, 2007.

program office. Of the total of 645 grants, only nine were made in Colombo proper and 58 other grants were multi-regional. Colombo was responsible for developing and implementing about 200 district level grants outside the domains covered by Trincomalee, Amparai, and, post-Tsunami Matara. These included some very difficult areas such as Jaffna and Puttalam. The grant making activities of OTI's field offices represent a major share of OTI's overall effort in Sri Lanka.

Sub-conclusion

The efforts of OTI to be engaged at the local level through its two field offices were by and large successful. Field offices made 66 percent of the grants, and, since Colombo was also a field office, the Colombo field office made 226 or 35 percent of the grants outside of Colombo proper. It could be argued that OTI might have made a greater effort to creatively link Colombo decision makers with the variety of peace-building enterprises undertaken in Trincomalee and Amparai regions, since this lack of connectivity between Colombo and the Sri Lankan people seems to be the Achilles heel of the entire effort.

1.d Types of Activities

SLTI grants served several purposes and had a range of possible benefits. First and most important, the grants were made to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviors in furtherance of one or more of the stated objectives. A media grant was supposed to increase the quality and quantity of information available to the public about the peace process. Second, the OTI Sri Lanka grants provided a benefit to both the individual and to the community most obviously when there were material benefits such as a new fishing boat complimented by new skills and increased knowledge. Third, by emphasizing a participatory decision making process for establishing needs and setting priorities, OTI hoped to demonstrate the value of democratic processes and help ensure ownership of and responsibility for the grant's beneficiaries. Fourth, in the OTI Sri Lanka post-Tsunami Supplemental program, grants were made for the purposes stipulated by the Congress, including material rehabilitation, improving Tsunami specific information, and re-establishing the means for livelihood. OTI Sri Lanka did make an effort to build into these post-Tsunami grants all the other attributes above, but in the interest of meeting its obligation, work plan and monthly quota, these other objectives were clearly subordinate and in many cases, not relevant at all.

There are several ways to classify OTI's grant supported activities in Sri Lanka. One classification is provided by the time period and the funding source. The team has established two classes by time period: pre-Tsunami 2003-2004, and post-Tsunami: 2005-2007 (see Pre Tsunami and Post Tsunami Allocations Table 4). Using the funding source to further refine this classification, the pre-Tsunami period was funded by OTI's Transition Initiative funds and Economic Support Funds. These funds are called "Flexible Funds" to be used by OTI at its discretion and consistent with its mandate. After the Tsunami, two more funding sources came on line: Tsunami relief funds that came from USAID's OFDA and, subsequently, OTI received $20 million from the $70 million Special Appropriation for Tsunami Rehabilitation from Congress. The OFDA funds were disbursed between January and May 2005. Supplemental funds became available in July 2005 and must be committed by March 2007.

Table 3: Pre- and Post-Tsunami Grant Categories by Sector

	Pre-Tsunami (2003-2004)		**Post-Tsunami (2005-2006)**	
Grant Sector	# Grant	Amount	# Grant	Amount
Community Infrastructure	81	$2,518,566	122	$7,609,039
Conflict Management	59	$965,263	100	$3,378,919
Livelihood	66	$1,437,458	41	$2,637,258
Media/Information	63	$979,270	109	$4,040,613
Total	**269**	**$5,900,557**	**372**	**$17,665,829**

Another approach to classification is how the OTI objectives and grants are coded in the OTI Grant Database. OTI had three objectives in 2003-2004. Summarized, these were: benefits of peace, bringing diverse groups together, and improved information. As previously mentioned, at the end of 2004, OTI reduced its objectives to two: bringing diverse groups together and improved information. However, the Supplemental Tsunami Appropriated funds added three more objectives that shaped the type of activities OTI had to fund: livelihoods, infrastructure and Tsunami related information. OTI strove to combine its pre-Tsunami objectives and general mandate with the earmarked Tsunami Supplemental funding, as well as to continue with its peace-building activities using its flexible funding accounts.

Table 4: OTI Grants by Objective: 2003-2004 and 2005-2006

	Pre-Tsunami		**Post-Tsunami**	
Objective	*# Grants*	*Estimated Grant Amount*	*# Grants*	*Estimated Grant Amount*
1) To Demonstrate Tangible Benefits of Peace	108	$3,172,401	0	$0
2) To Increase the Exchange of Information on Peace-related Issues in Society	53	$722,623	0	$0
3) To Promote Community-level Conflict Management and Peaceful Co-existence	70	$1,123,695	0	$0
4) To increase awareness and/or understanding of key transition issues	20	$429,667	113	$4,765,284
5) Increase collaboration/participation among diverse groups to set and/or address priorities	18	$449,257	263	$13,072,179
Totals		**$5,897,643**		**$17,837,463**

Sub-Conclusion

The multi-faceted complexity of the purposes and benefits of OTI grants makes any classification scheme difficult, and, as with the ones used in this report, possibly misleading. Because of this, the evaluation team was unable to come to any definitive conclusion about the appropriateness and effectiveness of any single "type" of grant, as such a conclusion might be true for one dimension of the grant, but not for others. Nevertheless, the team believes that of the several ways of classifying OTI grants, those grants that combined both participation and peacemaking processes with the provision of some material public and private benefit had the greatest potential for impact at the individual and community level. The likelihood of positive impact for peace was even greater where the creation of a public good engaged representatives from diverse communities as "stakeholders." This conclusion is consistent with conclusions already reached by OTI's M&E officer and in the 2004 review.

However one organizes the type of activities supported by OTI, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the grants depended on the mandate and objectives OTI was attempting to pursue. From the perspective of building active support for the peace talks, there is little to indicate that OTI was able to achieve this goal, in part because of other factors at both the local and national level, and in part, because OTI did little to use its grant making capability to advance organized coalition building or advocacy. In those areas where OTI concentrated, they introduced a language and awareness of peace, did much to bring diverse groups together through the conflict management grants, and, in several important areas, helped support active coalitions of local people prepared to engage and promote dialogue and cooperation in the face of violence at the local level.

1. e. Strategic Framework

As described in Section IV, OTI's Theory of Change, and as stated in the SOW, OTI did have a goal – to generate support for a negotiated peace settlement – as well as a strategy for its grant making activities that had the following features:

1. Concentrate resources in 'conflict area', including initially the Jaffna peninsula.
2. Use the visual arts and mass media outlets to convey and reinforce the peace message at the national and local level.
3. Make positive peace messages and information available to the public and to a variety of leadership groups.
4. Enhance the OTI participatory decision making process with an infusion of Peace Process techniques (conflict management training and interethnic contact or encounter programs).
5. Weaken opposition to the peace process in areas where anti-CFA sentiment was strong.
6. Use process and, where appropriate, product to change attitudes, behaviors and to create networks of people and organizations for peace…ultimately creating a sufficient critical mass that would advocate and influence government and political decision making. [21]

[21] This list is compiled by extrapolating from existing OTI documents and interviews with the Country Representative, the M&E Officer, and several of the more experienced OTI Program Development Officers.

After the Tsunami, OTI strove to maintain the key elements of this strategy as well as continuing to function in non-Tsunami affected areas. Still, all agree that the Tsunami and its aftermath had a powerful affect on OTI's ability to implement a process-driven strategy and at the same time ratchet up the grant obligation rate to a level that would meet the imposed deadline of March 2007.

OTI's most informed effort to develop a well articulated strategy for the Sri Lanka context occurred in the fall of 2004. In retrospect, the effectiveness of this strategic reorientation would have been much greater had OTI undertaken a similar review in the fall of 2003 or early 2004, as has been suggested by the current Country Representative. By the end of 2004, the strategy was constrained by several external and internal factors. First, while the CFA created great optimism, the fundamental restructuring of political and governmental authorities did not materialize.[22] Second, there was a growing awareness that the Sri Lankan political structure and culture was not responsive to "bottom-up" pressure or the development of well articulated interests. Third, OTI was strongly encouraged by USAID to work at the local level and with indigenous CBOs and NGOs. Fourth, the Tsunami imposed a new set of demands and requirements that, in spite of OTI's best effort, proved difficult to reconcile with OTI's pre-Tsunami strategy. Some of the factors related to the Tsunami context included the following: difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified staff; the delay until July 2005 of receiving authority to spend Supplemental Funds meant most obvious projects were already taken up by others; competition with a large number of INGOs and local NGOs in spending post-Tsunami relief funds; staff reluctant to adjust from relief and reconstruction to peace-building strategy; and a lack of local OTI expertise in managing infrastructure projects. Finally, the US policy of avoiding LTTE engagement and programs that might provide it with benefits, made it difficult for OTI to work in northern and the eastern part of the island.

Sub Conclusion

OTI did have a strategy, which it continued to implement in the face of a deteriorating political environment and the disruptions of the Tsunami and its aftermath. Strategic revisions in the face of changing circumstances are not uncommon, and OTI did use its experience to adjust its strategy in 2004 and again in early 2006.

2. Was SLTI appropriately flexible and responsive to shifting political and contextual issues?

If by "shifting political context" the reference is to the increasing difficulties in moving forward with the peace talks, the changes in government, and the increasingly difficult security situation as well as the factionalism within all of the communities, the principle finding is that OTI struggled very hard to remain committed to the objective of building support for peace through its information, media and grant programs, even as the situation continued to deteriorate. Because OTI worked primarily at the local level, it did not significantly adjust its programs based on the changing political environment. Reviews in 2005 basically concluded that while

[22] On the contrary, a severe escalation of human rights violations and renewed military operations in the conflict affected areas were indicated in most of the 33 SLTI field reports, and deteriorating security conditions were cited as factors for delaying or cancelling activities.

there had to be tactical changes, including opening a new office in Matara, hiring more staff, concentrating more on Tsunami affected areas, the basic strategy of building support for peace through information and community impact grants remained in place.

When the Tsunami hit on December 26, 2004, OTI was in the right place at the right time. It had offices in Amparai and Trincomalee, and projects in Habantota, Matara, and Galle. It had a network of local NGOs with which it had already worked, and had gained the trust of local leaders. Staffed with capable Sri Lankan citizens, the OTI field offices were well suited to respond to coordination and organizational requirements of the Tsunami. They were, in fact, the only American organization with significant strength throughout the affected areas. It was for these reasons that the USAID Mission in Sri Lanka insisted that OTI be responsible for organizing Tsunami relief funding from OFDA, and the more substantial $20 million portion of the Supplemental Funding out of $70 million provided by the US Congress for Post-Tsunami reconstruction.[23]

Some within OTI had serious doubts about the wisdom of accepting responsibility for the extra $20 million, believing that the burden of obligating a nearly five-fold increase in funds would put enormous pressure on the organization, and that it would distort OTI's essential peace-building mission. Others argued that OTI had a responsibility to step up to the plate, as some said "one never turns down additional funds." More to the point, OTI felt that since the Tsunami had hit many of the areas on the East coast of Sri Lanka where OTI had already been working, it would be able to merge its peace and empowerment process-oriented program with the purposes of the Supplemental. Hence, OTI chose to retain its two main objectives formulated in its strategy of October 2004.

There were three Congressional purposes set out for the supplemental: restore infrastructure, restore livelihoods, and provide accurate and timely Tsunami related information to affected areas (see Tables 7 Pre- and Post-Tsunami by Focus Area). These objectives created some difficulties in that there were disagreements about what constituted an affected area. In one disagreement, OTI argued that it should be broadly interpreted to allow them to program in communities where internally displaced persons had moved rather than the more narrow interpretation of "affected" as being a one kilometer wide band next to the water. A second area of disagreement was over what time period OTI would have to program the funds, with OTI stating that they would be able to use the Supplemental to support rehabilitation AND the peace process if they were given more time to program the funds. USAID/Washington decided against this view, insisting that funds be committed by March 2007, and disbursed by FY 2008.

[23] For similar reasoning, OTI/W management also was in support of this arrangement in which OTI/SL managed the Tsunami funds.

Table 5: Pre- and Post-Tsunami Grants by Focus area

	Pre-Tsunami (2003-2004)		**Post-Tsunami (2005-2006)**	
Grant Focus Area	# Grant	Amount	# Grant	Amount
Civil Society Org. Support	5	$84,658	15	$667,805
Civil Military Relations	-	-	1	$216,980
Community Impact Activities	177	$4,527,249	221	$12,284,981
Conflict Management	40	$499,713	46	$1,640,514
Election Processes	2	$10,845	2	$38,429
Ex-Combatant Reintegration	1	$72,226	--	--
Human rights and Justice	2	$12,779	2	$92,263
Media	33	$555,664	40	$2,153,806
Mine Action	2	$2,198	--	--
Transparency/Governance	1	$3,339	45	$571,051
Total	263	$5,768,673	372	$17,665,829

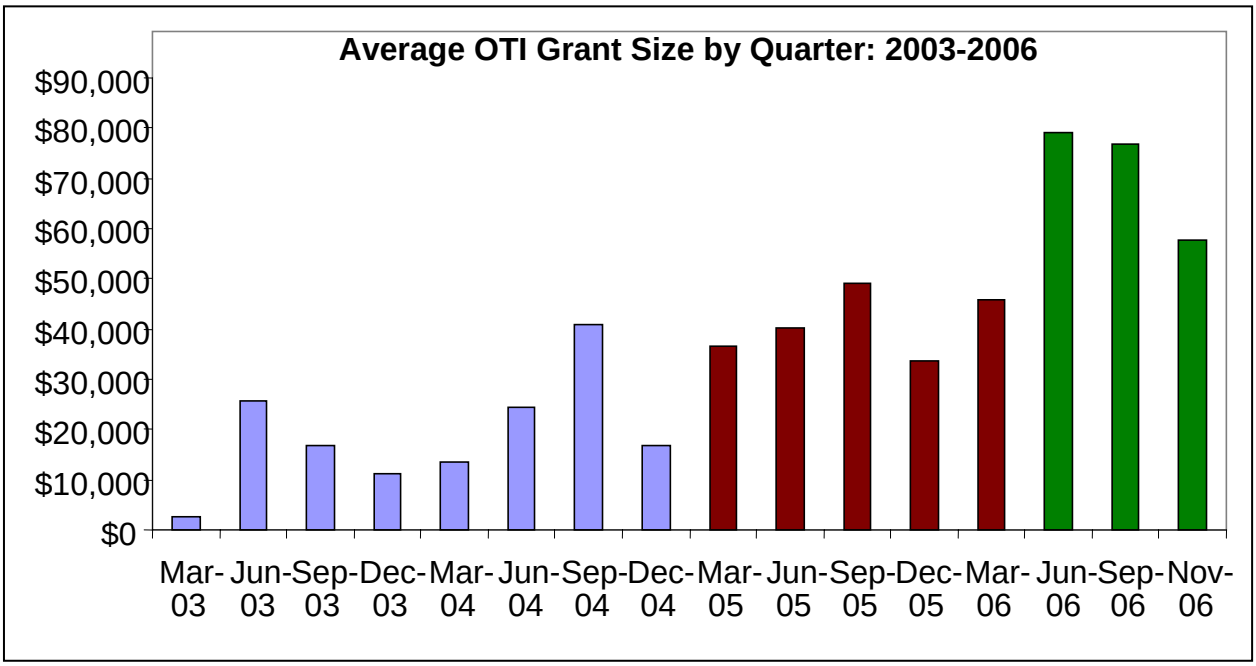
Finally, it was noted that although OTI had done a considerable amount of "livelihood" projects prior to October 2004 it had planned to abandon that objective on the grounds that these types of projects, while producing benefits, were not perceived by the general public as a "benefit of peace" as expected. The Supplemental, however, required that they revisit this area of programming.

As shown by the aforementioned Graph 2, OTI continued to commit its Transition Initiative and ESF funds at a substantially higher rate than the Supplemental Funds after June 2005 and until June 2006. With increasing pressure and concern about the Supplemental spending rate from USAID, OTI introduced a new approach in mid-2006. This was a significant shift away from its earlier rules of engagement, including dropping some areas in the general plan of Strategic Locations, dropping the prohibition on making grants to INGOs and working mainly with local level NGOs and CBOs rather than with local government. Also, by virtue of the Supplemental objectives, it returned to livelihood grants.

The results of these changes were visible in several ways. OTI had to bring on new staff with different backgrounds,[24] enter into contracts with engineering firms capable of managing larger scale infrastructure, and make several large grants to INGOs and open a new office in Matura to handle the work load. Although the average dollar value of grants had increased in the first year after the Tsunami, by June 2006, the average dollar value of a grant had increased three fold over that of the pre-Tsunami era. This brought OTI into a much closer relationship with local governments, since larger, dollar absorbing, infrastructure projects such as bus stations, market halls, and community town halls were under their jurisdiction.

[24] As mentioned earlier, of the 19 OTI Project Development Staff and Grant Officers responding to the OTI Staff Survey, 12 had two years or less experience with OTI, and of those, 4 had less than a year's experience with OTI. Nearly all staff had previous experience in 'development' organizations. None were trained in peace building methodology.

Graph 3: Average OTI Grant Size by Quarter: 2003-2006



Qualitatively, all OTI field staff agreed during interviews that the pressure to obligate funds reversed the relationship between "product" and "process." Whereas before the Tsunami, OTI had fostered process-learning that lead to empowerment and changed attitudes and behaviors relevant to Peace, retaining the idea of "product" in a clearly secondary position. Now the product became more important, with "process" concerns being tacked on wherever possible. In some grants, the team was told, the urgency was such that "process" was abandoned altogether.

At the same time, in Trincomalee and Batticaloa especially, the geographic space in which OTI could operate was shrinking due to the resumption of armed conflict between the Sri Lankan Army and the LTTE and the resumption of Hartals (strikes) and bombings in Trincomalee town. In fact, in mid-2006, the Trincomalee Office was eventually closed for three weeks when security conditions became extremely dangerous for staff. This created additional problems for OTI, since Trincomalee was and had been a key grant making location surrounded by several important Strategic Locations.

Sub-Conclusion

OTI was not in a position to make strategic or programmatic changes based on the change in governments and the deteriorating security situation, except to find itself having to curtail its efforts in and around Trincomalee and to some extent Amparai. As noted elsewhere, it had from the beginning attempted to ameliorate the more extreme expressions of anti-Tamil xenophobia found in some sections of the South, but these efforts did not change as a result of electoral changes. OTI basically stuck to its mandate to promote peace, even when the earlier optimism about the CFA had essentially disappeared. Had the Tsunami not occurred, OTI might have taken stock of the political situation some time in 2005, and might have made a decision to

withdraw from Sri Lanka on the good grounds that there was no longer "a transition" that could be supported by the means available to OTI.

As for the Tsunami, all the evidence points to the conclusion that OTI was responsive and did its best to merge its original mandate with the post Tsunami program responsibilities. It may also be concluded that OTI was slow to recognize the implications of what it had taken on, believing for nearly one year that it could meet the "burn rate" requirements of the Supplemental without fundamentally changing the way it did business. By mid 2006, OTI did come to grips with this issue, and reordered its decision rules, hired new staff, made different types of grants, increased the average size of grants substantially, and opened an additional field office.

3. In communities where numerous small-grant activities were supported over an extended period of time (i.e. strategic locations), is there evidence of a significant impact related to OTI's overall aims and objectives in Sri Lanka?

The team lacks the evidence to make comments about the impact of OTI's grant making activities in all of the 14 strategic locations identified in 2004. The team did find examples of positive impact on a grant-by-grant basis in those areas they were able to visit. The team also interviewed grantees from nine of the 14 areas, and made site visits to individual grantees in five of them.

The findings from these interviews and visits are as follows.

In nearly all of the strategic areas where site visits were made, it was difficult to find evidence of significant impact beyond the consequences of that particular grant. The six grants in Gomarandkadwela, including murals on school walls, peace themed drama performances, 52 latrines, and the peace and conflict management training, were valued by local participants, but did not seem to produce changed patterns of understanding or behavior with regard to "building support for peace," although children enjoyed the dramatic performances, housewives valued learning about how to manage family conflicts, and today's school children, when asked, knew the murals were about peace. The latrines that were next to houses were being used, but because many had left the area, the latrines stood alone in empty fields; mute testimony to the failure of the peace process.

In the Kuchchaveli Division north of Trincomalee, 16 grants were made for approximately $536,000. Thirteen of these grants were for community infrastructure, two for Conflict Management, a one for Media. Five grants had been made pre-Tsunami, 11 post-Tsunami. A number of the post Tsunami grants were for clean-up parties, which were diverse groups, but local people said the Sinhalese came mostly from another district, and then went home. In examining the Community Impact grants, four of these were for Muslim communities where, we were told, the Tamil minority had largely departed for India or elsewhere. The largest single grant was a post Tsunami grant to an American organization charged with infrastructure projects in several places in the division, including Pulmoddai, a largely Muslim community that, the grantee from that town told us several times, had been waiting for OTI to follow up on their

project since 2003.[25] This snapshot demonstrates that just making grants in strategic areas does not equate to impact with regard to building support for peace.

In other areas, where a more studied approach to building networks and activist coalitions was followed, either by a grantee or by OTI, the likelihood of positive and sustained impact beyond the grantee's immediate constituency was greater. One of the best examples seen was the Mutter Peace Committee, and its offshoot youth groups. OTI made 23 grants, primarily by supporting a dynamic leader, this time a Methodist priest and a Tamil, who, in collaboration with Muslim leaders and local authorities, were able to build a coalition of activist intervention whereby local conflicts were addressed pro-actively and over a fairly wide area covering both Tamil and Muslim communities. The Mutter Peace Committee is an exemplar in illustrating what OTI was able to do, as well as demonstrating the limits of what it could not do, and could be expected to do. By the time of this evaluation, Mutter area had once again become a battleground between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan Army. Trincomalee Town and Gravats, with 59 grants, had received significant investment by OTI, with many successful grants.

Another important characteristic of the OTI effort to cluster grants in strategic locations was that all the locations were in the more secure, non-LTTE areas, not in the LTTE north. OTI did program in areas where LTTE had strong influence, such as the Trincomalee and Batticaloa areas. Jaffna, in the north, is not LTTE controlled. OTI went to great efforts to develop a program there, but eventually had to withdraw because of difficulties in moving goods through LTTE controlled areas. Because of the US policy restricting all contact with the LTTE, it was not possible to program in areas under their direct control.

Still, as the cease fire deteriorated, and the political climate changed to despair or hostility, many local grantees found it increasingly difficult to speak of peace. As one experienced OTI field staff officer put it, "whenever we did programs in the South, we were always faced with the same question, 'Why are you telling only us these things…why don't you work with the people in the North also?'"

With these cautionary findings, below are more general findings about the impact of OTI's grant making program.

[25] Of the 15 people representing three different grants interviewed in Kuchchavelli, three were Tamils and the rest were Muslims. This does not reflect the known demographics of the division, which has had a significant Tamil population. We cannot explain the small number of Tamils among the grantee groups interviewed. In comments on the first draft of this report, OTI stated that "Pulmoddai (in northern Kuchchavelli) is a tricky place to work; an INGO we've funded up there to do water supply is currently facing death threats, presumably from the would-be grantee (also a local government authority) who didn't get the job, or the spoils that he probably thought would come with it)." We met the American representative of the INGO, who did say that demands had been made of this nature by one faction, but that their organization was not going to participate in 'payoffs.' The same person did say that they had worked things out and would be moving forward with the program. We heard similar stories related to construction work done in Tantarimale, and other forms of factional infighting with reference to Puttalam, both strategic areas. As the size of infrastructure projects increased with Supplemental Funds, it is not surprising that local leaders would want more control over the contracting process, whether for venal reasons or otherwise is difficult to determine. We can only report what we have been told. With the Pulmoddai case, the grantee made two efforts to tell his side of the story, at Trincomalee and again in Kuchchavelli.

To identify the impact of Peace Building (PB) programs, several indicators were developed during interviews with OTI staff in Washington, and explored with grantees, staff, and beneficiaries in Sri Lanka.[26] The team cannot measure these indicators in any quantitative sense, so the answers must be qualitative based on the overall "weight" of the available evidence.

The indicators are as follows:

A. Attitudinal and behavioral changes at individual level
B. New initiatives launched as a result of the project and sustained cross community cooperative activities
C. Relevance to containment or reduction of communal/sectarian violence
D. Development of networks, coalitions of activism for peace advocacy
E. Greater participation and linkage with local level government
F. Expressions of community support for peace to higher authorities
G. Infrastructure projects valued and maintained by communities

A. Attitudinal and behavioral changes

Peace building and conflict resolution is an emerging field in Sri Lanka. Until 2002 there have been very few organizations that specialized or even dealt with this area of improving interethnic community relations. The fact that OTI has intentionally invested relatively large amount of funds in supporting such area is itself a significant contribution to Sri Lankan peace building community and local capacities in this area

Sri Lankan local peace education resources were created and disseminated as a result of the various SLTI projects. For example, "Take this Road" is a film that has been shown in hundreds of villages and will remain as a resource for Sri Lankan peace community. Many books, booklets, theatre plays and groups, surveys, and training handbooks were produced, which could be important materials for Sri Lankan youth.

Figure 2: Examples of Positive Attitudinal Change

Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim students from nearby villages met each other for the first time in their lives. The excitement and discovery of the other left a positive mark on these participants. A teacher in Ampara summed it up nicely: "Tamil children were frighten to enter Muslim villages for the first time in their lives, but two days later they left with strong ties of friendships and promises to stay in touch." Through these OTI projects thousands of Muslim, Tamil, and Sinhalese adult and youth were exposed to the other's cultural and religious practices, and gained new insights and knowledge about their neighbors. "I have never imagined that I will be able to spend a whole day in a Muslim village." "Students were crying when they separated form each other."

OTI projects have trained many staff and local volunteers and activists in peace building tools and have as a result contributed to the growth of local Sri Lankan peace workers who have gained experience in designing and implementing such projects.

[26] The team transformed these indicators into questions which were used to structure the group interview process. These questions did elicit responses from various members of each group, and for some groups, there was a consensus which we checked by asking members to indicate their agreement by raising their hands. More often than not, there were a variety of responses to the questions.

Most of the interviewees and grantees confirmed that OTI projects have produced a *change in participants' attitudes and behaviors*, especially those who took part in the encounter, dialogue, conflict management groups, and cultural exchange programs. Many conflict management programs were completed and more than 1,000 new trainees were exposed to a new set of conflict management, analysis, and communication skills. Respondents to the SLTI Staff survey support this finding. Of the 484 grant ratings given, 51 percent were found to produce positive feelings. When asked whether OTI had been "very successful" in changing local people's attitudes and behaviors toward peaceful resolution of conflict, 61 percent of OTI respondents agreed, and 17 percent disagreed.

On the other hand, some grantees and participants who valued their participation in OTI peace workshops still referred to nearby residents from a different community as untrustworthy. Others said that the peace message should be taken "to the north," as the "northerners" were the cause of the problem.

Sub-Conclusion

Conflict Management grants constituted 24 percent of OTI's grants and 18 percent of the dollar value over the entire program. Most of these contact programs were completed in the pre-Tsunami period when the security and political climate were conducive. People were trained, exchanges occurred, and the optimism surrounding the CFA was enhanced. Language was identified as a major barrier and obstacle in these encounters and some programs even undertook language skills training. Based on impact assessments done by OTI before the Tsunami, and supported by the broader research literature, the critique was that simple contact was not enough to ensure lasting impact or sustained behavioral change. Most beneficiaries expressed satisfaction from learning new skills; however OTI grantees did not often provide structured opportunities for these participants to utilize their skills in future context. During a meeting in Kinneya four Muslim teenagers praised their mediation and conflict management training by North Eastern University, Trincomalee, but complained that they have not been able to follow up or train other people. While it is clear that "the contact hypothesis" or "Harmony model" was the primary framework that guided much of OTI's early promotion of interethnic community encounters, it appears unlikely that contact alone has been sufficient to build lasting momentum toward support of the peace process.

B. New Initiatives Launched and C. Containment of Violence

Some of the grantees and beneficiaries reported changes and actions beyond the individual attitudinal changes. These included the following: doing certain projects together; organizing another encounter and challenging the reality of ethnic separation; creating new youth society clubs, a small farmers society, a children society; and conducting exchange visits and phone calls to others in situations of violence. Sinhala participants attended a funeral for a Tamil for the first time in the history of these villages. During the Tsunami time 200 Tamil and Sinhalese went to Muslim villages to help and they stayed for 2 months in that area. In Kalmonai 50 of these participants spent time in a mosque, etc.

When asked whether the grants under their jurisdiction had produced positive impact and follow-on initiatives, the OTI field officers surveyed reported that 31 percent of their grants met these criteria. The response of OTI's field officers is a positive endorsement consistent with the findings from earlier evaluations done by the OTI M&E officer. Thirty-nine percent of OTI staff respondents saw this positive impact as a direct result of OTI's work, 17 percent saw other reasons, and 44 percent were unable to say.

More important, perhaps, is the finding that OTI projects have contributed to the containment of communal violence in various areas. Although it was not viewed as the primary factor, in all areas visited grantees, beneficiaries, and OTI staff provided actual examples in which certain project's members were active in mediating or preventing the spread of communal conflicts.

Figure 3: An Example of Intercommunity solidarity

During recent bombing in 8/2006 in Trincomalee district, Tamil villages were under siege. Sinhala villagers (from Dehiwatta) came and bought them food, violating GA and military orders that prevented NGOs and stores from selling them food. These Tamil communities were also warned that there is bombing in some other area and asked to avoid going there. This communal cooperation was as a result of OTI project relationships.

Sub-Conclusion

Whether through passive resistance to incitements of violence or more active engagement in mediation and conflict reduction efforts, there is substantial value in the results of OTI's efforts to change the terms of engagement in several areas from one of hostility to one of "let's try to get along." OTI is not the sole factor in this, as it is evident from interviews and from the OTI field officer survey that most local people are prepared to live in peace with their neighbors, even though they may not wish to have them next door or be part of their fishing cooperative. This may be a product of simply growing weary with the tribulations of 20 years of conflict, and a desire to get on with their lives, especially among the adult generations. Nevertheless, OTI grantees have helped to reinforce and channel this weariness into the creation of a "local political space and language" by which problems of living together may be addressed. When OTI is able to find and provide consistent support to strong local leaders, the possibilities of transformation from a passive to an active role in mitigating conflict is greatly enhanced. As OTI Staff respondents note, local leadership from diverse communities working together to resolve conflict was selected as a main factor in contributing to peace by 37 percent of the OTI staff survey respondents, the highest score given to several such factors. Unless local leadership is organized and motivated to act, the potential for "containment" will not be realized.

Figure 4: Examples of Interventions to Reduce Violence

Following the Bedulla market inter-ethnic clashes in 2006 between Tamil, Muslim, and Sinhalese, participants from nearby communities took the initiative and went to this town to help settle the conflict. The OTI project assisted to get traders together to mediate.

Because of the events of Kaptigolawa in 2006 where several people were killed, people in Bedulla did not participate despite attempts by some outsiders to provoke ethnic clashes. Participants from OTI projects operated a phone communication and network as a mechanism to inform people against communal violence and rumours. A large number of OTI grantees have worked on this area, as well.

In Kinneya a group of elders mediated a conflict between Tamils and Muslims over a school and land dispute. Several of the participants in the discussion group confirmed that two of the elders participated in the OTI project.

In Amparai area where a car incident triggered high level of tension and a group of local leaders (including the efforts of the local Internews journalists) intervened to calm things down.

In Central Camp, despite an LTTE bomb and attack on the Military post by LTTE, villagers did not engage in any communal violence. OTI grantees and their committees were instrumental in getting a process in place with the help of the local army forces.

D. Networks and Coalitions Built

One of the unexpected findings during group interviews of different grantees, many from the same geographic region or active in the same area, such as cultural and artistic programs, was that they did not know each other. As we questioned respondents, a substantial majority told the team that, with some exceptions, they had not formed networks or linkages by which they could share experiences and, perhaps, develop cooperative efforts to advance their message. Small grants made in district or village level on peace-building themes were not organically linked with each other to produce a network or a larger effect either on the district of regional level. Thus many of the grantees were not connected with each other even though they were all conducting conflict management or communication training.

Sub-Conclusion

OTI programs or grants on peace-building themes were not horizontally or vertically connected. The analogy of a hub with many spokes but no rim comes to mind. OTI (and other donors) was the hub, grantees were the spokes, but the "rim" failed to materialize, and therefore, there was no wheel. Many grantees expressed willingness and desire to be connected to others who had done the same work. This lack of connectivity has reduced the capacity of these grantees and their beneficiaries to create synergy for change in their area.

E. Connecting with Local Government and F. Supporting Peace to Higher Authorities

Although community leaders were often the target of the peace-building programs and seminars, as well as key actors in most community impact/infrastructure grants, most of the grantees confirmed that they did not have a direct linkage or involvement with local government officers.

In the few cases where grantees reported deliberate linkages with local government officials, it was mostly limited to a ceremonial presence. Again, until the post-Tsunami period, OTI did not make many grants involving local government authorities.

When asked about efforts to promote peace through advocacy at higher (not the highest) levels of political leadership, almost all responded that they had not, and they did not believe it would be effective in any case.[27]

Although grantees and beneficiaries (in some cases staff too) identified and recognized the impact of OTI projects on individual and local community attitudes and behaviors, the belief that they have little impact or no influence at the political peace process or on elite politics was commonly expressed. A socially active priest in the Muthur area said, "Political problems today affected our efforts. I can only ask what the problem is, but I can not do anything about it. My white robe allows me to ask the question but cannot do anything about it." This feeling of helplessness was repeatedly voiced by grantees when asked about influence on the macro political level. Peace is perceived as political and people have no way to influence it. It seems that this is a helpless and disempowering message that persists despite the intervention of OTI. This view was also expressed by OTI field officers. Of the SLTI Staff Survey respondents, 42 percent agreed and 37 percent strongly agreed with the following statement: "Local people want peace, but the leaders of diverse groups are not willing to truly negotiate." On a related statement, 62 percent disagreed and 11 percent strongly disagreed with this statement: "Government and Political Leaders listen to the voice of local people." OTI staff views strongly support the findings of the evaluation team on this issue.

OTI contributed to maintaining a "public space" in which Tamil Sinhalese and Muslims could meet, work together and share common vision despite the escalation in violence and pressure from political leadership for separation (most of the 33 SLTI program reports articulated security concerns and rising violence that were cited as obstacles for programming). The fact that OTI continued in its programming, especially on a national level, is itself a significant contribution to sustenance of such space in Sri Lankan context or reality.

G. Infrastructure Projects Valued and Maintained

There is evidence to suggest that Sri Lankan people of all categories are motivated as much, if not more, by the desire for improved material (economic/financial/livelihood) well being than they are by the desire for peaceful relations with other diverse groups. In those instances where OTI grants combined the peace process with genuine collaborative efforts that produced valued public and/or private benefits, the likelihood of a positive impact was greatly enhanced. To the

[27] In the comments OTI prepared for the first draft, they stated repeatedly that building vertical or horizontal linkages was not an OTI aim or objective. The Scope of Work prepared by OTI sets out a number of means by which OTI was to achieve its objectives, of which two are "ADVOCACY" and "LINKAGES." The evaluation team does not know what to make of the comments. Any strategy that one could imagine that would have as its goal, building support for peace or peace negotiations would have some means for mobilizing, linking, and advocating that support to higher levels of political and governmental authority. Otherwise, what is the point? Especially since the same comments repeatedly state that OTI was just a "tactical player," and cannot be held accountable for the breakdown in the CFA, or the restrictions imposed by US policy. The team agrees with that, but also has to ask: "What can OTI be held accountable for?"

extent OTI grantees followed up with additional training, support, and new challenges, with or without OTI support, the likelihood of sustained impact was even greater. Interviews with respondents who benefited from livelihood grants, small infrastructure and equipment grants all testified to the importance of these material benefits. Where OTI was able to develop a partnership through successive grants combining process and material benefits, as in the Galle "People's Companies" sponsored by the grantee Help-O, the impact bordered on true transformation through empowerment, self-help, and cooperative behavior. SLTI Staff Survey respondents said that the provision of material improvements for their communities was either a factor of "considerable influence" at 68 percent, or one of the "main factors" at 21 percent in explaining the positive impact of OTI grants. This and the performance of local leaders were considered the two most important factors in the peace impact of OTI grants as seen by OTI Staff.

The inability to pursue in-depth and overtime relationships with promising grantees and communities was a concern for several more experienced OTI field officers. As one said, the greatest frustration was "… the tendency to not go deep into programs/locations…Each time there was an attempt to consolidate programming and build networks, some other intervention forced the program to change direction."

Sub-Conclusion

Community Impact projects, with or without integrated processes, constituted 31 percent of OTI's grants, and 43 percent of its dollar value in obligations. Whatever else, OTI has contributed to both public goods and private benefits in the eastern regions of Sri Lanka largely ignored by most donors before the Tsunami, and helped restore livelihoods and public infrastructure after the Tsunami. If this had been the objective of the overall program, it is easy to conclude that it was well served. Although OTI staff sees material benefits as having considerable influence in the success of OTI grants, they consider local leadership involvement as even more important. OTI's support could, and in many cases, did demonstrate that the combination of sustained process and valued products could produce both material and peace benefits at the local level.

As the CFA situation deteriorated, optimism waned, and government and political attacks on foreign interventions increased, OTI programs became vulnerable in three ways: 1) fear by association made it risky for some grantees to associate with a USAID program; 2) the geographic space for OTI's operations shrunk, especially around and south of Trincomalee; and 3) the loss of optimism meant that grantees concluded they had failed, and admitted that the peace message was no longer a valid or convincing message to put forward.

4. Were media activities appropriate and effective to further OTI's overall goals and objectives?

Injecting such large numbers of activities or outputs into the Sri Lankan public discourse has certainly contributed to the efforts of Sri Lankan groups and forces that called the government and LTTE to return to negotiations, and opposed the nationalist or militant groups who called for

harsher measures in dealing with the others. Hundreds of thousands of people were exposed to the message of peace publicized by the various OTI activities.

OTI invested heavily in media and information programs, largely focused on any and all means for propagating the "peace message" at the national, regional and local level. Raising the agenda for peace and bombarding public spaces with peace slogans and arts exhibits, radio programs, films, public celebrations, International Peace Day, hundreds of press releases, national theatre and art exhibitions, photography books, and many other forms were supported.

OTI's investment in efforts to improve the quality, accuracy, objectivity and content of the media was substantial, varied, and constrained by the overwhelming politicization of most Sri Lankan media outlets. After the Tsunami, and the acceptance of the OTI Supplemental, media and information efforts included a separate contract with Internews International, with the objective of establishing radio training and production centers in Matara and Amparai districts, which were established in 2006. OTI staff rated accurate and objective information as having "no influence" at 11 percent, "some influence" at 32 percent, "considerable influence" at 41 percent, and "one of the main factors" at 16 percent, in explaining the positive peace impact of OTI projects. Although 56 percent believe it to have some influence or better, this factor also received the highest percent of "some" and "no influence" ratings by OTI staff at 43 percent. It appears that OTI's staff is divided or uncertain about the strength of this factor in promoting peace.

Sub Conclusions

This part of the OTI program has contributed to the Sri Lankan public awareness about the CFA and the need for peace and stability. During 2003-2004 when there was still optimism about the prospects for peace, Sri Lankan young people were especially keen to participate in festivals, cultural events, and art productions. Despite the fact that OTI programs on this level were not planned concretely or with an intention to directly link them to a policy or decision maker, nevertheless, they have contributed to maintaining the message of peace and negotiation in the Sri Lankan public space – a task that is much needed, especially during a period of escalation and collapse of negotiation. Also, there appears to be uncertainty among OTI staff about the actual importance of the kind of media messages promoted by OTI programs. Thus it is difficult to determine a direct and concrete impact that OTI peace-building media and information programs have had on the Sri Lankan population generally, or on Colombo macro policy makers. While the team did not agree with the conclusion expressed by several Sri Lankan grantees active in media and cultural programs that "we have failed," the team does believe that it is very difficult to develop enough "media power" to counter the prevalence of a media establishment largely devoted to propagating a lopsided, one dimensional view of the conflict. But such efforts have to start somewhere, and OTI has supported an important step into that direction – several interviewees confirmed that the regional Internews offices are certainly new and pioneering in their mission in the Sri Lankan context.

The Internews project, which was initiated after the Tsunami, had a regional focus. It too, provided a valuable space for aspiring Sri Lankan journalists, especially radio journalists, to develop a new kind of reporting on the conflict. The two Internews offices provided an

opportunity for journalists from mixed background (ethnically as well as politically) to interact and learn new methods and more balanced ways to report on the conflict.

At the time of the evaluation, the Internews Centers, which had just been launched, did not have the time to have a significant impact on the quality, objectivity, and relevance of radio transmitted information, although there is some evidence that giving voice to local views is valued in the regions. Training young journalists and giving them opportunities for air time is a worthy enterprise, but within the larger environment of ideological and politicized journalism, it offers few incentives or opportunities for a journalistic career consistent with the values/ethics and professionalism being taught by Internews Centers. It is hoped that when the operation of the Centers is taken up by the Sri Lankan Press Institute as planned, they will sustain the program long enough to influence the direction of media organization and programming in Sri Lanka.

Other forms of disseminating accurate information during the Tsunami were supported by OTI, most notably in Galle where fishing communities created their own "information centers" that became more valued by INGOs and others than Sri Lankan government efforts to estimate the damage and needs of local communities.

5. Relevance of the OTI program to USAID future strategy

OTI's program experience has clearly influenced the shape, location and direction of the emerging USAID Mission strategy, as interviews with Mission leadership have determined. OTI's growing experience with local government, its investments in public infrastructure, livelihood projects, vocational training, and micro-savings and loan schemes offer a rich menu of lessons learned.

One of the major challenges facing the new USAID strategy will be to develop a well coordinated and even integrated approach in its efforts to bring together democracy and governance programs with its economic development investments. The difficulties of achieving this kind of synergy cannot be underestimated. Everyone agrees that coordination is necessary, but at the end of the day incentive structures, contract requirements, and bureaucratic turf protection serves to reinforce the "stove-piping" tendency found throughout USAID programs. Even among the Democracy and Governance (DG)/Peace Building area involving OTI, the People's Forum program run by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) and the Local Government Strengthening program implemented by The Asia Foundation, all USAID funded, the evaluation team found little real intersect or synergy between these programs in the communities where all three were operating. This is not meant as a criticism of OTI. Responsibility for coordination and synergy lies with the USAID Mission leadership.

Another major challenge would be to do what OTI could not do by itself. That would be to link DG and Economic Growth programs in the regions to policy and political decision making in Colombo. USAID understands well the critical nature of these linkages. Efforts to strengthen local government will not succeed if national policy decisions thwart any real devolution of power to local authorities, to cite one example.

Sub-Conclusion

OTI's contribution to USAID strategy development has been substantial. As USAID moves forward, it is hoped that both the strengths and weaknesses of the OTI program will be carefully analyzed and incorporated into the new USAID development strategy.

VII. General Conclusions

1. The OTI program in Sri Lanka, by making 645 grants throughout most of the country under the control of the Sri Lankan government, did serve to demonstrate and reinforce the US Government's foreign policy commitment to support a negotiated peace settlement. By its location in many conflict affected zones, OTI demonstrated an "on the ground" presence and ability to promote understanding of the requirements of a negotiated settlement, produce more favorable attitudes towards peace at the local level, and provide a wide variety of material benefits to populations woefully underserved by their own government or by foreign donors. Moreover, OTI gave the US Embassy valuable knowledge and understanding of local conditions in the areas where it worked, a value that could not be provided by any other US entity. In terms of OTI's mandate to 'be political', these benefits to US policy may be sufficient to justify the program, and no further evaluative comment may be needed. OTI did what it does best – moved quickly, made grants in risky environments, and promoted participation and peace, while avoiding the risk of grantee financial impropriety and fraud. When the Tsunami hit, OTI was there. Although Tsunami relief and rehabilitation with Supplemental Funds forced OTI into a very different mode of operation, it was able to adjust and carry out the US commitment to provide direct assistance and rehabilitative support to the affected areas. No other US organization was in a position to do this.

2. Grants are the key means by which OTI expects to have impact. The grant obligation rate, or "burn rate" is, as discussed above, an important measure used by OTI to monitor its own performance. For this reason, there is considerable pressure to make grants, especially when the OTI budget increased substantially due to the response to the Tsunami. This pressure falls on the all levels of OTI organization, but especially on the Program Development Officers, whose job it is to find suitable grantees and develop the terms of each grant. As shown in the findings, PDOs felt that the pressure to make grants did make it difficult to develop a more studied and interactive dialogue with promising grantees. OTI needs to consider ways to balance the pressure to make grants with a more programmatic or strategic approach to achieving its objectives.

3. The OTI program in Sri Lanka has produced important benefits to the language of peace, and to development of assets for peace in terms of trained personnel, strengthened leadership groups, and demonstrable attitudinal and behavioral change among the thousands of persons affected by the 645 grants at the national and local level. The most visible impacts have occurred in those communities where OTI managed to vertically focus its grant activities into an integrated and multi-faceted grant partnership. In

addition to these changes, OTI's contribution to livelihoods, local infrastructure, and in some cases local quality of life has been substantial.

4. OTI responded to the challenge of the Tsunami and the post Tsunami rehabilitation period with commitment, ingenuity and the effective use of its unique capacity "on the ground" in the hardest hit areas. Constrained by the terms of the Tsunami Supplemental appropriation, OTI did its best to retain its original mandate. Ultimately the need to program Tsunami funding resulted in a major redirection of OTI's program.

5. In its limited capacity and role OTI can not be successful in building a 'critical mass' of political support for peace sufficient to prevent the deterioration of the peace process. Nevertheless, despite the negative trends that were emerging by 2004, during the second year of the OTI program, its local level grant making and national media and cultural campaigns certainly planted future seeds as well as supported other local forces who worked toward peace and resumption of genuine negotiation.

6. OTI did not invest great efforts or planning in building or linking together viable networks and coalitions of leaders at the local level who were prepared to give voice to what almost all agree is a widespread desire for peace on the part of most Sri Lankan residing in the OTI zones of influence.

7. OTI did not succeed, or pay much attention to promoting advocacy or building support for "pressuring" elite decision-makers to provide the political support to a negotiated settlement. An open question is whether a "bottom-up" approach to peace building could have had much impact as conditions in Sri Lanka deteriorated. Much of the evidence developed in this evaluation points to causal factors that reside with policies and vested interests at levels quite beyond what could be touched by OTI's programs. Similarly, most interviewees and OTI respondents do not believe that local hostility is currently the cause of sectarian conflict. A substantial majority of OTI staff, 68 percent either agree or strongly agree that "the only solution to the conflict is some sort of federal or decentralized structure that gives autonomy and local self governance to the Tamil areas." Unless the political and governmental leadership on both sides returns to the premises of the CFA, it is unlikely that any foreign donor program, including OTI, can have much impact. After all, OTI is the *Office of Transition Initiatives.*

   Where there is no "transition," OTI's initiatives cannot be expected to turn the tide.

Annex 1: SLTI Timeline

Sri Lanka Transition Initiative Timeline ***Important contextual events in Sri Lanka are italicized***			
Date	**Transition Event**	**Description**	**People Involved**
Feb-02	*Government and Tamil Tiger rebels sign a permanent ceasefire agreement paving the way for talks to end the long-running conflict. The peace initiative is sponsored by Norway.*		
Mar-02	*The road linking the Jaffna peninsula with the rest of Sri Lanka reopens after 12 years; passenger flights to Jaffna resume.*		
Sep-02	*Government lifts ban on Tamil Tigers - a rebel demand. First round of talks begins in Thailand. Both sides exchange prisoners of war for first time. Rebels drop demand for separate state.*		
Nov-02	Conflict Vulnerability Assessment	Included OTI/CMM	Justin Sherman (OTI), Thomas W. Stukel (OTI), & Alfred Nakatsuma (EGAT)
Dec-02	*At peace talks in Norway the government and rebels agree to share power. Under the deal, minority Tamils would have autonomy in the mainly Tamil-speaking north and east.*		
12/9/2002	OTI SLT decides to go to Sri Lanka		David Taylor, Greg Gottlieb, Larry Meserve, Roger Conrad, Gerry Render, Tjip Walker, Mary Stewart, Angela Martin, Chris O'Donnell, & Justin Sherman
1/15/2003	OTI submits Hill Report on SLTI		
Feb-03	*Peace process talks get under way in Berlin.*		
Feb-03	Rachel Wax assists Start up from DC as Sri Lanka PM		
2/13/2003	OTI/SL CR Justin Sherman arrives in Sri Lanka		
2/25/2003	DAI awarded SWIFT I Task	Ceiling $6,162,063.	

	Order for SLTI	Period of Performance 2/25/03-9/30/04.	
3/1/2003	DAI COP Laurie Pierce arrives in Colombo		
3/3/2003	DAI Advance Team arrives in Colombo to begin office start up		
3/3/2003	OTI Field Advisor Tom Stukel arrives for 3 weeks to undertake extensive field trips in the east and south with Mike DeSisti, USAID's Special Projects Officer (mission point person working with OTI).		Tom Stukel (OTI/Field Advisor), Mike Desisti (USAID/SL)
3/5/2003	DAI gets pre-grant authorization letter and signs contract.		
3/11/2003	OTI ANE Team Leader Karma Lively arrives for 2 weeks to assist with start up by setting up OTI's management system, training new staff, preparing OTI's outreach materials, and assisting with interviews.		Karma Lively (OTI/ANE Team Leader)
3/17/2003	First grant signed by CR Justin Sherman for the Karuna Center for Peace, for a planning workshop for training for trainers for a reconciliation program.		Justin Sherman (OTI/SL CR)
3/19/2003	DAI identifies office space and all staff for the Colombo office (14 staff including FSN program development officers, grant managers, and procurement, finance, logistics, admin, and drivers).		
3/20/2003	OTI Field Advisor Don Krumm undertakes 5 weeks of extensive field trips with Mike DeSisti to the North, East, and South to follow up on grant proposals identified during the first field trips, and develop new contacts/projects for review.		Don Krumm (OTI/Field Advisor), Mike Desisti (USAID/SL)
3/27/2003	USAID/OTI identifies a project assistant (from within existing mission staff).		Samanthi De Costa (OTI/FSN)
Apr-03	*Tamil Tigers suspend their participation in peace talks, saying they are being marginalized.*		
4/26/03-	Media Assessment by Edie	John Langlois provided	Edie Bowles (OTI/Field

5/27/03	Bowles	input into the assessment from Washington, DC	Advisor)
10/1/2003	SLTI Initial Strategy developed		
Nov-03	*President Kumaratunga dismisses three ministers, suspends parliament. She had been at odds with government over peace process. Parliament reopens after two weeks but negotiations with Tamil Tigers are put on hold.*		
Dec-03	SLTI Final Strategy developed		
Mar-04	*Renegade Tamil Tiger commander, known as Karuna, leads split in rebel movement and goes underground with his supporters.*		
5/14/2004	Due to unexpected infusion of Mission ESF fund challenging the contract ceiling, DAI SWIFT I Task Order prepares for close out.	Mod 5 decreases ceiling, changes period of performance and fully fund the contract.	
4/1/2004	Lee Briggs is hired by OTI, through DAI, as a consultant on a six-month contract to develop and implement a field-based small grants M&E mechanism, which seeks to identify best practices and lessons learned. His consultancy ends 09/31/2004.		
Apr-04	*Early general elections held amid political power struggle. Party of President Kumaratunga wins 105 of 225 parliamentary seats, falling short of overall majority. Mahinda Rajapakse sworn in as prime minister.*		
Jul-04	*Suicide bomb blast in Colombo - the first such incident since 2001 - raises fears for the fragile peace process.*		
8/1/2004	DAI awarded sole source contract for SLTI	Ceiling $14M. Period of Performance 8/1/2004 - 3/31/2006.	
Sep-04	OTI Sri Lanka Mid-term Assessment Report by Eleanor Bedford and Oren Murphy, September 2004		Eleanor Bedford (OTI/Field Advisor) & Oren Murphy (OTI/Field Advisor)
9/29/2004	September 29 and September 30, 2004, the OTI/Sri Lanka leadership program staff met to review the findings of the grants		

	monitoring work that had been conducted over the previous three months and the findings and recommendations made by the mid-term assessment team.		
9/30/2004	DAI SWIFT I Task Order closes		
Oct-04	SLTI Retargeting Strategy		Mary Stewart (OTI/Field Advisor), Eleanor Bedford (OTI/Field Advisor), and Rachel Wax (OTI/ANE PM)
12/13/2004	SLTI Programming Meeting in Nuwara Eliya	The first quarterly program development meeting (all PDOs and Sr Mgmt staff) and became a regular part of OTI's strategy evaluation/revision process	
12/26/2004	*Asian Tsunami. More than 30,000 people are killed when massive waves, generated by a powerful undersea earthquake off the coast of Indonesia, devastate coastal communities. Hundreds of thousands are forced from their homes. The government declares a national disaster.*		
12/28/2004	OFDA TDYers Bill Berger, Ron Libby and Scott Hocklander arrived		
12/29/2004	DAI CoP Laurie Pierce arrived in Trincomalee to manage the field office until return of RPM Brenda Barrett. DAI Ops Manager Matt Buzby arrived in Amparai in place of RPM Wayne Brook. This was the first day both offices opened since the 12/26 disaster.		
12/30/2004	Brenda returned early from holiday leave on 12/30. She met with Mike and OFDA's Bill Berger, who had just returned from his assessment in Trinco, before heading into the field.		
1/4/2005	Fritz Weden, former USAID Mission Director in Indonesia, travels to Sri Lanka on January 4 for 3 ½ weeks to assist the DART		Fritz Weden (OTI)

	in looking at mid and long term programming options (as opposed to immediate humanitarian relief)		
1/6/2005	OTI response to Tsunami		
1/6/2005	Amparai Regional Program Manager Wayne Brook returns to Sri Lanka on January 6 and will travel to Amparai the following day after briefings in Colombo.		
1/6/2005	Jason Aplon travels to Sri Lanka on January 6 through February 3, to serve as a military liaison officer for the DART.		Jason Aplon (OTI/Field Advisor)
1/7/2005	OTI CR Justin Sherman cut short his leave in Washington and will return to office on January 7.		
1/14/2005	OFDA adds $2.5 M to OTI/DAI contract for Tsunami Relief work		
3/11/2005	DAI contract SOW changed to be able to work on Tsunami Relief Work.		
4/1/2005	Mike Desisti becomes OTI/SL CR, and Justin Sherman becomes OTI/ANE Team Leader		
5/18/2005	Lee Briggs arrives in Colombo to begin his two-year contract as OTI M&E Specialist.		
5/23/2005	Sri Lanka Program Review		Don Krumm (OTI/Field Advisor), Fritz Weden (OTI), Karen Smith (OTI/ANE PM), & John Gattorn (OTI/AFR PM)
6/6/2005	DAI Contract extended to March 31, 2008, ceiling increased to $45M and ODFA adds $400K to contract for Tsunami Relief work		
Jun-05	*Deal reached with Tamil Tiger rebels to share nearly $3bn in Tsunami aid among Sinhalas, Tamils and Muslims. Sinhala nationalist JVP party pulls out of coalition in protest.*		
7/8/2005	Rachel Wax DCR arrives in Colombo, & Elizabeth Callendar becomes Sri Lanka Program Manager		
7/28/2005	Mission adds $19.9 M from the Tsunami Supplemental Fund to the DAI contract for 1) Small Scale Infrastructure, 2)		Carol Becker (USAID/SL MD)

	Livelihoods and 3) Info Dissemination		
Aug-05	*State of emergency declared after Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar is assassinated.*		
Nov-05	*Mahinda Rajapakse, prime minister at the time, wins presidential elections. Most Tamils in areas controlled by the Tamil Tigers do not vote.*		
Jan-06	Elizabeth Callendar goes to Liberia as Field Program Manager, and Christie Sunwoo is hired as Sri Lanka Program Manager		
Feb-06	*Government and Tamil Tiger rebels declare their respect for the 2002 ceasefire at talks in Geneva.*		
2/15/2006	Internews Network signs Cooperative Agreement	Ceiling $1.3 M Period of Performance 2/15/06 - 8/14/07.	Ivan Sigal (Internews/Asia) & Matt Abud (Internews/SL)
2/25/2006 - 3/10/2006	Media TDY by John Langlois TO oversee the implementation of a the Internews Cooperative Agreement.		
May-06	*Tamil Tiger rebels attack a naval convoy near Jaffna. International monitors describe the deadly attack as a "gross violation" of the 2002 ceasefire.*		
May-06	Sri Lanka PPR Field Review		Eleanor Bedford (OTI/Field Advisor), John Gattorn (OTI/AFR PM), & Michelle Girard (OTI/WBG DCR)
Jun-06	*64 people are killed in a mine attack on a bus in Anuradhapura district. Days later, more than 30 people are killed in a land and sea battle between government forces and Tamil Tiger rebels.* *Tamil Tigers insist that most of the 65-person Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission be replaced in light of an EU terror ban against the rebels.*		
Jun-06	Sri Lanka Program Performance Review		John Langlois (OTI/Media Specialist),

			John Gattorn (OTI/AFR PM), Karen Kaplan (OTI/AFR PM), & Dan Henry (OTI/OPS)
Aug-06	*Tamil Tiger rebels and government forces clash in the north-east. It is the worst fighting since the 2002 ceasefire. Hundreds of people are killed and the UN says tens of thousands have fled their homes.*		
Sep-06	*The government says it has pushed Tamil Tiger rebels from the mouth of strategic Trincomalee harbor. This is seen as the first major capture of enemy territory by either side since a 2002 ceasefire.*		
Oct-06	*A suicide bomber attacks a military convoy, killing more than 90 sailors.* *Tamil Tigers attack a naval base in Galle, the southern city frequented by tourists.* *Peace talks resume in Geneva but fail over the rebels' demand that the government reopen a key highway to Tamil-dominated Jaffna peninsula that was closed owing to fighting in August.*		
Oct-06	SLTI All Staff Mtg in Dambulla		
10/23/2006 - 11/4/2006	Media TDY by John Langlois to provide guidance to the Internews media training and production project.		
Jan-07	SLTI Final Evaluation		Richard Blue (SI) and Mohammed Abu Nimer (DAI)
Mar-07	OTI Handover of SLTI to USAID/Sri Lanka Mission		Becky Cohn (USAID/SL MD)
Aug-08	Internews Network Cooperative Agreement ends		
Mar-08	DAI Contract ends		

Annex 2: *Local Level* Peace Process Model

An Ideal Type – *Local Level* Peace Process Model

1. A grantee constituency (community, etc), which believes that they have a problem of sectarian strife or does in fact have a history of such problems. (Many local CBO leaders denied that there were problems between the communities in their area/domain.)

2. A grantee that is sufficiently trained in peace building and other participatory processes and is able to implement the "process" effectively. (In the context of Sri Lanka, grantee interviews supports this; it is challenging to find many organizations that were trained in, or skilled in 'peace process' use or training, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas).

3. A multi-phased process (interethnic contact and exchange activities, participatory decision making and collaborative work, timely results that are valued, and some form of follow-up activity to reinforce positive experience).

4. A public good or material benefit that was a valued product of the process (sense of ownership of something that provides benefits.)

5. Effective and timely implementation of OTI's 'in kind' responsibilities (delivery of inputs and payments)

6. Linking of grantee or participant leadership with other grantee groups sharing common concerns, challenges and values (coalition and network building).

7. Linking of grantee or participant leadership with local or higher levels of political and/or governmental process (vertical connectivity, empowerment, advocacy or other forms of expressing political support).

Annex 3: Evaluation Interview List

	Name	Organization/ Occupation	Title of Activity	Location of Meeting	Date
1	Ismail, Fazni	NYSC	-	-	
2	Buddhapriya, W.A Nirodha	NYSC	-	-	-
3	Juyaween, Amali Thathsarani	SLBC	-	-	-
4	Wasontua, G.M	SLBC	-	-	-
5	Sellahewa, Maheshi Prasangani	Youth Media Club	-	-	-
6	Yaume, GG Bonsa Bharathis	Youth Media Club	-	-	-
7	Arachahi, RP Kodagoda	Youth Media Club	-	-	-
8	Rathnayake, Nihal	"Apeksha" Media Unit	-	-	-
9	Madushika, Mahori	Vidusara Paper	-	-	
10	Mahinoa, TK	NYSC	-	-	-
11	Jayasehara, Chaminda	NYSC	-	-	-
12	Aviyarathna, N.A.	SANASA	-	-	-
13	Shanika, W.T.	SANSA	-	-	-
14	Samar, H.M. Thusitha	Youth Environmental Forum	-	-	-
15	Menike, H.N.M.B	Youth Environmental Forum	-	-	-
16	Hewage, C.	Youth Environmental Forum	-	-	-
17	Gamage, H.G.R.P.	Youth Environmental Forum	-	-	-
18	Thusanka, Ramil	Youth Environmental Forum	-	-	-
19	Gunawardana, Wilson	Samadeepa Future Pacas AYP	Evaluation Team Meeting	Anuradhapura	1/6/2007
20	Gunasena, M.R.	National Goat Council	Evaluation Team Meeting	Anuradhapura	1/6/2007
21	Kumara, BA Asaha	Rajanata Janodoya	Evaluation Team Meeting	Anuradhapura	1/6/2007
22	Tennakoo, Udaya R	CCSD DAIC 526	Evaluation Team Meeting	Anuradhapura	1/6/2007
23	Indrajith, Aruma	NICU Anuradahapora	Evaluation Team Meeting	Anuradhapura	1/6/2007
24	Sivanayagram, Rev. Sujithar	Methodist Church Muthur	Muthur Peace Cmte.	Trinco	1/8/2007
25	Esparan, Rev. M.R.	Methodist	Muthur Peace	Trinco	1/8/2007

		Church Hatton	Cmte.		
26	Ithrees, S.M.	SERDO	-	Trinco	1/8/2007
27	Mahfoob, A.F.	SERDO	-	Trinco	1/8/2007
28	Tharsini, S.	NESED	-	Trinco	1/8/2007
29	Anoja, M.	NESED	-	Trinco	1/8/2007
30	Sangeeyan, M.	NESED	-	Trinco	1/8/2007
31	Florance, L.	CTF	-	-	1/8/2007
32	Violet, V.	CTF	-	-	1/8/2007
33	Rairkumar	NYSC	-	-	1/8/2007
34	Janode, Ghar	SLRC	-	-	1/8/2007
35	Mohanaruban, V.	SLRCS	-	-	1/8/2007
36	Sajith, ASM	CTF	Tsunami Cleanup	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
37	Elthar, K.M.	Fisherman	Tsunami Cleanup	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
38	Selvaraj, M.	Fisherman	Tsunami Cleanup	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
39	Yagarajkuma, S.	NYSC	Tsunami Cleanup Org.	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
40	Ravikumar, S	NYSC	Tsunami Cleanup Org.	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
41	Violet, MS	DYKE Street Trinco	Tsunami Cleanup Org.	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
42	Farhana, M.R.	DYKE Street Trinco	Tsunami Cleanup Org.	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
43	Anonymous		CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
44	Anonymous		CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
45	Anonymous		CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
46	Herath, Anula	CESCOI	CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
47	Chandricekara, W.M	CESCOI	CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
48	Kamaradoa, A.M	CESCOI	CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
49	Herath, H.M.H.B.	CESCOI	CESCOI-484-4 and PKBE-437-3	-	1/9/2007
50	Dingsh, M.	-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
51		-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
52	Bandara, W.N.	-	-	Gomarankadawela,	1/9/2007

				Trinco	
53	Randika, N.	-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
54	Nadeeka, N.	-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
55	Kusumalatha, D.	-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
56	Husair, M.M.	-	-	Gomarankadawela, Trinco	1/9/2007
57	Hamid, ALS	President of Mosque	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
58	Mahifal, KM	Fisheries Society	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli i	1/10/2007
59	Sakthivel, A.	Farmer	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
60	Salam, MA Abdul	Builder	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
61	Ithree, S.M.	Rural Development Society	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
62	Sahundala, T.	Housewife	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
63	Kalifa, S.	Housewife	Pulmoddai Case Study:	Kuchchaveli	1/10/2007
64	Sampath, E. Eshan	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
65	Sampath, J.D. Duminda	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
66	Sampath, E.Nishan	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
67	Mancha, A. Gayan	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
68	Abeyrantne, M.A.K.	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
69	Chahdrageewa, J.	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
70	Buddika, I.G.	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
71	Pinstiri, W.T.	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
72	Rupasingeine, W.A.	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
73	Lasantha, D.G. Aruna	Tallala Support Group	-	Tallala	1/19/2007
74	Padmini, W.G. Neela	Divisional Secretariat Hambatota	Matara IV	Matara	1/18/2007
75	Gurawandare, IGA	Dickwella Pradesiya Sabr.	Matara IV	Matara	1/18/2007
76	Titin, NGS de	Dickwella Pradesiya Sabr	Matara IV	Matara	1/18/2007
77	Gunasekuya, Suranjikh	Conflict Study Centr of Ruhuna Matara	Matara IV	Matara	1/18/2007

78	Liyanage, Darshonna	Conflict Study Centr of Ruhuna Matara	Matara IV	Matara	1/18/2007
79	Jiffry, M.Him	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
80	Rishan, M.Sim	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
81	Mifra, M.	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
82	Rathnaweva, Mahindha	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
83	Sehavath, Rupa	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
84	Nafliya, R.	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
85	Riyasa, F.	Library Development Committee	Matara CDC #522	Matara	1/19/2007
86	Wanniarachchi, P.W.	T.D.A	Matara III-Theatre & Arts	Matara	1/18/2007
87	Kariyawasam, Wasantha	J.F.	Matara III-Theatre & Arts	Matara	1/18/2007
88	Amarasinghe, Jayantha	NCF	Matara III-Theatre & Arts	Matara	1/18/2007
89	Gamage, Nath	L.S.C.M.M.O.	Matara III-Theatre & Arts	Matara	1/18/2007
90	Kumara, J.M. Worna	L.S.C.M.M.O	Matara III-Theatre & Arts	Matara	1/18/2007
91	Dhammasena, Ven D.	KVTC	-	-	-
92	Hphl, HP	KVTC	-	-	-
93	Priyanga, W.G. Manjula	Yes Foundation	-	-	-
94	Thero, Keradewala Pancharataana	Sahata Sucharitha Padanama	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
95	Icanarasinghe, Ranjith	Kiridioya Fanar Organization and Sahata Sucharitha	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
96	Dhammika, Chithrani, S.H.	Janadiriya National Women's Devleopment Foundation	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
97	Mangalika, SP Sayana	Women's Development Federation	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007

98	Weerasinghe, Samanthi	Arunalu Community Development Fund	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
99	Kanthi, Iresha Nelum	Arunalu Community Development Foundation	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
100	Kannangoda, Nilanthi	RNGO Federation	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
101	Sundara, N. Ariya	EPF	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
102	Wellala, W.W.	CDC	Matara Group II	Matara	1/18/2007
103	Borham, JWM	YMCA	-	-	1/8/2007
104	Nannoo, M.S.	ERO	-	-	1/8/2007
105	Laxmanau, S.	ERO	-	-	1/8/2007
106	Lakmali, WHN	VOVCOD	-	-	1/8/2007
107	Samaraween, W.A.	SUREKUMA	-	-	1/8/2007
108	Jayalkale, U.B.	SUREKUMA	-	-	1/8/2007
109	Sivachadar, N	SLRCS	-	-	1/8/2007
110	Layan, TM	SLRCS	-	-	1/8/2007
111	Sathiyathevan, S.	SDRO	-	-	1/8/2007
112	Jathindra, A.	SDRO	-	-	1/8/2007
113	Walaidchadra, V.	CHA	-	-	1/8/2007
114	Sarath, W.D.	NUYC	-	-	1/8/2007
115	Jeyamurtuuan, V.	TYDUP	-	-	1/8/2007
116	Velayuthon, I.P	VSDOW	-	-	1/8/2007
117	Wasanthi, RMD	VSDOW	-	-	1/8/2007
118	Ithayarani, S.	VSDOW	-	-	1/8/2007
119	Mangulika, W.A.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
120	de Silve, Rasika	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
121	Perera, Ranfanie	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
122	Aponsi, Vinikia	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
123	Mali, M.B.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
124	Pushpami, K Sujatha	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
125	Nirmathie, M.D.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
126	Wickramasingae, AGS	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
127	W	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
128	Kanthi, H.W.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
129	Meegda, Ariyawathi	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
130	Nilanthi, A.W.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
131	Kamani, L.L.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
132	Parwathi, V.P.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
133	Gunawathi, S.M.	I.ola Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007

134	Damayanthi, A.A.N.	I.Mola - Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
135	Siriyawathie, K.A.	I.Mola - Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
136	Dilrukobi, Chandrika, K.A	I.Mola - Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
137	Roshaw, Dantika, A.P.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
138	Ransani, Nayana P.D.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
139	Sriyani, M.	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007
140	Samanmali, Disna	Help-O	-	-	1/17/2007

Annex 4: SLTI Staff Survey

OTI Project Development and Grant Management Staff
Impact Questionnaire
OTI Final Impact Evaluation
1.2.2007

This questionnaire is to be completed by OTI project development and grant management staff. We are asking for your cooperation because as members of the OTI staff and as local citizens of Sri Lanka, you have greater insight into the challenges and accomplishments of the OTI program than any other group of people.

- **Your participation is voluntary.**
- **The answers you give will not be attributed to you,** but will be aggregated with those of other OTI staff who complete the survey.

The Questionnaire has three parts.

- **Part One** asks you to provide some background information about yourself to help the evaluators see if there are any patterns to thinking about this program based upon background, experience, or region.

- **Part Two** asks you to rate the projects that are or have been under your direct responsibility. A list of all grant funded activities that you have helped to develop or manage must be generated, and you are asked to mark each grant with your 'score' on two dimensions: first, the grantee's implementation performance; and second, **the effectiveness or IMPACT of the activity** on expanding information or promoting peace among diverse groups.

- **Part Three** relates to your understanding or perception of larger conflict issues in your community or in your region, and has three sections, which consist of a series of statements about OTI's work. For each statement you are asked to circle the term which best fits your understanding and experience.

Part One: Personal Information

1. My Job (circle or write the appropriate answer):

PDO GMO Other_____.

2. I work from the OTI office in (circle the appropriate answer):

Amparai Colombo Matara Trincomalee

3. I have done this job since (date: month/year): _____.

4. Professional Background (Education and Work experience):

Part Two: Grantee Performance and Grant Activity Impact

GRANT: DAIC_____

1. Grantee performance:

0 Grantee did not perform well
1 Grantee completed some things but with difficulties
2 Grantee implemented as expected
3 Grantee exceeded expectations

2. Grant Activity Impact (change in attitudes, behaviors, or initiatives occurred relevant to supporting or keeping the peace which continued in some way after OTI activity finished)

0 Activity had negative impact (things got worse)
1 Activity did not appear to have any impact, no change (neutral)
2 Activity resulted in good feelings, some attitudinal change, but no evidence of continued activity or longer term impact
3 Activity changed attitudes and behaviors with evidence of sustained or post-OTI initiatives

Part Three: Perception of Conflict Issues in Community or Region.

Section 3.1: In your experience, **what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants?** Please rate each factor listed below, according to your opinion or experience.

1. Positive external factors (national level leaders remain committed, negotiations are occurring, fear is diminishing, etc.) influence success for OTI projects.

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

2. People from diverse communities successfully work together for common good.

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

3. People from diverse communities meet and enjoy each others' cultural expressions (plays, songs, dances)

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

4. People WITHIN each community benefit from material improvements (roads, schools, livelihood, water and sanitation)

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

5. People from all communities have and use access to accurate and objective news and media information

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

6. People from diverse communities learn each other's language, or a common language such as English

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

7. Local leadership from diverse communities work together to resolve or mitigate conflicts between communities.

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

8. People have more accurate and objective information and this helps to prevent violence and conflicts.

A. No influence or relevance
B. Some Influence
C. Considerable Influence
D. One of the main factors

Part Three: Perception of Conflict Issues in Community or Region.

Section 3.2: Please examine each of the following statements. **Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each statement** as it applies to the local communities where you do your OTI work.

A.) Local people want peace, but the leaders of diverse groups are not willing to truly negotiate.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree

3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

B.) Government and Political leaders listen to the voices of local people.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

C.) Most of the violence comes from local people who start trouble or seek revenge on other communities in the area.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

D.) Where people of diverse communities live near each other, there is more distrust and potential for conflict than in areas where people are living far from other communities.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

E.) Even at the local level, most of the violence is started by people from outside the immediate region.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

F.) The only solution to the conflict is some sort of federal or decentralized structure which gives autonomy and local self governance to the Tamil areas.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

G.) In the local communities where OTI has been active most people are willing to accept a settlement based on political autonomy for the LTTE controlled areas.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

H.) In other geographic areas, where OTI has not been active, local people are much less willing to accept a settlement based on political autonomy for the LTTE controlled areas or devolution of authority.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Part Three: Your Perception of Conflict Issues in Community or Region

Section 3.3: Stepping back from your role as PDO, and taking a broader view as an OTI staff person, please **tell us your judgment about each of the following statements** by indicating your level of agreement.

A.) OTI has been very successful in changing local people's attitudes and behaviors in favor of peaceful resolution of conflict. (circle one)

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

B.) Because of OTI's work, people in OTI areas will/did vote for candidates who favor a negotiated political settlement to end the violence.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

C.) Because of OTI's work, people here are now working actively to prevent violence and keep the peace.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

D.) OTI has been very successful in providing relief to people stricken by the Tsunami.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

E.) OTI has been very successful in using the Tsunami reconstruction projects to actively promote cooperation, collaboration and positive attitudes between people of diverse communities.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

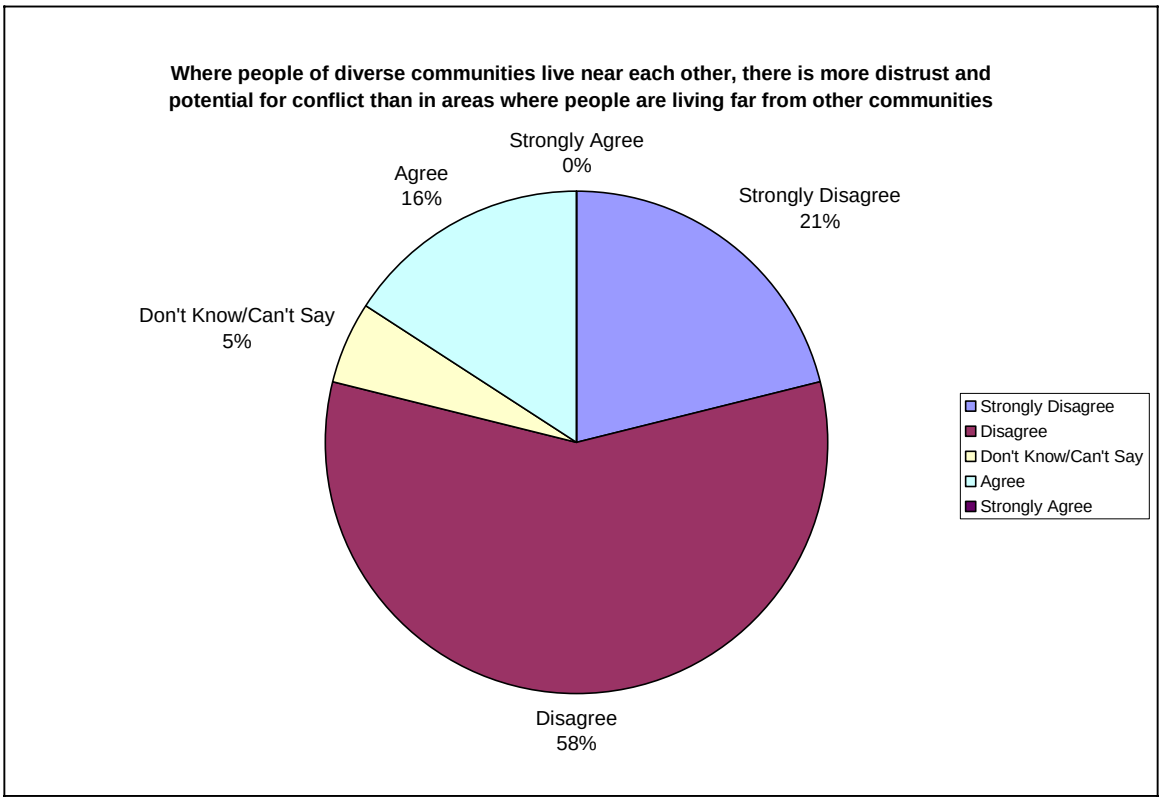
F.) OTI has been very successful in developing independent radio news and information that local people listen to and trust.

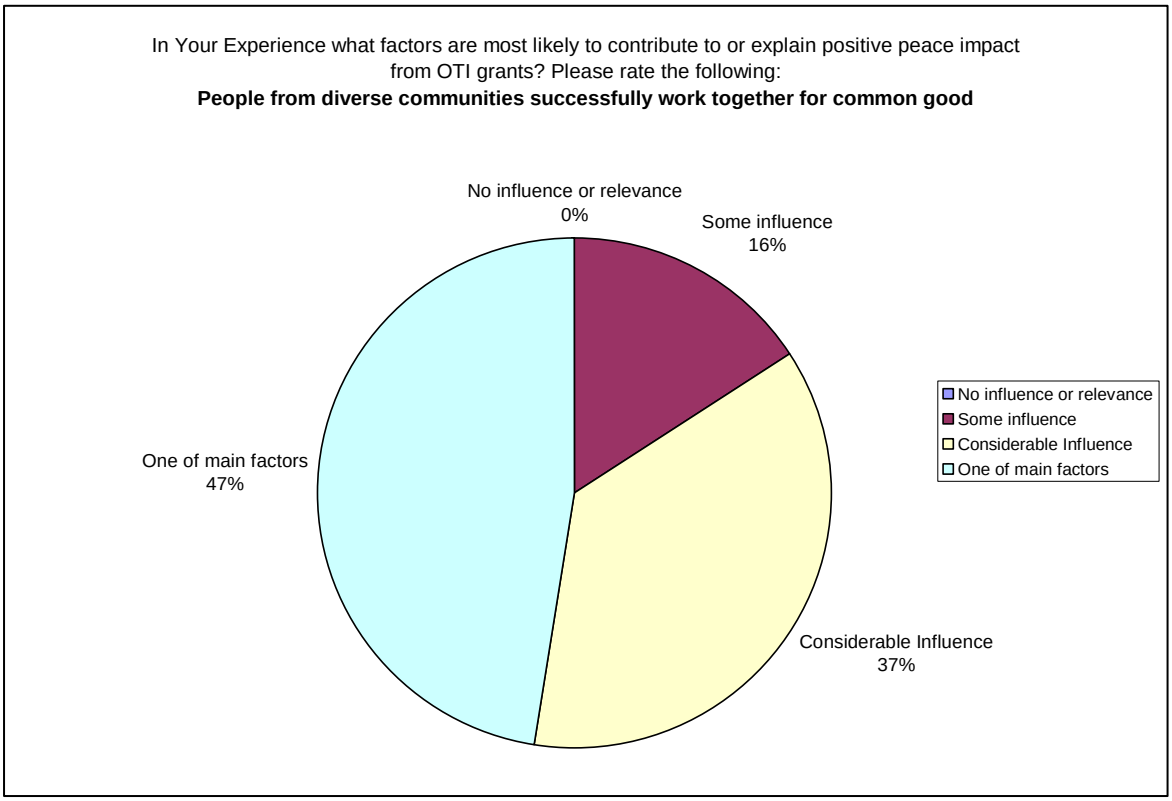
1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

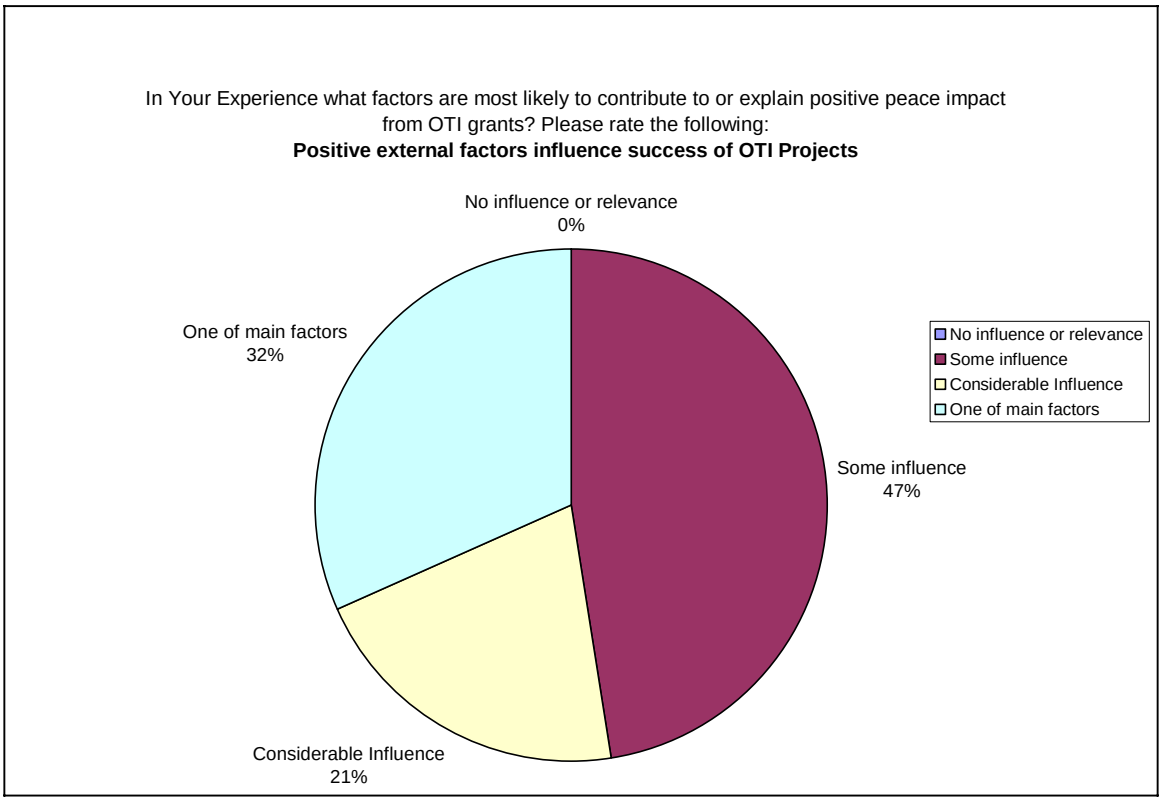
G.) After OTI leaves, local people will continue to work to promote peaceful cooperation and resolution of conflicts among diverse groups here.

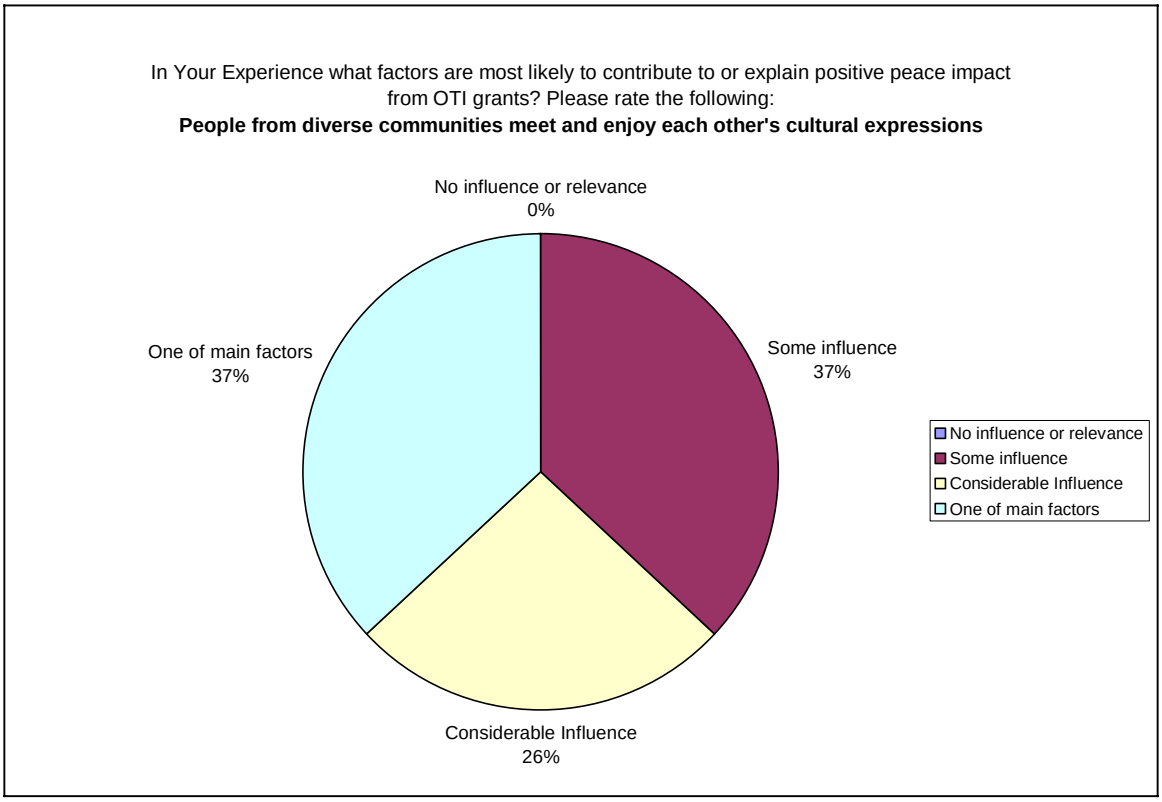
1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Don't Know/Can't say
4. Agree
5. Strongly Agree

Survey Responses to Part III (N=19)

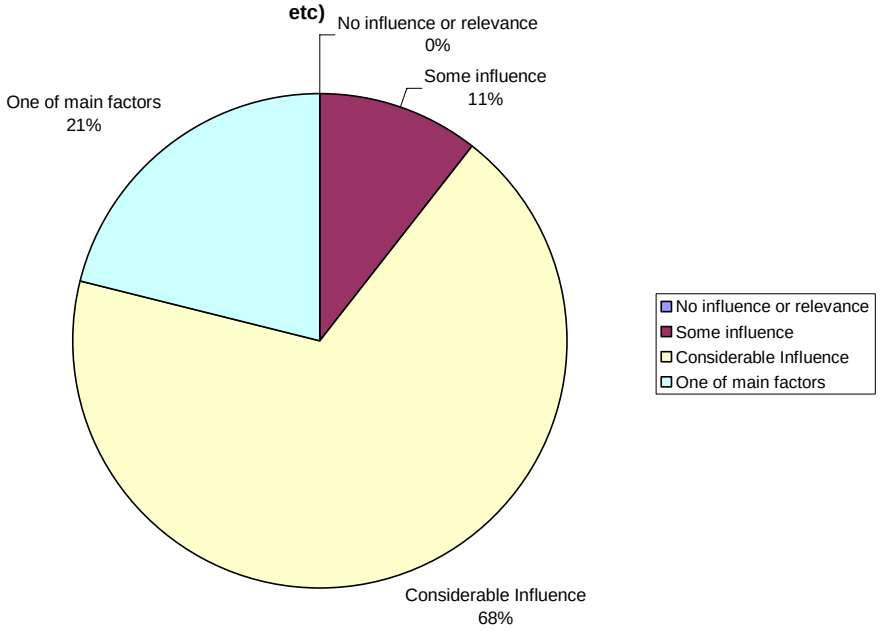




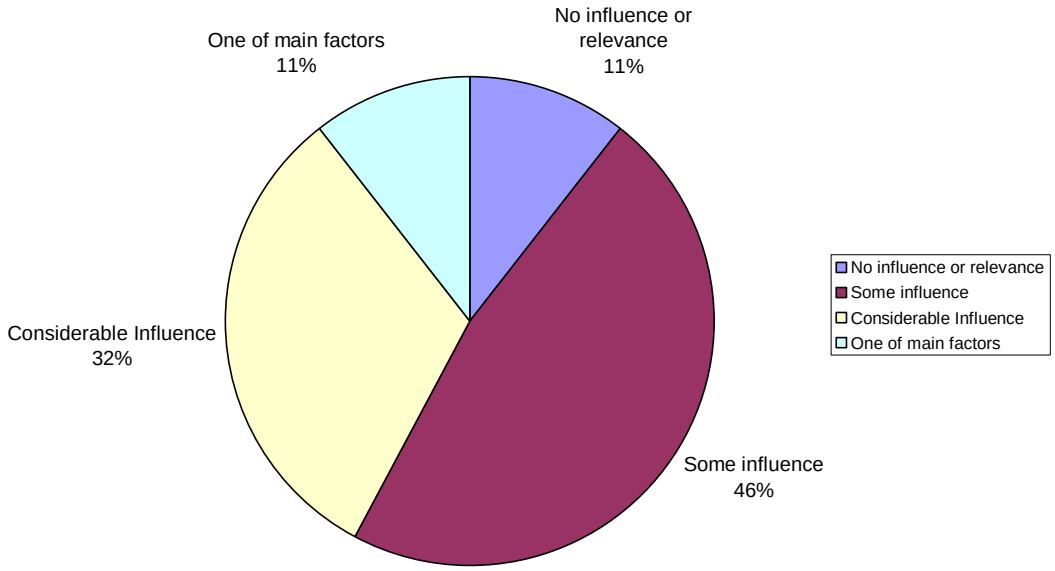

In Your Experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
Positive external factors influence success of OTI Projects
No influence or relevance 0%
Some influence 47%
Considerable Influence 21%
One of main factors 32%
No influence or relevance
Some influence
Considerable Influence
One of main factors


In Your Experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
People from diverse communities meet and enjoy each other's cultural expressions
No influence or relevance 0%
Some influence 37%
Considerable Influence 26%
One of main factors 37%
No influence or relevance
Some influence
Considerable Influence
One of main factors

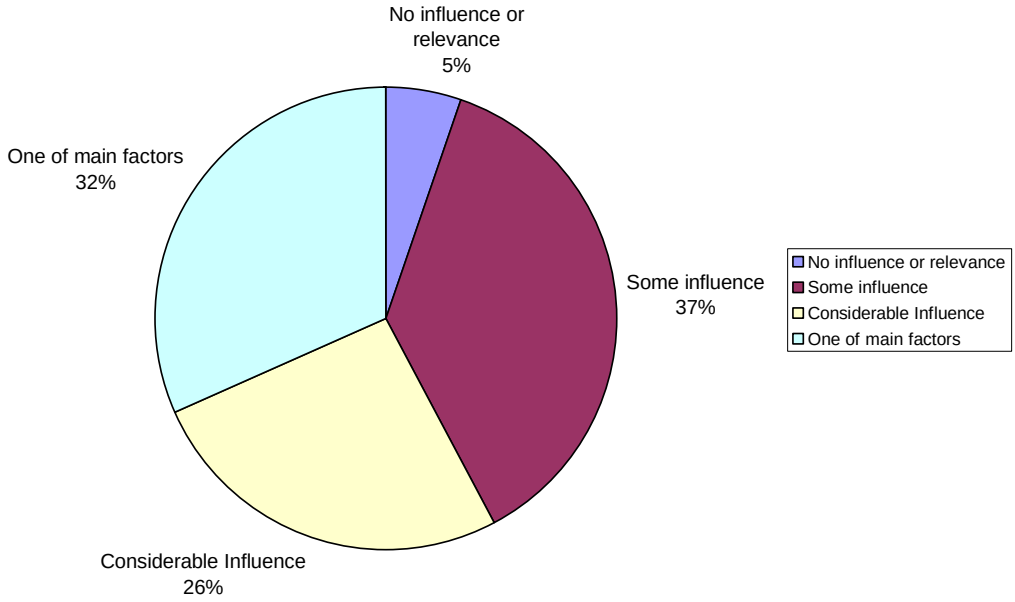
In your experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
People within each community benefit from material improvements (roads schools livelihood etc)



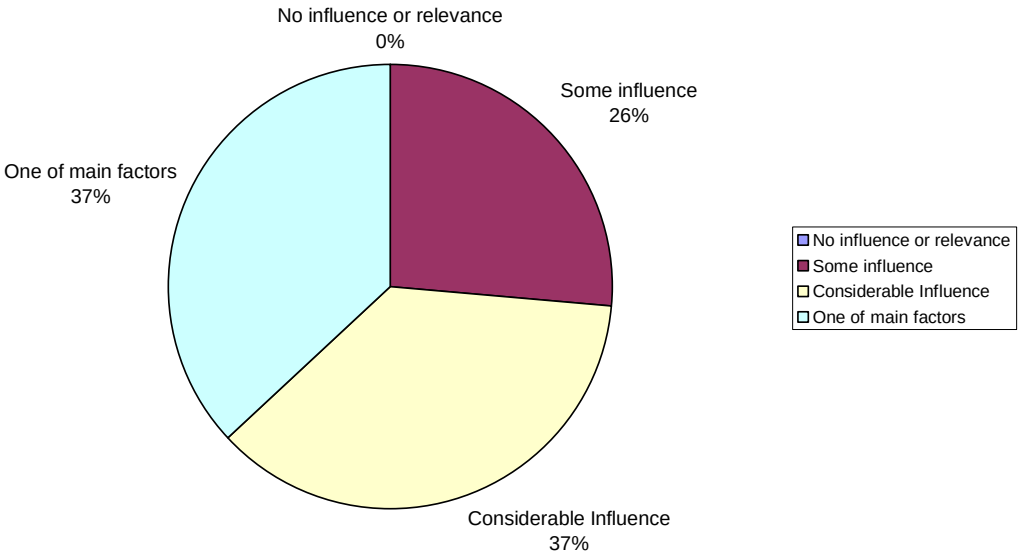
In your experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
People from all communities have and use access to accurate and objective news and media information



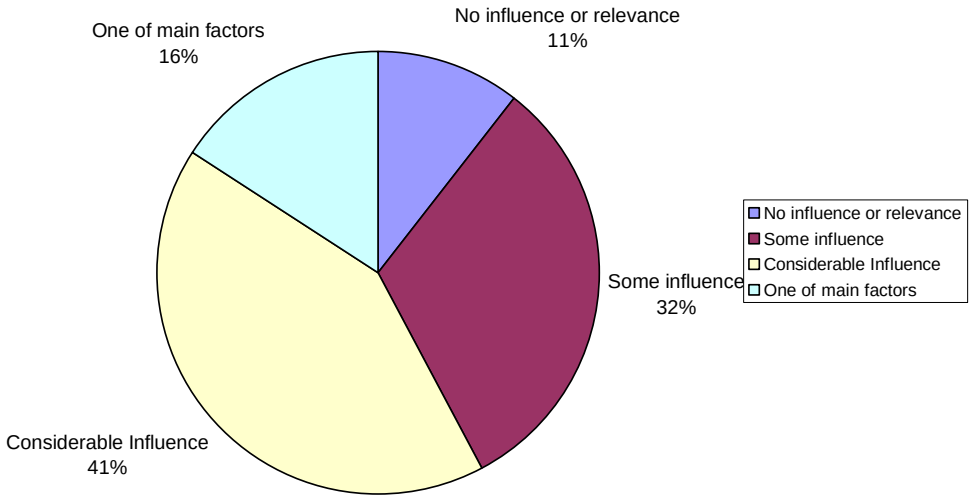
In your experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
Prople from diverse communities learn each other's language or a common language such as English



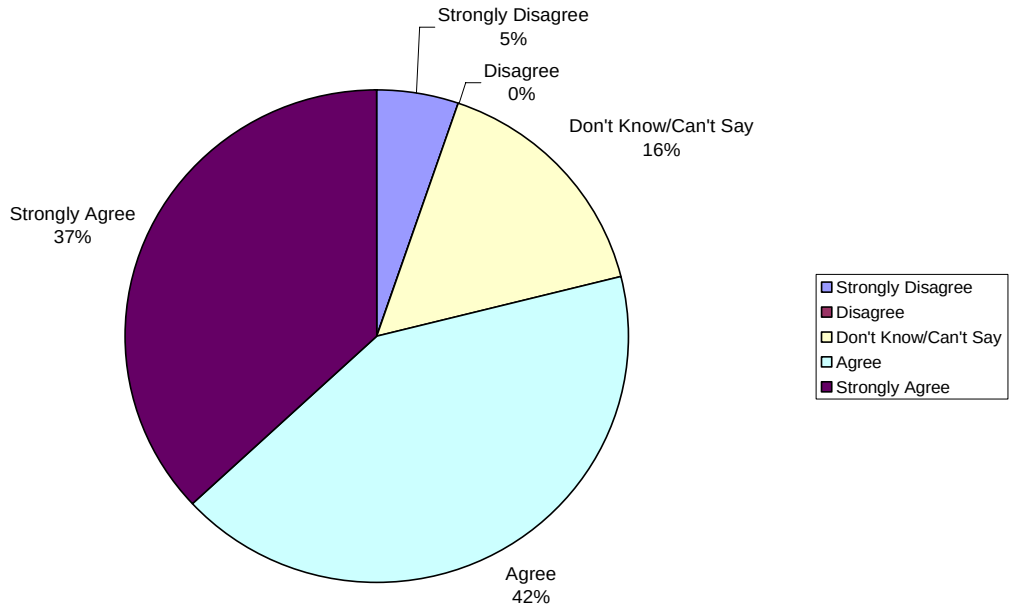
In your experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
Local leadership from diverse communities work together to resolve or mitigate conflicts between communities



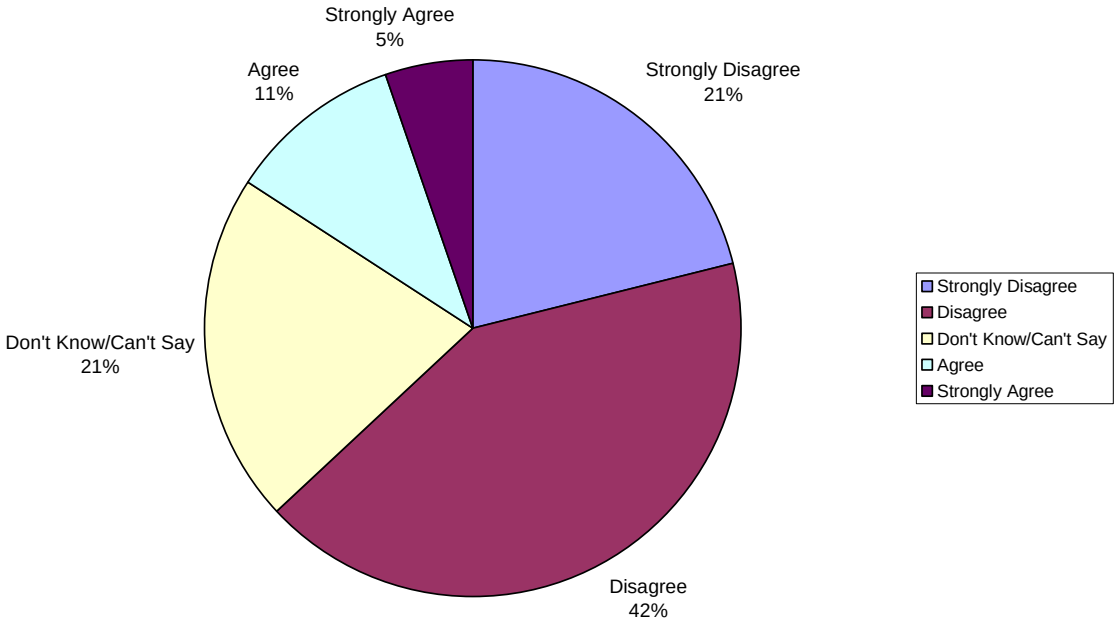
In your experience what factors are most likely to contribute to or explain positive peace impact from OTI grants? Please rate the following:
People have more accurate and objective information and this helps to prevent violence and conflicts



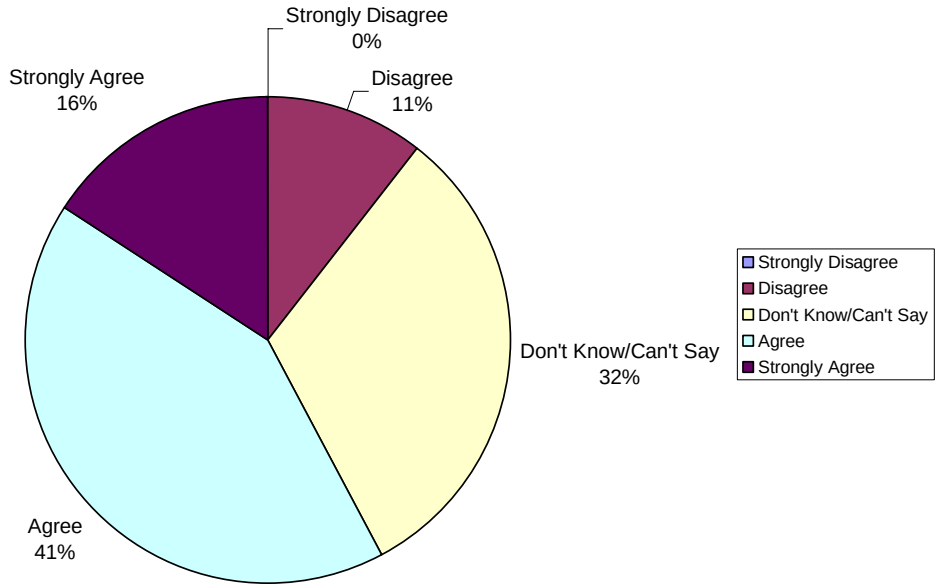
Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:
Local people want peace, but the leaders of diverse groups are not willing to truly negotiate



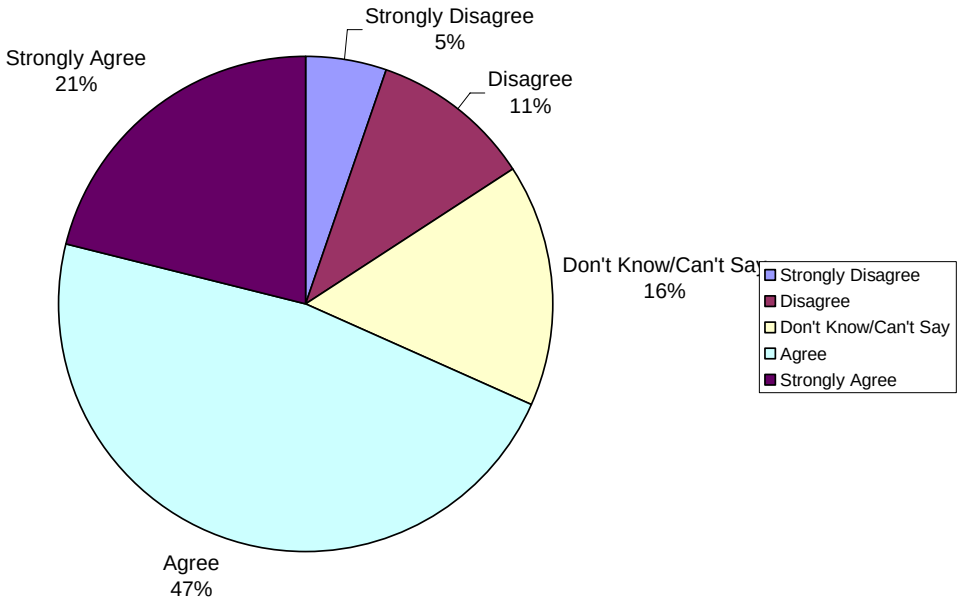
Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:
Most of the violence comes from local people who start trouble or seek revenge on other communities in the area



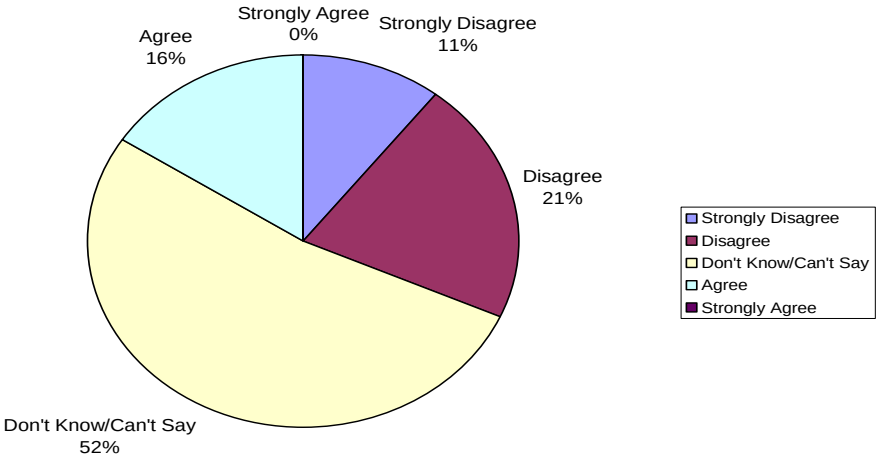
Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:
Even at local level most of the violence is started by people from otuside the immediate region



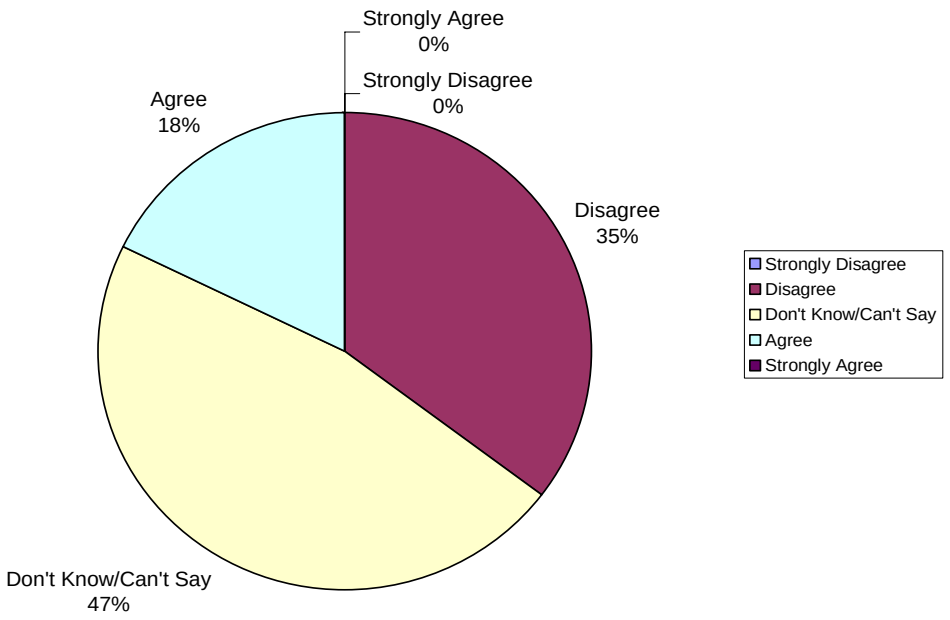
Indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statement:
The only solution to the conflict is some sort of federal or decentralized structure which gives autonomy and local self governance to the Tamil areas



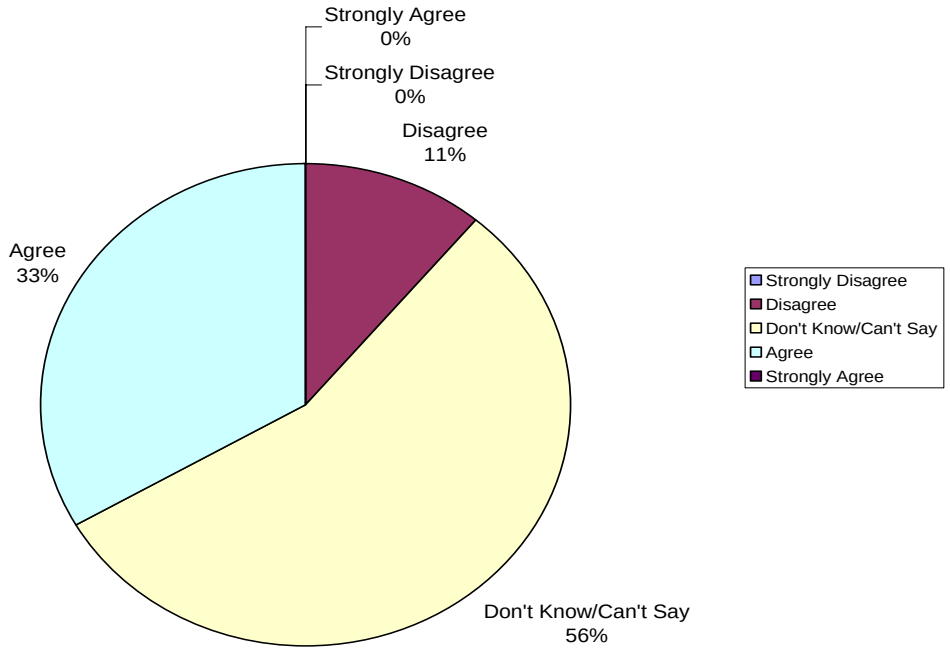
Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree:
In other geographic areas, where OTI has not been active, local people are much less willing to accept a settlement based on political autonomy for the LTTE controlled areas or devolution of authority



From a broader view as OTI staff member tell us your level of agreement or disagreement with following statement: **OTI has been very successful in developing independent radio news and information that local people listen to and trust**



From a broader view as OTI staff member tell us your level of agreement or disagreement with following statement: **After OTI leaves local people will continue to work to promote peaceful cooperation and resolution of conflicts among diverse groups here**



Annex 5: Evaluation Scope of Work

FINAL EVALUATION
SRI LANKA TRANSITION INITIATIVE
USAID/DCHA/OTI/SRI LANKA
STATEMENT OF WORK

Introduction

USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives' (OTI) mission is to support U.S. foreign policy objectives by helping local partners advance peace and democracy in priority countries in crisis. Seizing critical windows of opportunity, OTI works on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs.

Background

OTI's program in Sri Lanka started in February 2003, with the purpose of supporting peace talks between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), through generating greater support for a negotiated peace settlement to end the longstanding internal conflict. To accomplish this, OTI sought to:

- Increase awareness and understanding on transition issues, and change attitudes sustaining the conflict, through information dissemination, advocacy, dialogue and debate; and
- Mobilize and link peace constituencies through activities promoting inclusive, collaborative decision-making and resource allocation at the local level.

The program was radically altered on December 26, 2004 when, in one hour, a Tsunami claimed the lives of nearly half the number of Sri Lankans that have been killed in more than 20 years of armed conflict. While the program still work toward its original goal of generating greater support for a negotiated peace settlement, in July 2005 OTI received $22.5 million in additional funding to stabilize Tsunami-affected communities in six districts. OTI utilized its original peace building approach, specifically through small-scale infrastructure rehabilitation, livelihoods restoration, and activities fostering communication between citizens and local government authorities.

Now in its fourth year, the OTI program is implemented by two primary partners: Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI); and Internews Network, Inc.

DAI oversees the $51 million small-grants program and manages OTI offices in the capital of Colombo, the eastern towns of Trincomalee and Amparai, and Matara on the southern coast. From February 25, 2003 through August 2006, the OTI Sri Lanka program has awarded 571 grants worth $19.3 million. DAI's contract runs through March 2008.

Internews, under a $1.3 million agreement signed in February 2006, manages media resource centers in the South and East that provide access to knowledge, skills, equipment, and radio production opportunities for journalists and civil society organizations that seek to use media as a tool for advocacy or development. Programs developed within these centers are

broadcast over existing state and private networks, increasing the quantity and quality of news and information on issues of local importance from the regions as told through the voices of people who live there. The 18-month agreement runs through August 2007.

Additional information on OTI's program in Sri Lanka, including reports, success stories, and fact sheets, can be found at OTI's website at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/.

Purpose

OTI seeks an independent evaluation of the Sri Lanka program between February 2003 and December 2006. The nature of OTI's mandate, including its short-term objectives, shall be a driving factor in the evaluation. The evaluation shall document accomplishments and lessons learned for the use of both USAID staff and the general public. Specifically, the final evaluation report shall assist the USAID Mission in Sri Lanka as it takes over the program in March 2007, guide other current OTI country programs, serve as a tool for planning similar programming in Sri Lanka and elsewhere, and inform the public on OTI's work in Sri Lanka.

The evaluation should address the following questions:

1. Were areas of programmatic focus appropriate and effective for OTI? Below are a list of focus areas that should be addressed; however this question is not restricted to only these topics:
   - Geographic, such as which regions, which locations within each region.
   - Social strata, such as Track I/II/III, key people vs. more people, Colombo vs. districts.
   - Types of activities, such as media and info dissemination, conflict mitigation, community infrastructure, livelihoods.
   - Style of activities, i.e., short-term, in-kind, participatory implementation, and locally-identified needs.
   - Strategic framework, assessing the overarching goal and the two sub-objectives.
2. Was the program appropriately flexible and responsive to shifting political and contextual issues? OTI's response to the impact of the December 2004 Tsunami and shifting socio-political conflict conditions should be directly addressed.
3. In communities where numerous small-grant activities were supported over an extended period of time (i.e. strategic locations), is there evidence of a significant impact related to OTI's overall aims and objectives in Sri Lanka?
4. Were media activities used appropriately and effectively to further OTI's overall goals and objectives?
5. Specific recommendations about what elements of OTI's strategy and methods- if any- can support or enhance the USAID/Sri Lanka Mission's ability to effectively design and implement future conflict-sensitive programming should be developed.

In a brief annex, address the following questions concerning OTI's Mission Statement and the Sri Lanka Program. This annex of the final report should not repeat facts, observations, or findings from the first section. Rather it should specifically answer the questions and justify each answer with a summary, referring back to the main body of the report if necessary. The responses will be utilized in OTI's Annual Report and for other reporting needs, and therefore should be designed for public consumption.

a) Did the program support U.S. foreign policy objectives?[28] If yes, did it accomplish this by helping local partners advance peace and democracy?
b) Did OTI work on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs?
c) Did the program adapt, as necessary, to ongoing political developments/milestones relevant to the premises of the OTI program in Sri Lanka? Put another way, did OTI's program seizing critical windows of opportunity?[29]
d) Did the program, within 18 months of startup, on February 25, 2003, have a clear strategy and plan for continuation of activities/actors that were relevant to the specific objectives of the OTI program in Sri Lanka?
e) Does the evaluation find significant impact in strengthening democratic processes and/or increasing momentum for peaceful resolution of conflict?

Tasks

This scope of work is for the following tasks:

1. Recruit and hire one person of the two-person final evaluation team. OTI will identify and arrange for the second member of the team. However, the contractor is responsible for all deliverables specified below.
2. Develop, in coordination with OTI, an appropriate methodology (including questionnaires) for the evaluation.
3. Evaluate the performance and impact of the Sri Lanka program through:
    a. A literature review of documentation on the Sri Lanka program. All necessary documentation and database access will be provided electronically by OTI.
    b. Interviews in Washington DC with current OTI staff, as well as staff from partners Development Alternatives International, Inc. and Internews Network;
    c. A field review with interviews with OTI staff; USAID Mission Sri Lanka staff; US Embassy and other USG personnel as needed; Government of Sri Lanka representatives; implementing partners; and program beneficiaries at project sites where feasible.
4. Provide an out-briefing to OTI in Sri Lanka before departure from Sri Lanka.
5. Provide a briefing to OTI in Washington upon completion of the field visit, but prior to drafting the report.
6. Document, in a draft evaluation report for OTI comment, findings, conclusions, and lessons learned from the program, as well as recommendations for the future (details on the report are presented below);
7. Provide a final evaluation report for public distribution; and
8. Provide an official presentation in Washington on the final report.

Key Personnel

One senior-level evaluator (Team Leader) to be recruited and hired by the contractor. The evaluator should have extensive experience in designing and conducting evaluations of programs in fragile states. The evaluator will serve as team leader and be responsible for the

[28] As defined in USAID/Sri Lanka website. http://www.usaid.gov/lk/about_mission/index.html
[29] For more information on this as a criteria for OTI's engagement, refer to the Criteria for Engagement under "About OTI", found at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/aboutoti3.html

field review, interviews, the draft and final evaluation reports, and for debriefs in Washington, DC. The senior evaluator will have experience with political transition / post-conflict programs such as those implemented by OTI.

Deliverables

The contractor shall provide the following deliverables:

1. Brief outline of methodological approach for assessments, including proposed itinerary, schedule for interviews, and identification of all logistical support needs.
2. Draft the evaluation report plus additional annexes (report and annexes to be submitted electronically). Examples of past evaluations are available on the publications section of OTI's website. The format of the report is flexible. However, the report shall include photographs (to be taken by the evaluators and/or to be selected from OTI and Implementing Partners' photograph collections). The following sections are recommended for the final report: Table of Contents, Acronyms, Executive Summary, Background (OTI's mission and general approach to programming, country context, evaluation objectives and methodology, overall observations, findings (answers to questions in scope), conclusions, recommendations.
3. Final evaluation report, deliverable no later than two weeks after receipt of all comments from OTI on first draft. A total of 20 bound copies should be delivered to OTI in addition to an electronic copy in Microsoft Word format.
4. Final Power Point presentation to be submitted electronically at the same time as the final report.

The PowerPoint presentation and Final Evaluation Report should adhere to the USAID graphic standards identified at http://www.usaid.gov/branding/acquisition.html.

Proposed Time frame

Task Order period December 20 – April 20, 2007.
Desk Review: December 2006 - January 2007
Field Visit: January 2007
Final Presentation: o/a February 21, 2007.
Final Evaluation Report: o/a February 28, 2007

Suggested Level of Effort

Task	**LOE (days)**
Initial meeting with Program Team and Database Training	
Desk review of program documents and database	
Preparation of proposed methodology and meeting with OTI	
Initial interviews with staff in Washington DC	
Field Review and interviews (14 days with a 6 day work week, not inclusive of international travel normally budgeted at 4 days total)	18
Additional interviews in Washington DC as needed	
Preparation of draft report	
Presentation of findings, recommendations and discussion of draft	
Preparation of final report	

Task	**LOE (days)**
Total	38

LOE for tasks shall be proposed by the contractor. The total LOE shall not exceed 38 days.

Government Furnished Documents and Assistance

1. Suggested Interviewee List (Washington and Sri Lanka) with contact information. OTI will provide the VOIP number for USAID/Sri Lanka.
2. One mid-level evaluator will serve on the evaluation team and assist the key personnel. The evaluator will have experience with political transition / post-conflict programs such as those implemented by OTI, as well as experience working in Sri Lanka.
3. OTI will provide database training on OTI's Grants Database.
4. Sri Lanka Grants database, Monitoring and Evaluation documentation, Program Performance Review (PPR) documents, country strategy documents, previous assessments, partners' statements of work, contractor monthly reports, etc.
5. Monthly reports, success stories, and other documents are available on the OTI website.
6. OTI will arrange in-country logistics and lease vehicles for field visits. However, the evaluation contractor shall be responsible for all expenses including travel (such as international and domestic flights), per diem, supplies, and other direct costs.

Annex 6: Response to Additional Scope of Work Questions

Response to OTI Sri Lanka Scope of Work
Additional Questions

Based on the findings and conclusions of the main Sri Lanka Evaluation Report, the Scope of Work directs the team to prepare an annex providing brief responses to the following questions:

a) Did the program support U.S. foreign policy objectives?[30] If yes, did it accomplish this by helping local partners advance peace and democracy?
b) Did OTI work on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key political transition and stabilization needs?
c) Did the program adapt, as necessary, to ongoing political developments/milestones relevant to the premises of the OTI program in Sri Lanka? Put another way, did OTI's program seizing critical windows of opportunity?[31]
d) Did the program, within 18 months of startup, on February 25, 2003, have a clear strategy and plan for continuation of activities/actors that were relevant to the specific objectives of the OTI program in Sri Lanka?
e) Does the evaluation find significant impact in strengthening democratic processes and/or increasing momentum for peaceful resolution of conflict?

The answers follow:

a. The OTI Sri Lanka program did support U.S. foreign policy objectives as demonstrated in the report. Until the Tsunami, OTI worked exclusively through Sri Lanka organizations, local and national, to implement grant activities. The process by which OTI makes grants included democratic practices such as transparent and participatory decision making by local communities with regard to establishing priority needs for the community.

b. OTI mode of delivering assistance is marked by speed, flexibility and short term implementation. OTI does not engage in long term projects except in unusual circumstances. The targets for OTI's program in Sri Lanka varied widely, including national media, cultural and religious leaders and the national and local level, and particularly various ethno-religious groups inhabiting 14 specific strategic zones. Women were highly visible among the beneficiaries of the OTI grants. After the Tsunami, OTI focused assistance on Congressional mandated objectives in those areas directly affected by the Tsunami.

c. OTI's program in Sri Lanka remained fully committed to promoting peace and the peace process, even as the political and military environment for a negotiated peace deteriorated at an accelerating rate from 2004 forward. With the Tsunami, OTI did integrate Tsunami

[30] As defined in USAID/Sri Lanka website. http://www.usaid.gov/lk/about_mission/index.html
[31] For more information on this as a criteria for OTI's engagement, refer to the Criteria for Engagement under "About OTI", found at http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/transition_initiatives/aboutoti3.html

relief with its peace building goal by bringing diverse groups together across communal lines to participate in the clean up efforts. As with other aspects of the Sri Lankan situation, OTI's efforts on the ground were not, and could be powerful enough to overcome the tide of negative events at the national level, most of which conspired to close any 'windows of opportunity' opened by the Tsunami.

d. Yes. The OTI program was initiated in March 2003 with a goal and set of strategic objectives, as well as a tested OTI methodology for making grants. OTI conducted a major review within sixteen months of its start up, producing a strategic revision that brought greater programmatic and geographic focus to its grant making efforts.

e. The evaluation does find that OTI made an important contribution to sustaining and enhancing knowledge and attitudes among the Sri Lankan population consistent with supporting the peace negotiations process. Moreover, OTI introduced valuable ideas, material, trained personnel, and a 'language' for peace development that did not exist prior to OTI's involvement. OTI's grants also helped dampen proclivities toward communal violence and, in several notable areas, helped 'peace activist' groups to become more effective and pro-active in resolving or mitigating conflicts before they reached a boiling point. OTI was less successful in linking grantees into networks or coalitions of peace supporters who could articulate and advocate for peace at higher levels of governmental and political authority.