Every community from the U.S. to the smallest Caribbean island nation deals with violence and misunderstanding in disagreement between groups and individuals. ADR offers an alternative to the traditional adversarial approaches in conflict resolution. The following proposal is a generic design whose curriculum and structure may be adapted to the local environment. The program is designed to teach the local participants about ADR and to empower them with the knowledge to autonomously design and implement their own ADR program in their communities. This program will be divided into four phases; the first two will primarily focus on training with lots of discussion on implementation and the final phases deal specifically with implementation.

**Being Chosen by a Community**

This proposal will be presented to local NGO’s in countries where the government is either neutral or in support of ADR programs. Local NGO’s will invite the Caribbean Law institute (the sponsor of this proposal) to implement the program in their communities. The program will be put into action in communities that have self-identified that ADR would be helpful to the local population and have invited the institute to implement the program in the community.
Criteria for Participation/Stakeholders Selection for Phase I & II

Criteria for the selection of the participants will be people who hold positions of real or perceived power, are “engaged in formal or informal conflict resolution processes,” people who are open minded to new information, people of diverse backgrounds, and “people who are engaged in non-criminal conflict resolution.” These criteria are based on the criteria developed by the Center for Governmental Responsibility at the University of Florida for their Workshop Participant Selection in 1997. The goal of these criteria is to bring in educators, police officers, government officials, community leaders, and other people who have an interest in developing alternatives to violent conflict in their community together in a diverse group that will be able to disseminate and apply this information.

Phase I

The first step will be to identify interested stakeholders who are concerned with ADR. These stakeholders must fit the criteria listed in the previous section. These participants would be involved in an intensive training session for one week by a pair of ADR specialists. Local instructors would be preferred, but translation services would be procured if foreign instructors were necessary.

The curriculum would be developed based on the experiences of ADR specialists in the local environment and the experiences of the instructors presenting the material. Course material will be adapted for cultural sensitivity if none is available through an appraisal of the local community. The instructors would be asked to develop the material in coordination with the sponsoring NGO. The material would be tested for cultural relevancy through focus groups. The focus of the material is to create role-plays of real
life situations in which ADR would be a more effective tool. Development of implementation scenarios by participants will be a major objective of the training.

Staff members not from the community will have culture sensitivity sessions prior to the training. The local government and local NGO’s will be asked to submit any information that they felt staff members should be aware of before the beginning of training. Suggestions for the location of the training session will be gathered from local NGO’s and community leaders.

A person in the NGO will be chosen to be the contact point. This person will help guide the networking and information dissemination process. This person from the NGO must take part in the training and must be committed to seeing ADR programs implemented in the community. They are to assist in networking and information dissemination of ADR materials when the instructors leave.

**Phase II**

The second phase, one to two months later, will invite some of the participants and the selected contact point to see existing ADR programs in action. Ideally, the instructors would also be involved in this phase by introducing these programs to participants. The participants would be asked to synthesize their experience of these ADR programs in some brainstorming activities on ideas of what kinds of programs would be useful in their city.
Phase III

This would involve mobilizing NGO’s and the local government’s resources. Neighborhood meetings would be organized to get local community members involved in an introduction to ADR through games and discussion that are culturally appropriate. These neighborhood meetings would serve as an opportunity to produce a needs assessment of the community. All participants of the first and second phases would develop the actual structure and implementation of these ADR festivals. The instructors would act as guides in this process and encourage facilitation skill development. The fests’ implementation would be designed in a serious of extended workshop/trainings that would meet for a minimum of a month on a weekly basis. These weekly meeting would develop the ADR skills of the stakeholders/participants who will be running the community initiatives; hopefully, giving them confidence in their new skill set. The participants could adjust the time, length and period time allotted for the workshops (e.g. more than one month might be necessary) to suit their needs.

This phase would accomplish many goals. An accurate needs assessment of the community could be developed that would indicate where conflict occurs most often through the exercises and role-plays at the community activities. This information would be useful to the citizens developing ADR programs as well as many other NGO’s and aid agencies in the area. It would give the participant/stakeholders the opportunity to practice their ADR skills by being workshop leaders and gathering the information for the conflict needs assessment. It would also allow these stakeholders and engage in dialog with local citizens.
Phase IV, Implementation

The development of a community ADR program requires coordination on many levels. The police and NGO’s could refer disputes to the local mediation program. Training for mediators from the community has to occur. School programs require funding or special teachers to give their time to the local school system.

This workshop will take place over a two-day period and involve all the original participants. Programs will be prioritized and initialized. Instructors would promote the concepts of local government working in conjunction with NGO’s and community leaders to develop implementation policy. Participants will be encouraged to develop an information-sharing network. There will be an emphasis placed on documentation of work and findings in these programs so that information pools of effective ADR techniques can be developed. Funds to some community projects may be offered if available for the start up of certain programs for large one time costs like building construction; however, participants will be encouraged to develop community sustainable programs that do not depend on outside funding for basic function.

The point of contact’s (POC), in the NGO, duty at this time would be to maintain contact with participants employing these techniques and to keep all ADR records and encourage their circulation. A small stipend would be offered for period of time for these services. Implementation meetings will be held for the next five years would be organized by the POC and funded by the through the USAID for skill development, information sharing, and networking. These meetings would be voluntary and open to new participants at any time. The participants at the workshop would recommend the timing and structure of the meetings.