

ISAAME WOMEN'S WORKSHOP

"Share Success through Women in Service"

"Leadership Opportunities for Women in Lionism"

Taj Samudra, Colombo

Saturday, December 11th, 2004

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SHARE SUCCESS THROUGH WOMEN IN SERVICE *- Leadership Opportunities for Women in Lionism -*

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OVERVIEW/INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKERS:

Multiple Council Chairperson - Marcella Silva

Welcoming all those present, a brief introduction was given of the speakers and the Lions Club. She disclosed that the Lions Club opened its membership to women in 1987 and in the year 2003, 67,000 women joined the Association and the numbers are increasing everyday.

She mentioned the immense opportunities of Leadership opened for women through the organization.

INTRODUCTION OF MRS. JEANNE KUSIAK, THE SPOUSE OF INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT *Lady Lion Buddeni Gunasekera*

Introducing the First Lady, Buddeni stated that Mrs. Jeanne Kusiak's leisure time is spent with her children and grandchildren and enjoys watching movies, traveling, meeting new people and creating friendships around the world.

Address by Mrs. Jeanne Kusiak

Thanking all those present, Mrs. Jeanne Kusiak urged the participants at the workshop, not only to walk away with the knowledge gained, but also to share it with the others in society, and stated that she was happy to share her success with each and everyone those present.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT *International Director - Asoka Gunasekera*

The International President, Mr. Clement F. Kusiak, is an Engineer from the United States of America. He has headed a large conglomerate of companies and thereafter he was a Manager of a Company in the U.S.A. Having served the community firstly through his Club, he was elected to the high office of the District Governor and held many other positions before he was called up to be the President of the International Association of Lions Clubs.

Address by International President - Clement F. Kusiak

Mr. Clement Kusiak began by stating that everyone carries with them a level of leadership and Women create a great part of the association all around the world. The long ranged goal of the association is to promote leadership opportunities for women. The Lions Club is active in 193 nations and has gained its recognition around the world.

An important step that was taken in 1987 was the opening of membership to women. However he noted that women were active even before this opening. There are 228,000 women in the Clubs presently and the goal of the association is to increase the number to 250,000. The increase of women in July alone was 4000 and therefore it is clear that there will be no difficulty to reach the estimated target.

He went on to recognize various Lions Club members around the world who have helped the organization. Many leaders around the world have recognized the International Association of Lions Clubs ,through the many services provided to the community.

Leadership opportunities will help women in many ways, not only in serving the clubs but also in serving the society. Other associations too may benefit from it.

The President then declared the ISAAME workshop open and stated that the goals must be set high.

FIRST SESSION

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD LEADER

Jazima Ismail

Moderator - Dr. Hiranthi Wijemane

Dr. Hiranthi Wijemanne has been at UNICEF since 1977 and has been involved with children in Primary Education, Child healthcare and with women and children's rights, sanitation, sexual exploitation, maternal mortality and related areas. Since her retirement she acts as a consultant to UNICEF, UNFPA and the Human Rights Centre at the Colombo University. She is also an advisor to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Primary Education.

Dr. Wijemanne opened the first session by pointing out, that Women's Rights and Human Rights must be considered as one and the same, for men and women are equal partners in the community and society both in the public and private sector. But unfortunately out of a 53% population in Sri Lanka, only 4-5% of women were involved in the decision making process in the country.

She congratulated the Lions Club for recognizing women as important leaders in the community and society and thanked the Club for giving women all over, the opportunity to further improve themselves as important members of society.

Jezima Ismail is a key advocate of women's rights and the women's movement in Sri Lanka. She is especially renowned for her work with Muslim women and is a member of MWRAF. As an educationist she has contributed tremendously to educating women in Sri Lanka and is a member of the South Eastern University, the Open University Council, the National Committee on Women and many other organisations on women, education and social services.

She began her presentation by mentioning that one of the privileges of being in the Lions Club, is that while in other organisations one can be a leader sometimes, in the Lions club one can be a leader all the time!

The Twentieth Century brought about a dramatic transformation for women by awakening them from a slumber into the realization of women's rights, their potential for leadership and the uniqueness of women's existence. Women run one of the most complex organisations in the world by managing a household, a husband, children and their needs and wants.

In the Twenty First Century leadership has become a very important component in women's life. Leadership must not be profit oriented but women centered. Women and men have different styles and approaches towards leadership and one of the characteristics that highlight this difference is Daniel Goldman's "Emotional

Intelligence". Women are considered subjective and passionate about issues such as rape, abuse etc. and this characteristic sets women apart from men. It is one of the most excellent qualities a leader could possess as it builds up empathy, understanding between people and warm co-relations among one another.

Leadership programmes 15 years ago based on Executive Training dealt with how to present oneself, how one should smile, dress, conduct themselves etc. but as the times have changed, other leadership qualities have become essential.

To be a good leader in present society one needs

- ☐ Intelligence Quotient
- ☐ Emotional Intelligence

One must be intelligent in order to make good decisions according to circumstances, but the fluidity and flexibility of IQ derives from Emotional Intelligence. Women have a natural aptitude towards being Emotionally Intelligent but one must be able to tap into ones resources and be able to use it to benefit society on the whole.

A good leader must possess

- ☐ Self Awareness
- ☐ Self management
- ☐ Social Awareness

Self-Awareness

One must be able to identify ones strengths and weaknesses and be able to adjust and be flexible in order to be a better leader. In order to handle crisis situations and unexpected events one must be able to know how one can handle situations and how far one can go in order to make the best use of the facilities and resources provided.

Self-Management

Self-awareness leads to self-management, when one learns how to manage oneself - Manage Me- one can handle all other difficulties in society. Women have certain strategies in order to survive and manage situations. One of the most humiliating experiences is to lose ones temper, here self-management and self-control is important to manage ones anger. Meditation, reflection and thinking can help a person to manage ones self and is important in creating a good leadership environment. The way a person walks, talks, handles a crisis situation, deals with self-management.

Social Awareness

The awareness of what is happening in society and what is around us makes a better leader. The Lions Club occupies its time in providing services to society, thus a leader must be aware of what type of needs and services are necessary for a particular society.

A few questions were posed on the overhead projector and was discussed with the members of the workshop.

☐ Are Leaders Born or Made?

Not everyone can become a leader as there are ingrained characteristics and traits such as charisma, but leaders are Made by molding a personality that has potential and enhancing the qualities already available.

☐ "Not a cry, but the flight of the wild duck that leads the flock to fly and follow" - Chinese proverb

One must set an example in order to be a model leader. A leader may be able to give orders and set rules and regulation but if she does not set an example by following them by action, others will not follow.

☐ "A successful leader needs Training, Exposure and an Excellent Support System" Leadership as a continuous process of training and experience.

☐ What makes a Good Leader?

- Is Leadership a rare quality as assumed to be?
- Are Leadership qualities inborn in a certain class (group) of individuals?
- Can an aspiring individual be trained to be a successful leader?

☐ Queen Elizabeth I - alternated styles of Royal Severity with a Feminine Touch

Women must celebrate and appreciate femininity and feminine qualities and is an important value in leadership.

☐ Leaders should:

- Challenge - be willing to change status quo, take risks, accept failure, accept failure and use set backs as opportunities
- Inspire - a shared vision, persuasion (not a solo vision)
- Enable - others to act, encourage and collaborate
- Show - standard, excellence e.g. plan and create opportunities for achievement.
- Provide Spirit - hope and determination

Mrs. Ismail concluded the presentation with a note that women have different styles of leadership in comparison to men and the fact that women are good communicators is a definite plus point together with Emotional Intelligence which should be used for the betterment of society.

Leadership should be a flaming torch, not a candle or a light which would burn out, pass it on and use affectively.

Panelist

- ▣ Mrs. Sangeetha Jatia – District Governor
- ▣ Mrs. Aruna Oswal – District Governor
- ▣ Mrs. Lajja Kaul – Past District Governor
- ▣ Mrs. Indrani Weeratunga – President Lions Club of Nugegoda Central

OPEN DISCUSSION

Through this presentation the forum was made aware of the multiple roles that women have to deal with in day to day life. The patriarchal values and social norms that are part and parcel of society also play an important part in women in leadership roles, for it is necessary for women to have the collaboration and co-operation of men in order to carry out their duties and roles to perfection. Roles such as child bearing are biological, yet roles such as child rearing can be shared by both men and women and enlightened men can be more helpful in helping women tap their potential of becoming leaders. Thus men should be involved in women's activities and workshops etc for they too need to be present in order to realize the potential of leadership roles among women.

The Vision of a leader is very important in order to continue and motivate the rest. Women must be able to revise, review and change ones vision and goal while at the same time be able to take and handle constructive criticism.

Dr. Hiranthi Wijemanne wrapped up the session by reminding the forum that gender roles and gender stereotyping is a product of socialization and that both girls and boys are taught from a very young age to play with certain types of toys. While girls are encouraged to play with dolls and keep house, boys are shunned if they would engage in this type of play. Men and boys in the Twenty First Century have taken up more responsibilities in accepting household chores and child rearing and other tasks. Husbands have changed their attitudes to women as solely responsible for household work and fathers towards their daughters not being educated. A good leader must be knowledgeable and through that one gains credibility to face the future and be able to serve ones community to the best of ones ability.

SECOND SESSION

SOCIAL FACTORS: WHAT HELPS PROMOTE/WHAT HINDERS LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

Prof. Savithri Goonesekara

Moderator

Dr. Padma Ratnayake, Executive Director, South Asia Partnership in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Padma Ratnayake, introduced Prof. Savitri Goonesekara, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Colombo. Prof. Goonesekara was previously a professor of Law in the Faculty of Law and has a keen interest in women's affairs and has guided women and worked hard to protect the rights of women in Sri Lanka.

Prof. Savitri Goonesekara began her presentation by commenting on the role that service clubs play in society and how the Lions Club especially has been recognized for their services.

In reflecting on leadership a range of factors need to be recognized: social, economic and political. What promotes leadership is also connected to what hinders the opportunity to attain leadership. To her leadership opportunities for women commence at work for not only in South Asia but also around the world women experience stereotypical attitudes of society, which creates a great hindrance to women.

The attitude of the family and society towards girls must be considered. For at birth everyone has an equal opportunity. It is society that creates a sense of superiority and inferiority and hinders the opening for opportunities for women. This is one of the greatest factors, which women face and it is a difficult problem to overcome.

When speaking of leadership of women one must talk about the opportunity that women are given in society. In South Asia "son preference" hinders the opportunity for women and is a denial of a chance of life.

In Sri Lanka too, the stereotypical attitude is evident and is a great hindrance to the development of the country. Due to parents differentiating between male and female sexes, girls grow with low self-esteem and thus do not have the ability to reveal leadership qualities, which are within them. The home and family greatly contribute in helping bring forth leaders in the community. Thus it is important to address the stereotypical attitudes in the family and give both males and females equal life chances.

Prof. Goonesekara analyzed the attitude of society in different areas:

- ▣ Education System
- ▣ Environment
- ▣ Politics

Education System

The education system could help overcome the problem or could reinforce it. The question posed was whether it discourages or encourages women to be leaders.

The Sri Lankan experience was taken as an example to reveal the analysis between co-education schools and single sex schools and it has been established that single sex schools produce more women with leadership qualities than co-education schools. When both girls and boys are in the same class and society is stereotypical, then the girls in the classroom would also play a subservient role in relation to others. On the other hand single-sex schools would not have this problem and thus girls would be encouraged to share their ideas and views and further the teachers do not have to deal with the stereotypical views in such environment. Therefore the birth of new leaders is more frequent in single-sex schools.

In early history, missionaries and foreigners set the forum to establish leadership potentials. They were mostly Victorian English and sought to introduce qualities of leadership and did not have stereotypical attitudes. They taught women to be feminine and most importantly looked at women as human beings. They encouraged sports and other activities.

Single-sex schools have been more frequent in producing leaders and found to be in great roles in private and public sectors and therefore the school environment is a very important factor in achieving leadership qualities in women.

Prof. Goonesekara, stated that it was unfortunate that the private sector concentrate mainly on co-education and very little concentration is given to single-sex schools. She emphasized the importance of free education, not just in the primary level but also in all levels to provide opportunities for women, for the failure to provide for such facilities may result in students dropping out of school and entering into early marriage. She stated that the countries that provide for such facilities are more successful than the countries that do not provide free education.

The Environment

There are many organisations in society that provide opportunities for leadership, the general result is positive. However they could also create hindrances in this regard. The example provided for by Prof. Goonesekara was the Rotary club, which is for men

and the Inner Wheel created by that organization for women, however she stated that the organization also provided great opportunities to women.

She went on to state that in the private and public sectors, legal policies play a very important role in creating an environment that supports or hinders opportunities for women. In the public sector she states that equal opportunity is apparent for recruitment is done by holding an exam. Since there are standard schemes of recruitment, it fosters in women a sense of security and strength that helps women get to the top.

In almost all countries the rights of people are codified. For example the Bill of Rights in the U.S.A and the Constitution of Sri Lanka. This helps women establish their rights if there is any arbitrary act against them. However women are not aware of their rights, which are evident due to the fact that there is only one case on this matter, which has gone before court in Sri Lanka.

However in Sri Lanka this privilege is only available in the public sector, therefore if an arbitrary act is done in the private sector one cannot seek refuge under the constitutional provisions. Thus there is a grave problem faced by women. However in the modern society men are more willing to recognize women's rights and provide for opportunities for women. Today many women are seen holding high posts in the private sector especially the banking sector. However society must be supportive, for if there is no support from society and no legal measures then again women will face a great hindrance in society.

The society must change in order to provide for leadership opportunities. Lack of support in the working environment would result in a hostile environment and problems of sexual harassment. Women face great problems in this regard and thus there are laws against harassment in the Penal Code of Sri Lanka, however they are hardly used.

There are Labour Tribunals to deal with arbitrary termination due to reasons of sexual advances. Many forums have codes, which they follow which embody the rights of women. Thus women may seek redress when they face such problems.

Prof. Goonesekara stressed 3 points, which must be considered:

- ▣ The need to address the dual responsibilities of women and men
- ▣ Dual responsibilities of women, which hinders her opportunity to become a leader
- ▣ The task of responsibility of those at home and at work.

Thus today society has recognized both the male and the female as equal and many new amendments are made in the law and attitudes of society. Sri Lanka has taken a great leap forward in this regard by introducing parental leave rather than maternal

leave. This is because previously men were reluctant to employ women due to the maternity leave that women are provided.

Politics

This aspect is critically important to leadership. The ugly face given to politics and the violence make women reluctant to join politics. Therefore if women want to be leaders then these problems need to be addressed.

It is important to perceive the required capabilities of individuals as humans rather than considering a person's gender.

Prof. Goonerasekara ended by stating that leadership is a gender neutral term and that it is a human quality possessed by all.

Panelist

1. Mrs. Jisa Chaudry – Regional Chairperson

Mrs. Chaudry looked at the weaknesses of women and stated that those weaknesses may be used for their advantage. She states that the caring, tender nature helps them to be better leaders. She stressed that everyone has the potential to be a leader if given the opportunity. She thanked the Lions Club for providing an opportunity for women to stand up and be leaders.

She went on to state that the greatest problem that women face is the economical problem and needs to be given an opportunity for employment and education.

Women, she said, have many responsibilities and this helps them to be leaders not only in the home but also in society. However support is needed from the men in order for women to be good leaders.

She concluded by stating that women must support, encourage, appreciate and help each other to overcome the hindrances that women face.

2. Dr. Gowry Chandrakasan – Past District Governor

She began by pointing out that there isn't a single country in the world that enjoys complete equal opportunity and that is why there is a need for change.

There are exhaustive laws and very little of this is utilized. She stated that women should:

- ▣ Learn to be strategists
- ▣ Upgrade themselves

- ☐ Know how to negotiate
- ☐ Break down barriers
- ☐ Be independent, decisive
- ☐ Follow your dreams.

She stated that these characteristics will help women to establish self-importance and become good managers and thus result in being good leaders in society.

3. Mrs. B. Tharini - District 324 A1

She analyzed various professions and presented the problems that women face in society and that there are laws to protect women and they must be used and therefore women must be educated in this regard. She stated that in many professions there are differentiating factors with regard to women. On a lighter note she pointed out that the registration fees was \$100 for this womens workshop as opposed to \$70 in other workshops. This however was clarified later that the reason for this was because meals and stationary was provided unlike other workshops, and thus the increase in registration.

4. Mrs. Jayshri Mohansundaram

Reflecting on the presentation by Prof. Goonesekara, she commented on the Indian experience in this regard. The stereo-typical attitude, service organizations and political arena were commented on during her presentation.

5. Lion Dilshard S. Mohammed

She began by stating that women need motivation but they must be educate on the aspect of Lionism. She spoke of her experience in the Lions Club and the great opportunities the club has provided for her in her 28 years of being a member. She said she was grateful to the Lions Club and said she was proud and privileged to be a member.

An overview of the Issue of social norms

- ☐ Sociologist Perspective on Social norms
- ☐ How these norms are changing and why
- ☐ Leadership that have helped to reshape society

Discussion Group

The participants were divided into groups and discussed and came up with solutions and ideas on the three levels.

Social norms that hinder a woman's leadership opportunities

- ☐ Women are considered as a liability in most countries, especially in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal. If a boy is sick in the night he will be immediately taken to hospital, but if a girl was to fall ill she would not be taken

to the doctor or even taken to a hospital. In India females have a day of fasting for their fathers, husbands and brothers but there is no day of fasting for men for the females of their family. While many females have to undergo ultra sounds while pregnant, most often if the child is a girl they will be aborted and son-preference is prevalent in the society.

- ▣ As a result of the multiple roles that a woman must carry out such as daughter, wife, mother, wage earner, she does not have the time, opportunity or the resources to become leaders in their communities.
- ▣ As a result of women having to be employed, many are sexually harassed at the work place
- ▣ In equal representation of females in leadership arenas such as politics, local government etc.
- ▣ Women are not considered worthy of having an education while males are given preference over females in attending schools.
- ▣ Women are less supportive of fellow women and rarely give encouragement and support
- ▣ The young Leo's addressed some issues and restrictions in participating in events and workshops and other activities organized by the club.
 - In Sri Lanka and most Asian countries young girls are protected and are not granted permission by their parents to travel alone late at night.
 - Travel and transport is another obstacle faced by the young Leo's in participating in events
 - As most youth are studying and working at the same time, they are faced with time constraints
 - The young Leo's also face financial difficulties when organizing fund raisers and other events and workshops

Strategies to minimize effect of negative norms

- ▣ There should be no gender discriminations in job opportunities, educational opportunities and all mental blocks on gender constraints should be removed
- ▣ There should be a sharing and exchange of ideas and information not only among women but also among men.
- ▣ To view problems and ideas not only as a women oriented outlook but also from a male perspective in order to find better solutions.
- ▣ If women were to appreciate and encourage other women and their work and achievements, then men would follow suite
- ▣ By encouraging co-education among students they would be more tolerable and understanding of gender differences
- ▣ This would also help females compete on par with males and not be limited to females in their chosen fields of education
- ▣ Equal representation of women and more women's participation in the political arena and local government and other organisations

Strategies to promote positive norms

Under this umbrella topic, the groups suggested ideas and solutions in order to promote positive norms.

- ▣ As professionals women should do their best and motivate themselves and others in order to attain the best results
- ▣ Begin leadership at home
- ▣ Women should learn to present themselves in a positive and professional manner
- ▣ Family values should be encouraged and parents should promote equality of sexes among siblings and children
- ▣ Lion Ladies should support and encourage those who have already ascended to leadership positions
- ▣ Ensure that women leader will succeed with cooperation and collaboration
- ▣ Sometimes aspects reviewed as negative can be taken in a positive light:
 - by husbands and males being breadwinners the females are left to concentrate on becoming good leaders
 - household leadership should be promoted and encouraged by women and be highlighted in the home front

The above comments, suggestions and ideas were contributed by the forum and participants on viewing the obstacles, negative perspectives, social norms and positive norms that effect leadership opportunities for women.

THIRD SESSION

LION LEADERSHIP TRAINING PATHWAYS

Lion Chuck Wijenathen - Past International Director

Moderator

Lady Lion Marcella Silva - Council Chairperson

Lady Lion Marcella Silva introduced Lion Chuck Wijenathen as a Management Consultant who was invited to join the Lions in 1966. He became the club President in 1982 and held the position of International Director from 1982-84. He was awarded the Life Membership in 1984 and has been recognized by 22 International Presidents.

Lion Chuck Wijenathen began with the Mission Statement of LCI where it is dedicated to create and foster a spirit of understanding among all people for humanitarian needs and providing opportunities to all. He further reminded the forum of the learning opportunities that are available for Lions through way of videos, pamphlets, brochures and other paraphernalia. He further commented on Ms. Jezima Ismail's complement of Lions being an organization that gives their members the opportunity to become leaders, as being one of the main reasons that the Lions have become an organisation that builds and encourages leadership constantly.

A Video was presented on the (Lions Club International Foundation) LCIF and its activities throughout the world in order to help Lions help others.

LCIF Video

One of the main projects organized and launched by LCIF was "SIGHT FIRST". This project concentrated on Blindness prevention in 78 countries and six continents. At present 3.5 million cataract surgeries have been performed the world over and in China a project on prevention of childhood blindness in partnership with WHO was organized to save children's sight. Other countries such as United States, Australia and Turkey carried out screening, tests for glaucoma and diabetic eye diseases.

Presentation on Lions LCIF video "World of good"

Leadership and Training are indispensable to each other

- ▣ Leadership Training that is available to Lions, and their Leadership roles in Lionism
- ▣ Women Lions in various Leadership positions

LCIF further promotes health and sanitation projects, youth leadership programmes and helps people to organize themselves. Life skills programmes for children, training and youth leadership programmes have also been part of their agenda. In their quest for better housing for the differently abled, LCIF together with HABITAT helped build 500 homes for the needy.

A special “Olympics Opening Eyes Programme” targeted for athletes who could barely see, helped detect early stages of eye diseases and provided others with clinically incorrect lenses and other facilities free of charge. LCIF hopes to expand this project to Latin America, North Africa, the Caribbean and other developing countries throughout the world.

Another focal point of LCIF has been natural disasters areas that have plagued many under developed countries who lack infrastructure and aid for fresh water, sanitation, and assistance in rebuilding homes. In 2001 rebuilding of schools, homes and disaster relief was provided to the State of Gujarat, India. Relief funds were further allocated for emotional and social health after September 11th and its victims and survivors.

In 35 years, \$320 million of grants and funds were earned and utilized for humanitarian needs. The M Jones Fellowship was given to outstanding and deserving members of society in order to promote leadership and encouragement among the community.

Lions Conquering Blindness

With its track record for providing surgery for the blind, distribution of medicine, transporting patients and many other facilities, LCIF will be a re-launching Sight First. This will target the poor and under-privileged communities to prevent avoidable blindness. Only one in ten children who are unavoidably blind are sent to school in many countries as a result of diabetes, glaucoma, cataracts and other eye diseases. While the number of blind is expected to increase two folds by 2020, LCIF hopes to detect anomalies in children at an early stage by carrying out screenings and test centers and free surgery. With the aid of computer-based technology and by using artificial methods such as “bionic eye” implantation, LCIF plans on counteracting and fighting blindness in over 79 countries.

Lion Wijenathen moved on to his presentation of the Pathways of Leadership Training, while he emphasized that brochures, videos and other information are available for the public in order to find out more about training and leadership and at the website www.lionsclubs.org he emphasized that Lions must make an effort and genuinely want to increase their knowledge and improve their skills.

**Chart 1 - Opportunities for Training (MERL: M - Members; E - Extension;
R - Retention; L- Leadership)**

Chart 2 - Structure of Lions Organisation

Persons responsible are encouraged to learn new skills and knowledge to increase their Membership base, to Retain members, and to promote leadership in order to extend their services to those in need, especially in the fields of humanitarian work and relief.

Growth and development is possible when one serves in a committee where one learns and discovers new skills and improves and develops on their potential. There are two types of roles, one of the Administration and the other of the Services. The following roles will be explained by relevant members of the Lion Ladies.

Role of the District Governor - Dr. Shashi Gupta

Dr. Shashi Gupta is a leader among the corporate level management and is an outstanding Lion Lady. She is also a poet and author and by combining the two roles she has contributed immensely to the Lions Club.

The District Governor acts as a mediator between the members and the International Committee and represents the International Committee at Club meetings and other functions. Sri Lanka will expand to Six Districts by July 2005 which will further improve the membership base and promote more participation. This focuses on developing skills in the middle level management as they are most often ignored and not considered important.

According to Dr. Shashi Gupta a District Governor must be able to improve the quality of members in order to attain more negotiation power, dedication and be able to motivate the Lions of the particular district. It is the faith they have in her ability as a leader which would enable her to be a District Governor and carry out her role to perfection.

Four important sections in the role of a District Governor is to

- ▣ Agitate people of LCI and LCIF
- ▣ Promote people and Lions for better services and fellowship
- ▣ Motivate them to do some work for society and the less fortunate and to
- ▣ Recognize services of Lions and through that help her to be confident of herself and her club.

Role of the Zone/Region Chair - Maureen Chemba Hight IPDG (Zambia - Zone Chair)

A region consists of 8-15 clubs and active members must be in good standing. The Region Chair must liaise with the Club President and attend Cabinet Meetings and staff meetings; Regional Leadership Workshops and Conferences and service programmes for members.

A Zone includes 4-8 clubs and the Zone Chair must chair the District Governor's Advisory Committee. She must also communicate with clubs, Regional Chairpersons,

Treasurer, Secretary, Vice District Governor and District Governor. Both the above should be lead by example of action.

Role of Club President - Mrs. Indrani Weeratunga, President, Lions Club, Nugegoda Central

Mrs. Indrani Weeratunga was a student of the University of Colombo and then left for the United States for her higher studies. She was the Minister of Plantation Industries and a member of the Board and at present is the Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Plantation Industries.

Mrs. Weeratunga believes that she was unanimously chosen as the Club's President because of the trust and confidence her members have placed upon her. She felt that her genuine interest to serve the needy gave her members more courage to place their confidence in her. She further explained that leadership positions could be used as a tool to reach out to all sectors of the community and access the untapped human resources and make best use.

The President of the Club has to undertake multiple roles within the community. she must

- ▣ Facilitate in different scenarios, be it in receiving or distributing donations on behalf of other organizations
- ▣ Acting as a Resource Person within the community and tapping into the communities own resources such as lawyers, counselors, doctors etc.
- ▣ Showing empathy towards disadvantaged groups
- ▣ Help members of disadvantaged groups to stabilize their lives after disasters such as droughts, famine, floods, landslides etc. and
- ▣ Assist in order to improve the quality of life of all communities.

Panelist

- ▣ ***Dr. Janhavi Sharma*** - Emphasized that women should use the immense wealth of power they have only for the betterment of mankind and must be of a positive attitude in order to show the rest of the members the right path. She also went on to say that her suggestion of increasing women's membership to the Lions Club by three members had become a reality which was a positive outcome for Lady Lions.
- ▣ ***Mrs. Sushi Shah*** - District Governor claimed Leadership Training Programmes to be the heart of Lions and made a valid point by acknowledging that not everyone can become leaders and do not have the qualities of being a leader, but everyone must attend one leadership programme at least.
- ▣ ***Mrs. Sangeeta Jatia*** - District Governor pointed out that in the Lions Club the General Members are placed at the top while the President is placed next which

emphasizes the importance placed by the Lions Club on its General Members and their importance to the organization and community

▣ *Christine Muumbi* – *Zone Chairperson* reviewed her views on how leaders are born but they must be trained in order to understand and know the what happens at ones village, community, country and the world. Knowledge is very important in order to be a good leader and one must remember that all great leaders learnt their leadership skills and gained their qualities by their mothers.

Open Discussion

Lady Lion Marcella Silva acknowledged the fact that there are different experiences of leadership, training and pathways that may have influenced the members. She opened the forum to contribute their views and ideas and discuss the various trainings that have helped them in their lives and invited the members to share their experiences.

A Lion Lady from Thailand encouraged all the Lion Ladies present to introduce their daughters, sisters, friends to Lions Club so that they could improve themselves and the community they live in and make a valid contribution to their society. While another Lion Lady from Colombo 306D admitted to being the only Lady Lions club in the district said that while communication is an important factor in leadership, listening skills are as essential in order to be a great leader.

Many Clubs answered the invitation by sharing their experiences in helping the community. One Club was assisting babies with open heart surgery and was proud to have helped carry out 26 surgeries to date. Another Club with the collaboration of the Government of Tamil Nadu was promoting awareness and implementing immunization programmes among girls in Chennai. And another club was involved in a valiant effort to screen all school children for childhood blindness and carry out operations on cornea transplants. Another Lions Ladies club President was involved in teaching prisoners English and was a member of the welfare society in prisons. She said it was a great joy to report projects carried out by the members and the club and it encouraged the members further and motivated them to help the community.

Another Lions Lady expressed her experience of working in an Office environment and within the Lions Club which happen to be two different entities. While one can get subordinates at the work place to do tasks, one must be tactful when working with fellow members for they are all at a similar level and here leadership qualities are essential and important in order to people manage.

A Lion Lady made a valid point on how the training and leadership workshops and conferences are mostly aimed at the Administration of the Lion members but that when asked how the conference or training was they would only reply “it was good”. She felt that the members of the Service unit should also get a training on leadership

skills for it is they who are dealing with people and communities in need. And that Lions Club should broaden the criteria which is limited to past presidents etc. when applying for these training workshops to others who are as worthy.

President Clement F. Kusiak then took the forum and related a few experiences of his own in dealing with leadership and pathways. He explained how he rose from being a tale twister to Secretary of his club and how much of experience he gained in that position. He was allotted the task to take down minutes, log members and records of transactions and many other duties. He was later made the Treasurer and gained experience of the workings of the position and fund management. He was then made Vice president and then President and he took up the position as a result of the trust and confidence the members had placed in him.

In order to be a good leader one must be

☐ a good communicator

☐ liaise with the Secretary, Treasurer and other Members and be able to understand the workings of the Club

When he received the award for the Best President, there were certain criteria that had to be fulfilled such as paying the Club bills on time, sending reports sent by the Secretary, record membership and send details to the International Committee and the District Committee. President Kusiak felt that the award he received was not confined to him alone but it became a reality as a result of the hard work and effort put in by all the club members and officials and that it was an award for the whole club and not an individual award. Finally he encouraged the Lions not to act as a blocker but to help improve, advance and motivate the rest of the members as a leaders.

The forum was closed by Lion Chuck Wijenathen reminding the members that communication is an important and key factor in working with the community. That services to the community must be provided not according to the leaders and the clubs wants and needs but according to the priorities of the community and society. In order to figure out the needs of the community one must be able to communicate with them and build a relationship of trust and commitment which in turn would help bring about valid solutions for the betterment of mankind.

FOURTH SESSION

HOW TO INTRODUCE THE LIONS ORGANIZATION TO WOMEN WHO ARE NON-LIONS

Ms. Sangeeta Jatia - District Governor

Moderator

Dr. Gowri Chandrakasan - Past District Governor

Ms Sangeeta Jatia began her presentation by stating that she will set out a few guidelines on how and what may be done to introduce the organization to non-Lions.

She asked What the Lions Club represents? Answering her question she stated that it gives people the opportunity to:

- ☐ Lead
- ☐ Serve
- ☐ Develop
- ☐ Satisfy

It is a platform to repay to the society our rent for occupying a place in it by contributing to making that part of the world where God has placed us a slightly better place than what it has been before; and in the process also acquiring leadership and inter-personal skills that make us better human beings, thus having gained personal satisfaction.

Does the Club have a gender bias? Membership to women was opened in 1987.

- ☐ Women have also been accorded recognition as lions for the years of service put in by them as lionesses.
- ☐ Women have graduated to all levels of leadership, including International Directors.
- ☐ Gender specific titles have been altered.
- ☐ Specific women membership promotion schemes including admission waivers, establishment of women's empowerment chairpersons at all levels and forums like this are being encouraged.

Why should one consider joining the Association?

- ☐ Don't you wish to make a difference to the world around you?
- ☐ Can you do it alone?
- ☐ Would you not be better off with more like-minded persons working with you? Would that not multiply your results?
- ☐ Would you not like to meet and build bridges with people like you around the world?
- ☐ Don't you want to belong to an organization that has an impeccable track record and offers opportunities to serve in varied fields?

A view of the track record:

- ▣ 46000 clubs in 193 countries
- ▣ 50 years of partnership with UN
- ▣ World's most effective blindness prevention program
- ▣ Youth care and world peace promotional programs
- ▣ Health care and community service programs to serve local needs, even through international partnerships
- ▣ Assistance in all major natural calamities
- ▣ Helped develop global leaders
- ▣ Best run Foundation

What is the profile of the membership?

- ▣ Common people, but with a vision
- ▣ Men and women from all nationalities
- ▣ People who love to share and care
- ▣ No language barriers
- ▣ Open to the physically challenged
- ▣ Not necessarily required to make large personal donations
- ▣ Usually a choice of various clubs having different age groups, cultures and meeting venues/time to suit you-may even start a new club if a group of 20 is available

Information is Power

- ▣ Our web site offers all details
- ▣ The Lion magazine in various languages
- ▣ District and MD conventions
- ▣ Area Forums
- ▣ International Conventions
- ▣ Leadership Institutes and web learning centers
- ▣ Brochures and printed material

International conventions of the Club are a mini global village

- ▣ Members from across the world
- ▣ Display of various cultures at the parade
- ▣ Translation facilities
- ▣ International shows
- ▣ One place where you feel and realise you are a world citizen

What is so special for women?

- ▣ The opportunity to let your inner desire to touch the lives of others come true
- ▣ The various avenues to lead and make an impression
- ▣ The experience of serving others with a larger vision
- ▣ Respect and recognition as you go along
- ▣ The satisfaction of being a part of an Association that is flexible enough to suit your needs, and has the tenacity to command global acceptability.

She concluded by inviting all those non-Lions to join the Lions Club, promising that the Club will be the Best investment of a lifetime

Panelist

▣ *Ms. Marcella Silva - Council Chairperson*

She stated that, Lions must show the public what they stand for and what they do – to be a living example. Invite the people to share in these experiences and to reach out to other people. Then if they have a desire they will surely join the Club.

She made known that she introduced the “Bring a Buddy Programme” as a District Governor in 2003/2004 , which brought in nearly 800 members that year and out of which over 400 members were inducted in one day when the International President visited the country.

▣ *Dr. Janhavi Sharma*

She Suggested that non-Lions could be educated of the services of the society by conducting various workshops and people could be made more interested in the Club by organizing competitions, public events etc. to create awareness. She also said that more involvement of the Leo members must be sought after.

▣ *Mrs. Joyce Ndegwa - District Chairperson*

After sharing her experiences as a Lion, Mrs. Ndegwa stated that before introducing new members it is important to reflect upon oneself in the society and ask what one has done for the society.

She stated that in her country, women who had economic problems were given the opportunity to join in the Club and encouraged to help society in turn.

▣ *Dr. Sashi Gupta - District Governor*

▣ *Mrs Lajja Kaul - Past District Governor*

Open Discussion

What do Lions need to do to invite more non-Lions?

Various methods, which were discussed during the presentation, were discussed and further suggestions were made: To spread the message of Lionism, recognize non-Lions in meetings. A suggestion was also made that in order to attract women to become Lions; they could first become Lionesses to see how the Club works.

What are the biggest barriers in inviting new members?

Lion Asoka Z. Gunasekera addressed the gathering commenting on one of the drawbacks in the community projects – inviting community leaders. He says that this will help create greater awareness amongst people and also create the image that the Club is sincere in providing services. This will help in gaining more recognition.

Ms. Sangeeta Jatia said that one of the barriers she faced was when people asked her how she should be addressed: Lioness, Lady Lion or Lion? She requested that a consensus must be arrived at to settle with one title and that is to be known as a Lion.

Comments were made by a member of the workshop, on the financial difficulties women face and thus hinder the opportunity for such women to be a part of this organization.

When looking for new members one must first find out if such person is service minded. They must be aware of the needs of society and have a genuine need to help those in need.

What attract the non-Lions to their current volunteer organization?

- ▣ One of the greatest attractions in this organization is the opportunity to serve along side men, on an equal platform.
- ▣ The organization not only provides for both men and women but also to the younger generation, in the Leo Club. Thus the entire family unit may participate in its activities.

IN CONCLUSION, A SUMMARY WAS MADE OF THE DAY'S EVENTS BY MRS. MARCELLA SILVA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the Introduction of speakers Mrs. Marcella Silva did the welcome address. Thereafter Introductions were made of Mrs. Jeanne Kusiak and International President Mr. Clement F. Kusiak. The First Session on Characteristics of a Good Leader was by Jazima Ismail. In her speech she highlighted, that Good Leadership is a process. The Second Session was on Social Factors: What helps promote/What hinders Leadership Opportunities for Women this was by Prof. Savithri Goonesekara. She analyzed the attitudes of society in different areas, such as Education System, Environment & Politics. She further stressed that leadership is a gender neutral term and that women should be perceived not as women but as human beings. The Third Session was on Lion Leadership Training Pathways by Lion Chuk Wijenathen. He highlighted the Mission and Vision Statements of LCI after which a video was presented on the (Lions Club International Foundation) LCIF and its activities throughout the world in order to help Lions help others. The Fourth and final Session was on, How to Introduce the Lions Organization to Women Who are Non-Lions by Ms. Sangeeta Jatia. She highlighted many aspects such as, opportunities, expectations, profile of the membership, Power in Information, and the special significance to women through this membership.