

ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?

CHANCES • CHOICES • CHALLENGES





ARTIST DELPHINE SAIRA GOMEZ

IN NATURE, WE SEE THAT EVERYTHING GROWS TOWARDS THE LIGHT.

HOW WELL EACH SPECIES ADAPTS TO ITS ENVIRONMENT DEPENDS ON HOW CREATIVELY IT ABSORBS LIGHT AND ENERGY. WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE NEED TO LET NATURE BE THEIR TEACHER.

TO QUOTE WORDSWORTH IN HIS POEM *THE TABLES TURNED* (1798):

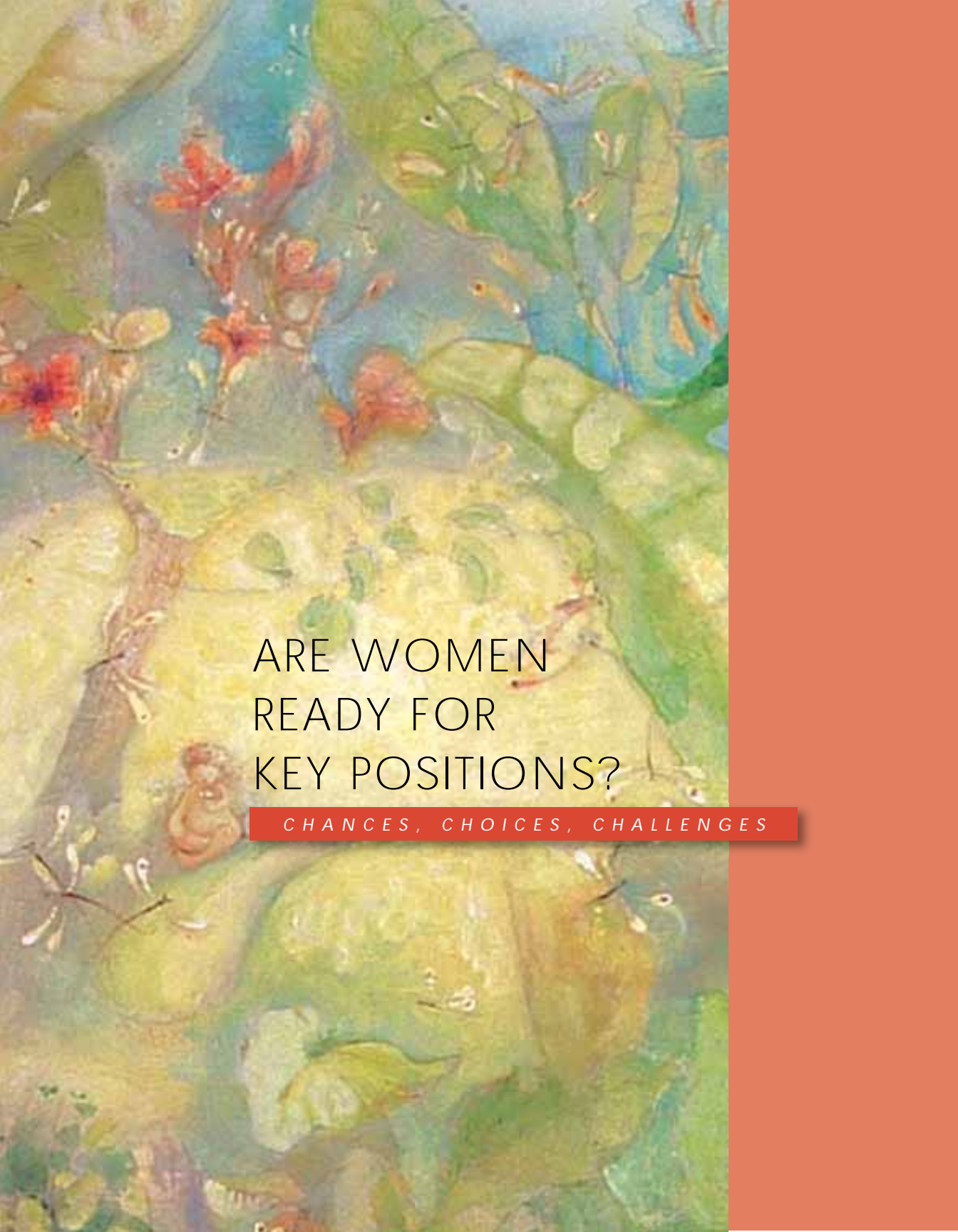
“one impulse from a vernal wood can teach you more of man of moral evil and of good than all the sages can”

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KEY POSITIONS?

CHANCES, CHOICES, CHALLENGES



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PERUTUSAN

YB DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL

MENTERI PEMBANGUNAN WANITA, KELUARGA DAN MASYARAKAT



SEKAPUR SIREH

Hampir setiap hari kita mendengar atau membaca laporan tentang wanita dilantik memegang jawatan tinggi, sama ada dalam kerajaan, dunia korporat, akademik, NGO dan lain-lain. Baru-baru ini, dua orang wanita yang berkaliber telah dilantik sebagai Naib Canselor dua buah universiti yang terulung di Malaysia: YBhg Datuk Rafiah Salim sebagai Naib Canselor Universiti Malaya; dan Y. Bhg. Datuk Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin sebagai Naib Canselor Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Belum pernah sebelum ini wanita memegang jawatan yang sebegitu tinggi dalam bidang akademik di negara kita. Kami di Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat berbangga dengan kejayaan mereka. Kejayaan mereka adalah untuk seluruh masyarakat, bukan untuk wanita sahaja. Kami percaya, jawatan yang terbaik hendaklah diberikan kepada orang yang paling layak untuk menjawatnya – sama ada lelaki atau wanita. Kami bimbang kerana ramai wanita yang berpotensi menjadi orang yang terbaik untuk sesuatu jawatan tidak mendapat persekitaran yang sesuai untuk mencapai potensi mereka. Apabila ini berlaku, bukan wanita yang berpotensi tinggi ini sahaja yang rugi, bahkan seluruh negara akan rugi.



Di Sidang Kemuncak ini, kita mengajukan persoalan yang perlu ditangani sebelum kita boleh mencapai kesaksamaan gender, khususnya: *ADAKAH WANITA SUDAH BERSEDIA UNTUK JAWATAN-JAWATAN PENTING?* Untuk menjawab soalan ini, kita perlu menangani isu-isu natijah *Pilihan, Peluang & Cabaran*.

Sesetengah daripada pilihan, peluang dan cabaran ini secara khusus ditujukan kepada wanita. Bagaimanapun, terdapat juga pilihan, peluang dan cabaran yang perlu dihadapi oleh masyarakat secara keseluruhan untuk menyokong wanita. Saya teruja dengan tema Sidang Kemuncak tahun ini, dan saya tidak sabar untuk mengikuti perbincangan mengenainya. Bagaimanapun, matlamatnya bukan sahaja untuk berbincang, tetapi juga untuk mengambil tindakan. Kami di Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat komited untuk membuat perubahan yang diperlukan ini, bagi menggalakkan wanita yang berpotensi supaya bersedia untuk mengambil jawatan-jawatan penting.



MESSAGE FROM

YB DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL

MINISTER OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Almost every day, we hear of women acquiring top positions, whether in the government, the corporate world, academia, in NGOs or in other spheres. Only recently, we have seen two brilliant women being named Vice Chancellors of top universities in Malaysia: YBhg Datuk Rafiah Salim as Vice Chancellor of our premier university, the University of Malaya; and YBhg Datuk Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin as Vice Chancellor of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. For women in Malaysia, this is a coup. Never before have women held such high positions in academia in the country.

We at the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development are heartened by such success stories. But we see these as success stories for the whole community, and not just for women. We believe that the best jobs should be given to the persons most qualified for them – either man or woman. Our concern is that many women who have the potential of being the best man for the job are not being given the right environment to realise this potential. When that happens, not only do these high-potential women lose out, but so does the entire nation.



At this Summit, we ask a question that needs to be addressed before we could possibly achieve that utopia of gender equity, namely: *ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?*

In order to answer this question, we need to deal with the corollary issues of *Choices, Chances & Challenges*. Some of the choices, chances and challenges apply specifically to women. However, there are also choices, chances and challenges that society as a whole needs to face up to in order to support women.

I am very excited about this year's theme, and am looking forward to the ensuing discussions. The aim, however, is not just to talk, but to take action. For our part, we at the Ministry are committed to making those changes that are necessary to encourage women who are ready to assume key positions.



PERUTUSAN

YBHG DATUK FAIZAH MOHD TAHIR

KETUA SETIAUSAHA, KEMENTERIAN PEMBANGUNAN WANITA,
KELUARGA DAN MASYARAKAT



SEULAS PINANG

Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat telah menganjurkan Sidang Kemuncak Wanita sejak tahun 2003, kerana kami benar-benar percaya bahawa ia menyediakan peluang untuk perbincangan secara jujur dan terbuka, antara lelaki dan wanita, mengenai isu-isu kemajuan wanita di tempat kerja. Kami berharap, menerusi pendapat dan pengalaman yang disuarakan, kita akan lebih memahami cabaran-cabaran yang dihadapi oleh wanita, dan perubahan-perubahan yang perlu untuk mengoptimumkan potensi dan keupayaan mereka.

Kemajuan wanita adalah satu isu yang sangat kompleks. Ia dikaitkan dengan nilai-nilai budaya, pegangan agama, cara pemikiran dan banyak faktor lain yang diperlihatkan dalam dasar-dasar dan peraturan-peraturan yang digariskan oleh kerajaan. Semakin majmuk negara kita, semakin bercambah sudut pandangan dan titik permulaan yang boleh menjanakan kemajuan.

Tidak seperti lelaki, keputusan kerjaya seseorang wanita tidak bergantung semata-mata kepada dirinya. Disebabkan kewajipan kepada keluarga, seseorang wanita biasanya tidak dapat memberikan komitmen 100 peratus kepada kerjaya. Jadi, bila kita bertanya: *"ADAKAH WANITA SUDAH BERSEDIA UNTUK JAWATAN-JAWATAN PENTING?"*, kita bukan bertanya sama ada wanita mempunyai kelayakan untuk memegang jawatan penting. Dalam banyak kes, jawapan kepada soalan mudah ini ialah "ya".



Apa yang kami maksudkan ialah sama ada wanita sudah bersedia untuk membuat pilihan yang pasti – sesetengah daripadanya amat sukar – untuk menempuh ranjau terakhir dalam perjalanan menuju ke puncak kerjaya pilihan mereka.

Sidang kemuncak kali ini akan memberi tumpuan kepada *Pilihan, Peluang & Cabaran* yang perlu ditangani oleh wanita, lelaki, masyarakat, kerajaan dan pelbagai agensi jika kita ingin membebaskan wanita daripada belenggu yang mengekang dan membataskan pilihan mereka serta kemajuan profesional mereka. Pengupayaan wanita benar-benar menuntut perubahan paradigma yang memerlukan sokongan dan kerjasama pelbagai sektor yang terbabit.

Kementerian sangat komited untuk mewujudkan persekitaran kerja yang saksama untuk wanita. Untuk itu, kami perlu mendengar daripada wanita, dan juga lelaki, apa yang diperlukan untuk mewujudkan persekitaran yang sedemikian. Lebih banyak suara yang kita dengar, lebih baik kefahaman yang akan kita perolehi. Justeru itu, gunakan peluang ini untuk menyuarakan pandangan anda.

Dalam hidup ini, kita sering mengambil pendirian pasif kerana kita merasakan, sebagai individu, kita tidak berupaya melakukan sesuatu yang bermakna dan boleh membawa perbezaan. Sidang Kemuncak ini memberi peluang kepada ramai individu untuk menyuarakan isi hati mereka, dan merasa yakin bahawa dengan berbuat demikian, anda menyumbang kepada perubahan yang bermakna kepada separuh daripada penduduk negara ini.

MESSAGE FROM

YBHG DATUK FAIZAH MOHD TAHIR

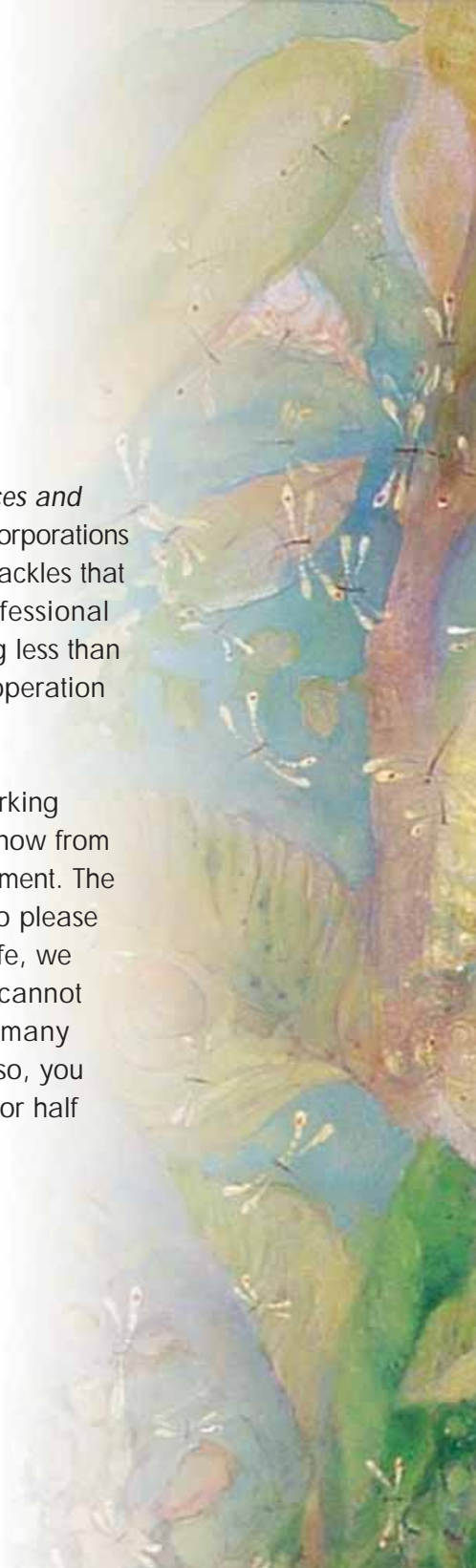
SECRETARY GENERAL, MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development has been organising the Women's Summit since 2003. We have been doing so because we truly believe these summits present an opportunity for open and honest discussion, between men and women, on issues concerning women's progress at the workplace. Our hope is that, through the opinions and experiences voiced, there can be better understanding of the challenges that face women, and the changes that are necessary to optimise their capabilities.

The advancement of women is necessarily a very complex issue. It is related to cultural values, religious beliefs, traditional mindsets and numerous other factors that tend to be reflected in policies and regulations as outlined by the government. The more pluralistic the nation, the more divergent the viewpoints and starting points from which any progress can be made. In many senses, a woman's career decisions, unlike those of a man, do not rest solely on her. Because of her familial obligations, a woman is often unable to commit 100 per cent to her career. So, when we ask: "**ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?**" we are not asking if women have the credentials to take up key positions. In many cases, the answer to this simple question would be a resounding "yes". What we are asking is if women are prepared to make certain choices – some of which will be difficult – to take that last rocky path to reach the zenith of their chosen careers.





At this summit, the focus will be on those *Choices, Chances and Challenges* that women, men, society, the government and corporations need to grapple with if we are to free women from the shackles that confine them and restrict their options vis-à-vis their professional growth. Such true empowerment to women entails nothing less than a paradigm shift which requires the endorsement and cooperation of the various sectors concerned.

The Ministry is committed to establishing an equitable working environment for women. In order to do this, we need to know from women, and men, what it takes to create such an environment. The more voices we hear, the better our understanding. So, do please take this opportunity to express your views. Too often in life, we adopt a passive stance because we feel the individual cannot possibly make a difference. This is an opportunity for many individuals to speak out, and feel confident that in doing so, you are contributing towards lasting and meaningful change for half of this nation's population.





LAPORAN MENYELURUH SIDANG KEMUNCAK WANITA 2006



Sidang Kemuncak Wanita ke-4 yang berlangsung pada 24 Ogos 2006 merupakan salah satu acara yang dijayakan oleh Kementerian Wanita, Keluarga dan Pembangunan Masyarakat yang mengutarakan isu-isu yang dihadapi wanita dalam dunia pekerjaan. Tema *ADAKAH WANITA BERSEDIA UNTUK PERANAN YANG PENTING? Pilihan, Peluang dan Cabaran* memberikan peluang bagi 1,400 wanita yang menyertai sidang tersebut mendapat inspirasi dan perangsang menerusi sesi perbincangan dengan penceramah yang berpengetahuan dan berpengalaman. Para peserta mendapat peluang untuk bertukar fikiran dan pendapat dengan wanita-wanita Malaysia yang berjaya.

Yang Berbahagia Datuk Faizah Mohd Tahir, Ketua Setiausaha Kementerian, di dalam ucapan alu-aluannya telah memperakui bahawa terdapat ketidakseimbangan di antara bilangan wanita di institusi pengajian tinggi dengan golongan wanita yang memegang



jawatan tinggi dalam semua sektor di kalangan masyarakat Malaysia. Tidak boleh dinafikan bahawa golongan wanita dilihat sebagai tidak memilih cabaran untuk menjadi pemimpin tahap tertinggi atau mereka terus meninggalkan kerjaya sama sekali. Keadaan inilah yang telah menghidupkan tema Sidang Kemuncak tahun ini. Sebagai sebuah platform untuk golongan wanita meluahkan dan memberi pendapat, Datuk Faizah menekankan bahawa peranan Sidang Kemuncak ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti isu-isu yang membawa kepada trend ini dan menerusi perbincangan ini, membolehkan Kementerian melaksanakan dasar yang lebih relevan dan berkesan bagi wanita di Malaysia.

Yang Berhormat Menteri, Dato' Sri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, dalam ucapan dasar beliau, memperkatakan bahawasanya, wanita mempunyai sifat-sifat yang penting sebagai seorang pemimpin. Ciri-ciri wanita seperti perspektif mereka yang unik, kreativiti tinggi, kerjasama dan naluri mereka yang perihatin, mempertingkatkan kualiti suasana bekerja. Ciri-ciri ini dianggap amat penting bagi negara yang membangun. Beliau berharap Sidang Kemuncak ini akan membawa kepada pelbagai perbincangan dan dialog yang akan memberikan pendekatan inovatif yang berupaya membantu wanita mengharungi cabaran globalisasi tanpa mengabaikan kualiti kehidupan dan integriti keluarga mereka.

Pada masa yang sama, adalah diakui bahawa wanita menghadapi kekangan dalam usaha mereka mengimbangi kewajipan mereka di rumah dan di tempat kerja. Mereka juga mempunyai peranan tradisi sebagai penjaga dan ramai daripada golongan wanita memainkan peranan sebagai penjaga kepada anak-anak kecil dan juga ibubapa yang sudah tua. Pada masa yang sama, mereka menghadapi suasana pekerjaan di mana kedudukan tertinggi menekankan kemampuan untuk memberikan dedikasi sepenuhnya kepada pekerjaan dan menepikan tanggungjawab mereka yang lain.



Tambahan pula, wanita di Malaysia juga menghadapi masalah dari segi persepsi mundur mengenai peranan wanita dalam masyarakat sejagat. Sebagai contoh, wanita yang mempunyai cita-cita berasa kecewa dengan sesetengah pendapat bahawa wanita hanya berperanan sampingan dan dianggap hilang sifat kewanitaan mereka apabila mengharapkan sesuatu yang lebih daripada itu.

“Saya percaya cabaran kita yang paling ketara ialah dalam membentuk pemikiran baru bahawa wanita yang memegang peranan sebagai pemimpin adalah sangat penting dalam sebuah masyarakat yang dinamik, inovatif, produktif dan perihatin. Kita perlukan lelaki dan wanita yang mempunyai pendekatan yang lebih mendalam terhadap kepimpinan, yang berteraskan nilai-nilai murni dan kebaikan sejagat”.

Dato’ Sri Shahrizat dalam kesimpulan ucapannya, menaruh harapan supaya Sidang Kemuncak ini berupaya memangkinkan perbincangan yang terbuka mengenai isu-isu berkenaan perkembangan wanita dalam sektor pekerjaan. Beliau juga mengharapkan perbincangan tersebut akan membawa kepada pemahaman yang lebih mendalam terhadap cabaran-cabaran yang dihadapi oleh wanita dan juga perubahan yang diperlukan untuk mempertingkatkan lagi daya saing dan kemampuan mereka.

Pembentang Panel Perdana, Dato’ Dr Ng Yen Yen dan Dr Noeleen Heyzer memberi pandangan dari pengalaman mereka sebagai pemimpin. Walaupun kedua-duanya mempunyai pengalaman dan latar belakang profesional yang berbeza, Dato’ Ng Yen Yen sebagai Pengerusi Wanita MCA dan Dr Heyzer sebagai Direktor Eksekutif UNIFEM, mereka berpendapat bahawa untuk mengorak langkah bagi memantapkan lagi diri mereka, wanita seharusnya menyertai bidang politik dengan lebih meluas. Wanita seharusnya menyahut cabaran untuk berjuang supaya memenuhi peranan

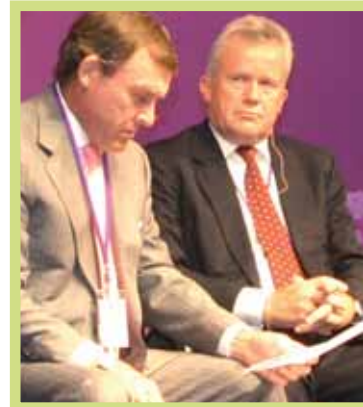




pemimpin yang tertinggi di dalam masyarakat jika mereka ingin menjadi pemangkin perubahan yang positif di dalam komuniti mereka.

Sesi Pakar pula menonjolkan ahli-ahli CEO Solutions sebuah firma perunding terdiri daripada ketua-ketua pegawai eksekutif yang amat berpengalaman bagi berkongsi fikiran menerusi sesi *Walking the Talk: What Works for Women – The CEO Factor*. Sesi ini dikendalikan oleh Tony Heneberry, pengasas dan Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan PDQ.

Datuk Peter Wentworth, Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif BP Asia Pacific apabila ditanya “Mengapa lebih ramai wanita diperlukan dalam bidang perniagaan?”, mengatakan bahawa mereka yang di dalam bidang perniagaan, terutamanya pada masa kini, menganggap pembabitan sebagai amalan yang strategik. Tambah beliau, “Bidang perniagaan kini memerlukan pembabitan wanita yang lebih menyeluruh untuk mendapatkan faedah sepenuhnya dari segi pemikiran yang luas dan kemampuan untuk menangani masalah, membuat keputusan dan dalam pengurusan strategi”.



Beliau menerangkan bahawa untuk meningkatkan daya saing di dalam pasaran global, bidang perniagaan perlukan strategi yang menyeluruh. Oleh itu penyertaan wanita yang berwibawa adalah sangat penting.

Mohd Ashraf yang pernah berkhidmat sebagai Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Federal Auto Malaysia, mengatakan bahawa wanita perlu bersifat lebih asertif dan tegas dalam memperjuangkan isu-isu yang unik kepada mereka. Beliau menekankan bahawa persekitaran pekerjaan seharusnya menyokong dan lebih perihatin terutamanya terhadap keperluan wanita yang kadang kalanya juga merupakan

seorang ibu. Kemajuan dari segi teknologi dapat membantu dalam usaha ini. Dengan kemudahan teknologi perhubungan terbaru ibu-ibu berupaya menjalankan tugas mereka dari rumah dan sudah tiba masanya bagi majikan-majikan menyokong cara bekerja sebegini. Beliau mencabar kaum wanita untuk menjadi lebih kreatif dalam menyuarakan keperluan mereka. Sebagai contoh, memanjangkan tempoh cuti bersalin boleh digambarkan sebagai memberi peluang latihan kepada wanita lain dan pada masa yang sama, ibu tersebut pula dapat meluangkan masa yang lebih lama bersama bayinya.

Dr Hamidah Marican, yang berkhidmat sebagai pengurus bahagian Diversity & Inclusion di BP Asia yang merupakan ibu tunggal kepada seorang anak perempuan berumur 14 tahun, berpendapat bahawa tiada penyelesaian yang mudah untuk menangani situasi ini. Wanita yang inginkan kerjaya sememangnya terpaksa membuat pengorbanan. Beliau menggalakkan kaum wanita supaya tidak membuang masa melayani perasaan serba salah dan memastikan supaya terus membina kemahiran dalam pengurusan masa dan menetapkan apa yang penting bagi mereka. David Fuller, bekas Ketua Pegawai Operasi Malaysian Oxygen juga bersependapat dan menambah bahawa kaum wanita tidak perlu merasa segan atau malu untuk membuktikan kemahiran atau penguasaan mereka di dalam sesuatu bidang ataupun cita-citanya. Seorang wanita seharusnya menetapkan hala tuju dan jangka masa tersendiri untuk mencapai tahap tertinggi di dalam sebuah organisasi tersebut dan tidak hanya mengharapkan jawatan tersebut diberikan kepadanya.



Pada sesi petang Sidang Kemuncak, para peserta berpeluang untuk menimba ilmu daripada dua usahawati yang berbeza. Mereka telah mengorak langkah di dalam bidang yang unik dan amat mencabar dan telah mencapai kepuasan peribadi dan profesional. Elizabeth Carlassare pengasas *dotcomdivas.net* merupakan seorang wanita





muda dari Amerika Syarikat yang membina perniagaan yang berasaskan IT dan berjaya megembangkan syarikatnya selari dengan perkembangan sektor internet. Beliau telah menghasilkan sebuah buku yang membincangkan peranan internet yang kini membuka banyak peluang kepada golongan wanita. Fleksibiliti internet telah memberikan peluang untuk wanita meneruskan kerjaya dan pada masa yang sama memenuhi tanggungjawab kepada keluarga mereka.

Diana Rose pula merupakan bekas wartawan yang telah mengambil keputusan untuk pulang ke kampungnya di Mukah untuk meningkatkan sifat berdikari masyarakat Melanau menerusi usaha mempertengahan warisan budaya mereka yang unik. Pada tahun 1997, beliau menubuhkan Badan Budaya Melanau yang merupakan kumpulan tarian tradisi dan telah berjaya mengumpulkan dana untuk membina sebuah rumah tradisi bangsa Melanau yang digelar Lamin Dana.

Lamin Dana memberi para pengunjung peluang untuk menikmati kehidupan tradisi di Tellian. Peserta Sidang Kemuncak terpegun dengan cara penyampaian Diana yang bersemangat dan menyayat hati. Mereka kagum dengan pencapaian Diana yang berjaya merealisasikan cita-citanya. Lamin Dana kini merupakan perniagaan pelancongan yang berjaya dan telah memberi kaum Tellian kebanggaan terhadap identiti dan kebudayaan mereka yang tersendiri.

Penceramah-penceramah tersebut mengakhiri Sidang Kemuncak dengan memberikan kata-kata perangsang kepada para peserta. Mereka dapat menyayati pengalaman yang membuahkan hasil yang begitu memuaskan di mana cita-cita idaman penceramah-penceramah dapat menjadi kenyataan. Kami harap anda juga akan menyahut cabaran ini menerusi kandungan Laporan Khas Sidang Kemuncak Wanita 2006 ini.



WELCOME MESSAGE

YBHG DATUK FAIZAH MOHD TAHIR

*SECRETARY GENERAL, MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT*



In Malaysia, there are more girls than boys at institutes of higher learning. Yet, top positions in the corporate world, in government, NGOs, and in academia are still predominantly occupied by men. Somewhere along the line, women are choosing not to aspire to be the boss, or head of department, or Minister, or indeed to assume any position of leadership. Why is this?

It was to answer this complex question that we launched the Women's Summit in 2003, in conjunction with the National Women's Day. We thought, rather than pat ourselves on the back for what we have achieved so far; we should seek to understand the issues confronting women which continue to hold the majority of us back, and which prevent women in Malaysia from achieving even more.





The Women's Summits are a platform for women to hear from successful women and to be inspired by them. But more than that, they are also a platform for women to voice their concerns and their personal experiences. Their input is crucial to us at the Ministry to formulate and implement policies that are relevant to women in Malaysia.

After having discussed, in previous summits, issues such as the 'glass ceiling' and other factors in the work environment that hinder the advancement of women, we felt it was time to tackle another very pertinent, and in some ways controversial, point: *ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?* Given this main theme, we hope to explore and appreciate the *Choices, Chances and Challenges* that face today's intelligent, educated and socially aware career woman.

We have invited some exceptional women to speak at our Perdana Panel this year. We are pleased to welcome to the Summit, Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM, who is based in New York, but who regularly travels to places of strife and disaster around the world to promote women's security and rights. We have also invited one of Malaysia's own rising political star, Dato' Dr Ng Yen Yen who is not only Wanita MCA chairman, but also Deputy Minister Finance 1 of our government. Dato' Dr Ng is proof that a woman is capable of being an accomplished medical doctor, and a respected politician, and a mother to three successful sons!

Ladies & gentlemen,

Women have been trying to engage in smart partnerships with men to enable them to deliver a higher level of service in the workplace. At this year's Summit, we have a distinguished panel, of mostly men, who will discuss what it takes for women to tread this path to leadership. I have great pleasure in welcoming our panel comprising David Fuller, former CEO of Malaysian Oxygen;

Mohd Ashraf Iqbal, former CEO of Proton Cars UK/Europe; Datuk Peter Wentworth, CEO of BP Asia Pacific; and Dr Hamidah Marican, BP Asia's Regional Diversity and Inclusion Manager.

Finally, as part of the Expert Series, we have with us today two speakers who we believe will move women to act in unexpected ways. Elizabeth Carlassare, from the US, will speak about how she became named one of "Net's 25 movers and shakers in February 2001" by *Interactive Week Magazine*. Diana Rose, from Sarawak, will speak about heritage and culture as a source of community and economic empowerment. Their sessions, *Jumping Out of Your Comfort Zone* and *Rowing Upstream*, will be personal accounts of how these two women found success by moving into new areas of entrepreneurship.

With such speakers, we can expect very stimulating presentations which will inspire us, motivate us, and perhaps even make us question certain attitudes or belief systems which prevent us from realising our true potential.

We hope you will enjoy the day's programme and take this opportunity to engage in knowledge sharing sessions.

Thank you.





UCAPAN DASAR

YB DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL

MENTERI PEMBANGUNAN WANITA, KELUARGA DAN MASYARAKAT

WOMEN'S SUCCESS - A STATE OF MIND



Bismillahirrahmanirrahim.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh dan salam sejahtera.

Syukur Alhamdulillah kerana dengan izinNya dapat kita sekali lagi berkumpul pada tahun ini bagi menjayakan Sidang Kemuncak Wanita tahun 2006. Bagi pihak Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat, saya ingin mengalu-alukan kehadiran puan-puan dan tuan-tuan sekalian.





SIDANG KEMUNCAK WANITA – TUJUAN

Sidang Kemuncak Wanita diadakan saban tahun bertujuan menemukan wanita daripada sektor awam, korporat, akademik dan pertubuhan bukan kerajaan untuk membina satu visi yang sama dan mencari penyelesaian yang praktikal kepada sebahagian cabaran yang dihadapi oleh wanita di tempat kerja. Semenjak mula diadakan pada tahun 2003, Sidang Kemuncak ini menjadi wadah kepada wanita untuk bertemu dengan pemimpin-pemimpin terkemuka dalam pelbagai bidang untuk berkongsi kemahiran, pengalaman dan strategi.



SUCCESS - A STATE OF MIND

The Women's Summit was designed to provide our participants the opportunity to engage in direct dialogue with other women about workplace issues that are important to them. I believe the Summit is a vital mechanism for consultation. It is imperative that we continue to examine what is needed of women as partners in our country's development. How do we communicate a vision and influence others to work towards a common objective? How do we empower others through mentoring or other means? How can we generate a sense of openness to change and acquire new knowledge?

All this is part of a conscious, consistent



effort to create a state of mind and a working environment in which women can succeed and can feel they are contributing towards the economy in whatever their choice of occupation.

As more women become a part of the national 'workspace', they are bringing many positive attributes to the leadership process, including thoughtfulness, sensitivity, a collaborative approach and a caring spirit, all of which are critical to developing

a nation that is looking for ways to meet the challenges of globalisation without compromising on the quality of life and the integrity of the family unit. I also believe that as more women participate at the decision-making level in the development process, we can help raise the level of efficiency and creativity in the 'workspace'.

The Ministry of Women, Family & Community Development is working towards maximising opportunities and choices for women. Since the establishment of the Ministry we have had many major achievements:

- More women attaining higher levels of education;
- More women in the workforce;
- More women in positions of influence and leadership;
- Greater support for women raising families and providing care; and
- Better health outcomes for women.

Saya pernah mengatakan bahawa pengisian jawatan-jawatan yang belum pernah diterokai seperti Naib Canselor di universiti-universiti tempatan serta pihak pengurusan tertinggi dalam syarikat-syarikat





berkaitan kerajaan atau Government Linked Companies merupakan cabaran yang perlu dihadapi oleh wanita di Malaysia. Kini ternyata wanita telah berjaya menahuti cabaran tersebut dengan perantikan dua orang wanita menjadi naib canselor universiti baru-baru ini iaitu Y.Bhg. Datuk Rafiah Salim sebagai Naib Canselor Universiti Malaya, universiti terulung di negara kita; Y.Bhg. Datuk Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin sebagai Naib Canselor Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Pepatah ada mengatakan, “Apa tampang, itulah tumbuhnya” saya amat berbangga pada hari ini untuk mengatakan bahawa usaha kerajaan memperkenalkan dasar sekurang-sekurangnya 30 peratus wanita di peringkat pembuat keputusan dalam sektor awam pada tahun 2004 telah mula menampakkan hasilnya. Walaupun kadar penyertaan wanita yang memegang jawatan penting masih jauh ketinggalan berbanding lelaki dan banyak lagi usaha perlu dilaksanakan untuk mencapai sasaran, tetapi ia telah menunjukkan perkembangan yang amat positif khususnya dalam bidang-bidang yang sebelum ini hanya diterajui oleh kaum lelaki.

ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN

One of the most difficult issues that women in countries all over the world are grappling with today is the pressure of balancing the demands of work and home. Let's face the facts. Women are the ones that have the babies, and the choices forced upon them when they start a family have enormous consequences. They are our country's traditional caregivers and, as such, continue to struggle with the basic questions of family and community. Many feel sandwiched between caring for young children and elderly parents. At the same time, they face a working environment and the willingness to put their jobs first. If they want to rise to the top in their organisation, they have to dedicate themselves to their work, often to the exclusion of almost everything else.



Fortunately, many companies are focussing efforts on attracting and keeping women at senior levels. They are finding that executive women benefit from flexible schedules, the ability to telecommute, better family leave policies, business opportunities and mentors. In all this, I cannot but emphasise the need for supportive families.

USAHA KERAJAAN

Dalam mengatasi masalah ini memang tidak dapat dinafikan kerajaan telah melaksanakan pelbagai usaha untuk menyediakan persekitaran yang kondusif bagi membantu wanita membina kerjaya sehingga berjaya menjawat jawatan penting. Kerajaan sedar wanita yang bekerja menghadapi banyak cabaran kerana perlu memainkan dua peranan iaitu sebagai pengurus rumah tangga dan pekerja.

Umpamanya, bagi membantu keluarga yang berpendapatan rendah, kerajaan telah bersetuju menubuhkan taman asuhan kanak-kanak berasaskan komuniti (community-based childcare centre) iaitu TASKA komuniti pada tahun 2005. Kerajaan juga menggalakkan Kementerian atau Jabatan menubuhkan TASKA di tempat kerja dengan menyediakan pelbagai insentif. Bagi menjamin kualiti pengasuhan kanak-kanak tidak diabaikan, usaha memperkemas aspek pengurusan dan pemantauan pusat penjagaan kanak-kanak sedang dibuat melalui pindaan ke atas Akta Taman Asuhan Kanak-Kanak 1984.

Rancangan Malaysia Ke-9 juga memberi penekanan kepada usaha mempertingkatkan penyertaan wanita dalam pasaran pekerjaan. Beberapa teras strategik telah digariskan bagi menggalakkan penyertaan wanita dalam pasaran pekerjaan. Antara strategi yang akan terus dilaksanakan termasuk meningkatkan penyediaan kemudahan sokongan bagi membolehkan wanita menyertai pasaran pekerjaan seperti penyediaan peraturan kerja yang kondusif, mewujudkan peraturan kerja baru dan fleksibel seperti telekerja, kerja sambilan dan perkongsian kerja. Strategi ini diharap dapat membantu wanita untuk terus kekal dalam pasaran pekerjaan.





Pihak kerajaan juga telah melaksanakan pelbagai inisiatif untuk mencapai kesaksamaan gender dalam bidang pekerjaan, termasuklah melalui penguatkuasaan undang-undang. Jawatankuasa Kabinet Mengenai Kesaksamaan Gender dalam mesyuaratnya pada 27 Julai 2006 telahpun bersetuju supaya ditubuhkan satu jawatankuasa antara agensi bagi mengkaji peraturan dan undang-undang berkaitan pekerjaan yang tidak memenuhi standard Pertubuhan Buruh Antarabangsa (ILO) serta berat sebelah dari segi gender. Jawatankuasa tersebut akan dipengerusikan oleh Kementerian Sumber Manusia.

Akhir kata, terima kasih jua saya ucapkan kepada semua dif-dif jemputan, penceramah dalam dan luar negara serta peserta kerana telah sudi hadir menjayakan Sidang Kemuncak Wanita 2006. Kepada pihak urusetia, syabas dan terima kasih saya ucapkan kerana telah bekerja bertungkus lumus demi menjayakan persidangan ini.

Sekian, Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahiwabarakatuh.

PANEL PERDANA
PROSIDING SIDANG
KEMUNCAK WANITA 2006



ADAKAH WANITA
BERSEEDIA UNTUK
MENYANDANG
JAWATAN PENTING?
PILIHAN, PELUANG
DAN CABARAN

**PEMIMPIN WANITA SEBAGAI AGEN
PERUBAHAN**

DR NOELEEN HEYZER

*PENGARAH EKSEKUTIF, DANA PERTUBUHAN BANGSA-BANGSA BERSATU
BAGI WANITA (UNIFEM)*

DR HEYZER MERUPAKAN PENGARAH EKSEKUTIF PERTAMA DARI NEGARA SELATAN YANG MENERAJUI UNIFEM. UNIFEM MERUPAKAN AGENSI DI BAWAH UN YANG MEMPERJUANGKAN PEMERKASAAN DAN KESAKSAMAAN WANITA. DENGAN MENYERTAI UNIFEM, BELIAU TERLIBAT SECARA LANGSUNG DENGAN ASPEK-ASPEK WANITA SEPERTI MEMPERKUKUHKAN HAK DAN KESELAMATAN EKONOMI WANITA, MEMBANTU MENYELESAIKAN KONFLIK DAN KEAMANAN DI KALANGAN KEPIMPINAN WANITA, MENAMATKAN KEGANASAN TERHADAP WANITA DAN MEMPERJUANGKAN HIV/AIDS DARI PERSPEKTIF GENDER.





DI BAWAH KEPIMPINANNYA, UNIFEM TELAH BANYAK MEMBANTU NEGARA-NEGARA UNTUK MERUMUSKAN DAN MELAKSANAKAN DASAR SERTA PENGUATKUASAAN DALAM USAHA KESEDARAN TENTANG HAK DAN KESELAMATAN WANITA. IA TELAH MEMBAWA KEPADA PEMBARUAN UNDANG-UNDANG TRADISI, PERSEKITARAN KERJA YANG LEBIH BAIK BAGI PEKERJA PENDATANG, PROSES RUNDING DAMAI DAN POLITIK DI KALANGAN WANITA. UNIFEM JUGA TELAH BERJAYA MEMBAWA AGENDA WANITA KE PERINGKAT YANG LEBIH TINGGI DI PERTUBUHAN BANGSA-BANGSA BERSATU.

Dr Noeleen Heyzer telah memulakan perbincangan dengan mengutarakan pendapatnya bahawa persoalan, “Adakah wanita bersedia untuk memegang jawatan penting?”, sebenarnya sudah tidak lagi timbul pada masa kini. Pada pendapat beliau, persoalan yang lebih relevan adalah sama ada wanita telah mempersiapkan diri mereka untuk menjadi pemimpin.

Ketika ini lebih ramai wanita berada di peringkat kepimpinan tertinggi sama ada dalam bidang politik mahupun swasta. Wanita juga telah lama membuktikan bahawa mereka merupakan pemimpin yang baik bukan sahaja di peringkat bawahan malah sebagai pemimpin negara. Sebagai bukti, pada tahun 2006 dua pemimpin wanita negara yang baru telah muncul, iaitu Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Presiden Liberia dan Michele Bachelet, pemimpin negara Chile.

Menurut Dr Heyzer lagi, kedua-dua pemimpin itu tidak bersendirian di peringkat pucuk kepimpinan. Di seluruh dunia, kini terdapat 11 ketua negara, 23 menteri luar dan 12 menteri pertahanan yang terdiri daripada wanita. Malah di Rwanda, sebuah negara mundur di benua Afrika, wanita menguasai 49 peratus daripada kerusi parlimennya, iaitu jumlah tertinggi di dunia di sesebuah negara.





Dr Heyzer juga berpendapat bahawa wanita telah menguasai bidang ekonomi. Setakat ini, terdapat 20 menteri ekonomi serta 45 menteri berkaitan dengan perdagangan dan industri dari kalangan kaum wanita. Wanita di sektor swasta juga memperlihatkan penguasaan yang bertambah. Berdasarkan kajian yang telah dibuat oleh Pertubuhan Bangsa-

bangsa Bersatu (PBB), sekurang-kurangnya 10 daripada 500 syarikat dimiliki oleh golongan wanita.

Wanita juga mampu memainkan peranan sebagai agen perubahan yang berkesan dalam membawa keamanan di sesebuah negara. Di Liberia, rakyat wanita negara itu telah keluar memberi sokongan penuh di pilihanraya dan mengundi untuk perubahan di negara mereka yang selama ini bergolak. Ini jelas membuktikan bahawa mereka sedar bahawa perubahan hanya akan dicapai melalui pembentukan undang-undang dan polisi.

Begitupun, beliau menegaskan bahawa wanita tidak boleh menjadi agen perubahan secara bersendirian kerana isu gender bukan membabitkan golongan wanita semata-mata. Sebaliknya, perubahan adalah hasil daripada kerjasama di dalam masyarakat, di antara lelaki dan wanita, dengan pembabitan Kerajaan.

Sebagai kata akhir, beliau menyeru supaya semua pihak membenarkan wanita memainkan peranan aktif dalam semua bidang ekonomi, sosial dan politik. Penglibatan wanita boleh membantu membentuk dunia tanpa keganasan, ketidakadilan dan diskriminasi terhadap wanita.





PANEL PERDANA

PROSIDING SIDANG
KEMUNCAK WANITA 2006

ADAKAH WANITA BERSEDIA UNTUK MENYANDANG JAWATAN PENTING? PILIHAN, PELUANG DAN CABARAN

**PERJALANAN POLITIK WANITA
CINA MALAYSIA**



DATO' DR NG YEN YEN

TIMBALAN MENTERI KEWANGAN 1 & Pengerusi Wanita MCA

YB DATO' DR NG YEN YEN MEMPUNYAI KELULUSAN SARJANA MUDA PERUBATAN DAN PEMBEDAHAN DARI UNIVERSITI MALAYA DAN TELAH BERKHIDMAT SEBAGAI DOKTOR PERUBATAN SELAMA 26 TAHUN SEBELUM MENCEBURI BIDANG POLITIK. BELIAU DILANTIK SEBAGAI SENATOR PADA TAHUN 1993. PADA TAHUN 1999 BELIAU MENJADI AHLI PARLIMEN DAN SETERUSNYA DILANTIK SEBAGAI TIMBALAN MENTERI KEBUDAYAAN, KESENIAN DAN PELANCONGAN. PADA TAHUN 2003, BELIAU DILANTIK SEBAGAI TIMBALAN MENTERI KEWANGAN I, JAWATAN YANG DIPEGANG SEHINGGA SEKARANG.



Dalam Panel Perdana, beliau telah mengatakan bahawa penyertaan wanita dalam politik dan pada peringkat membuat keputusan sangat penting bagi mengukuhkan sistem demokrasi dan memperkasakan wanita. Tahun 70-an dan 80-an adalah masa yang tidak memihak kepada wanita, sedangkan beliau sendiri tidak berhak untuk menandatangani permohonan untuk membuat kad pengenalan anaknya. Pengalaman ini mendorong beliau untuk bergiat aktif dalam politik sebagai satu landasan untuk menangani ketidaksamaan gender terutamanya dalam sistem undang-undang yang perlu dikaji semula.

Wanita Malaysia telah bersedia menyandang jawatan penting jika keupayaan wanita diambil kira dari segi pendidikan dan kemahiran, penglibatan ekonomi dan pendedahan antarabangsa. Walau bagaimanapun, kesediaan wanita bukan hanya bergantung kepada keupayaan. Terdapat faktor lain yang menyumbang seperti keadaan sekeliling iaitu keluarga, kerjaya, masyarakat, dasar, undang-undang serta pemikiran.

Pilihan menjadi pemimpin politik hanya akan wujud dengan adanya kesedaran, minat, kehendak dan tindakan. Membuat pilihan merupakan hak kepada semua wanita. Namun pilihan





tidak akan wujud tanpa persekitaran yang menggalakkan. Pada abad ke-20 wanita Cina terikat dengan pemakaian kasut *lotus*. Sekarang wanita boleh berlari!

Kemahiran memimpin boleh diperkukuhkan dengan mengubahkan pemikiran tradisional dan memperkasakan wanita melalui pemikiran yang kritikal, analitikal dan membina. Beliau juga menyentuh tentang *Basket Movement* di mana bakul membeli-belah digunakan untuk mewakili kepentingan-kepentingan wanita hari ini, seperti kesihatan, penyertaan ekonomi dan keperluan keluarga. Kerajaan Malaysia kini sedang berusaha untuk memberi sokongan kepada wanita yang bekerja. Contohnya, Kementerian Kewangan telah menawarkan pengecualian cukai kepada syarikat yang menyediakan kemudahan penjagaan anak muda.

Cabaran wanita dalam kepimpinan politik adalah mengimbangi antara tanggungjawab kepada keluarga, suami dan politik. Peranan wanita sebagai ibu juga tidak boleh diganti. Wanita dalam politik perlu sokongan daripada keluarganya. Beliau menggalakkan wanita untuk melibatkan diri dalam perwakilan politik kerana ini merupakan jalan yang paling berkesan untuk menyumbang kepada perubahan yang positif dan pembangunan negara.

WALKING THE TALK: WHAT WORKS FOR WOMEN

THE CEO FACTOR



Tony Heneberry berperanan sebagai moderator bagi perbincangan ini. Graduan dalam bidang kejuruteraan beliau merupakan pengasas dan Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan PDQ, sebuah syarikat yang terlibat dalam perkhidmatan pasaran dan perhubungan dalam pengurusan perniagaan. Beliau sering menjadi perunding bagi syarikat-syarikat lain dari pelbagai sektor termasuklah perkhidmatan kewangan, automotif, pembuatan, perkhidmatan pelanggan, teknologi maklumat dan penjagaan kesihatan.



Datuk Peter Wentworth MERUPAKAN KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF BAGI BP ASIA PACIFIC. SEPANJANG 35 TAHUN DENGAN BP, BELIAU TELAH BERKHIDMAT DI UNITED KINGDOM, PERANCIS, AUSTRALIA DAN MALAYSIA DENGAN TUMPUAN KEPADA PENGURUSAN PERNIAGAAN DAN PEMBANGUNAN PROJEK-PROJEK MEGA.



David Fuller MERUPAKAN BEKAS KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF MALAYSIA OXYGEN (MOX), SALAH SEBUAH DARIPADA 50 SYARIKAT TERSENARAI DI MALAYSIA. BERSAMA KUMPULAN BOC (SALAH SEBUAH PEMEGANG SAHAM TERBESAR MOX) BELIAU DILIBATKAN DALAM PELBAGAI ASPEK PENGURUSAN, TERMASUK HAMPIR 15 TAHUN SEBAGAI KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF DI HONG KONG, MAURITIUS, OPERASI DI SELATAN CHINA DAN MALAYSIA.



Dr Hamidah Merican MERUPAKAN PENGURUS DIVERSITY & INCLUSION RANTAU ASIA PASIFIK, BP ASIA. BELIAU MEMPUNYAI SARJANA DALAM BIDANG PEMBANGUNAN DAN LATIHAN DAN IJAZAH KEDOKTORAN DALAM PENGURUSAN BERASASKAN NILAI. BELIAU JUGA TERLIBAT DALAM PROGRAM PENDIDIKAN NILAI KEHIDUPAN YANG DIBAYAI OLEH PERTUBUHAN BANGSA-BANGSA BERSATU.



Mohamed Ashraf Iqbal MERUPAKAN BEKAS KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF AUTO FEDERAL, PENGIMPOR DAN PENJUAL UTAMA KERETA VOLVO DI MALAYSIA. BELIAU PERNAH MENJADI KETUA PEGAWAI EKSEKUTIF PROTON BAGI UK/EROPAH. PADA MASA INI, BELIAU ADALAH PERUNDING BAGI SYARIKAT-SYARIKAT BESAR DI MALAYSIA DAN INDONESIA TERUTAMANYA DALAM PROGRAM TRANSFORMASI PENGURUSAN.



Sesi panel ini dimulakan dengan pengenalan ringkas mengenai usaha Diversity & Inclusion syarikat BP. Syarikat BP pada masa ini telah diperluaskan meliputi aspek geografi mahupun perniagaan dengan kepelbagaian budaya melalui penggunaan dasar Diversity & Inclusion yang memanfaatkan potensi penuh yang ada pada manusia. Diversity & Inclusion sentiasa mempertahankan dasar pra-pekerja seperti pekerja patut dilayan dengan penuh penghormatan dan dinilai dari segi merit dan bukan ciri-ciri lain seperti bangsa, umur, gender, agama dan orientasi seksual.

Menurut Datuk Peter Wentworth, sebagai syarikat kejuruteraan berteknologi tinggi, BP telah merangka strategi termasuklah mempelbagaikan perwakilan dan kepimpinan pengurusannya. BP percaya bahawa dengan mengubah persepsi, sikap dan tingkah laku terhadap kaum wanita, ia akan memberi ruang dan peluang untuk kejayaan mereka dan seterusnya menyumbang kepada kejayaan organisasi secara keseluruhan.



Dr Hamidah pula telah menggariskan tiga langkah untuk mencapai kejayaan sebagai pemimpin dan mengatasi persepsi negatif terhadap kaum wanita itu sendiri. Pertama, wanita perlu mengenal pasti dan memperbaiki diri mereka dengan mengenal pasti apakah sebenarnya yang mereka inginkan dalam hidup serta visi dan matlamat hidup mereka. Kedua, wanita perlu menjadi lebih fleksibel dan perlu tahu cara menyesuaikan diri terutamanya pada masa kini di mana suasana kerja adalah sangat dinamik. Walaupun menemui halangan, wanita perlu melihat kepada kelebihan-kelebihan kelebihan yang ada pada diri mereka. Ketiga, wanita perlu membina rangkaian yang berkesan untuk berjaya sama ada dalam sektor awam atau swasta. Bagi memperluaskan rangkaian, kaum wanita harus keluar dari 'zon selesa'.

Mengikut David Fuller, perubahan minda perlu dibuat jika seseorang wanita ingin menjadi pemimpin yang berjaya. Beliau tidak menafikan bahawa terdapat halangan bagi seseorang wanita untuk berjaya. Prestasi, kredibiliti dan kemampuan wanita sering tidak dihargai. Dalam usaha untuk mengatasi keadaan ini, wanita perlu menjadi lebih proaktif dan mempunyai pemikiran yang positif. Mereka juga perlu berani bersuara dan mempunyai daya saing yang tinggi.

Ashraf Iqbal percaya bahawa kredibiliti dan kemampuan wanita telah banyak menyumbang kepada kejayaan produktiviti. Beliau turut menyokong isu perlanjutan cuti bersalin yang kini diperjuangkan oleh Kementerian. Dipandang dari aspek lain, cuti bersalin boleh mewujudkan peluang latihan dan pendedahan untuk pekerja lain yang menggantikan pekerja yang bercuti walaupun secara sementara. Secara tidak langsung pekerja-pekerja lain mendapat pengalaman membuat kerja-kerja yang lebih mencabar. Ini akan menambah bilangan pekerja berkemahiran tinggi yang akhirnya akan menyumbang kepada kejayaan organisasi.





S E S I S O A L J A W A B

1. PUAN USHA DILLAI, NCWO

Bagaimanakah kita memastikan bahawa pengurusan atasan akan mengambil kira persoalan diversity dan inclusion dan bagaimana ianya dilakukan?

DAVID FULLER: Dasar Diversity & Inclusion masih pada peringkat awal di BP, dan perlu masa untuk dikembangkan.

2. KHAIRIAH TALHA, PERANCANG BANDAR

Beliau mengatakan kegusaran mengenai peluang yang tidak sama rata dan diskriminasi masih wujud terutamanya dalam perlantikan wanita untuk jawatan kepimpinan. Salah satu contoh ialah kekurangan wanita di peringkat kepimpinan kerajaan tempatan. Berpandukan pengalaman beliau sendiri, sikap prejudis, terutamanya kepada wanita Muslim yang bertudung, masih wujud. Memandangkan 70 peratus daripada pelajar di peringkat pengajian tinggi adalah wanita, pelaburan negara di dalam pendidikan mereka adalah dibazirkan jika mereka tidak diberi peluang untuk membuktikan diri dan berkhidmat untuk negara.

PETER WENTWORTH: BP telah mewujudkan kepelbagaian struktur kepimpinannya walaupun agak sukar bagi BP memandangkan ia adalah syarikat berasaskan kejuruteraan berteknikal tinggi.



3. DATUK DR RAJ KARIM

REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION,
EAST AND SOUTH EAST ASIA & ASIAN REGION

Bagaimanakah anda membangunkan kapasiti dalam BP sehingga wanita berkebolehan tinggi sedar akan potensi besar yang ada pada diri mereka?

Bagi pihak BP mereka sentiasa menerapkan nilai-nilai di mana lelaki dan wanita perlu memahami antara satu sama lain. BP juga menggunakan sepenuhnya perbezaan antara lelaki dan wanita ke arah yang positif. Antara program yang BP dilaksanakan ialah *Gender Speak* dalam usaha mewujudkan suasana pembelajaran kerja yang menyeronokkan.



THE WOMEN'S SUMMIT EXPERT SERIES

JUMPING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

7 SECRETS TO SUCCESS FROM WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

ELIZABETH CARLASSARE

ELIZABETH CARLASSARE MERUPAKAN SEORANG PENULIS, PENCERAMAH, PERANCANG STRATEGIK INTERNET DAN USAHAWAN YANG MEMPUNYAI PENGALAMAN KERJA LEBIH DARIPADA 16 TAHUN DENGAN SYARIKAT-SYARIKAT DI SILICON VALLEY. SELAKU PENGURUS PEMBANGUNAN MAKLUMAT UNTUK SYARIKAT SYMANTEC, ELIZABETH CARLASSARE DITUGASKAN DALAM BIDANG PENGURUSAN ISI KANDUNGAN DAN PEMBANGUNAN LAMAN WEB UNTUK SYARIKAT-SYARIKAT BESAR SEPERTI ADOBE DAN INTUIT. BELIAU JUGA TELAH MENULIS SEBUAH BUKU YANG BERJUDUL *DOTCOM DIVAS: eBUSINESS INSIGHTS FROM THE VISIONARY WOMEN FOUNDERS OF 20 NET VENTURES*.

Pada Sidang Kemuncak Wanita kali ini, Elizabeth Carlassare telah membincangkan topik bertajuk *Jumping Out of Your Comfort Zone – 7 Secrets to Success from Women Entrepreneurs*. Elizabeth Carlassare memaklumkan bahawa bilangan pengusaha wanita semakin ramai di Amerika Syarikat. Peningkatan wanita yang menceburi perniagaan adalah dua kali ganda lebih ramai daripada bilangan lelaki. Kini, sebanyak 29 peratus perniagaan baru dalam bidang teknologi maklumat telah melantik wanita di peringkat pengurusan atasan. Lebih kurang 7 peratus syarikat baru diasaskan oleh wanita, tetapi mereka hanya menerima modal sebanyak 5 peratus sahaja.



Elizabeth Carlassare seterusnya menerangkan bahawa buku *Dotcom Divas* adalah mengenai 20 orang wanita yang berjaya menubuhkan syarikat internet dengan mendapatkan modal usaha niaga (*Venture Capital*). Beliau didorong menulis buku ini untuk menceritakan kejayaan wanita di dalam bidang teknologi maklumat dan komunikasi untuk dijadikan panduan oleh bakal usahawan wanita.

Wanita memilih bidang keusahawanan kerana mereka mempunyai idea untuk direalisasikan bagi menembusi pasaran. Di samping itu, mereka berpeluang mengetuai perniagaan yang dijalankan. Ini menarik wanita untuk bekerja tanpa terikat dengan mana-mana struktur kuasa bagi menjayakan usaha yang dirancang dengan menggunakan cara pentadbiran mereka yang tersendiri.

Elizabeth Carlassare mendapati bahawa terdapat beberapa ciri yang dikongsi oleh usahawan-usahawan wanita yang berjaya. Ciri-ciri tersebut adalah seperti berikut:

- i.* Ramai usahawan wanita yang berjaya *mempunyai fikiran luas* bagi mengembangkan perniagaan atau menceburi pasaran yang lebih besar.
- ii.* Para usahawan wanita yang berjaya sering *mengkaji dan meneliti setiap peluang* yang ada dan menggunakan peluang yang terbaik untuk memajukan perniagaan mereka.
- iii.* Salah satu cara yang terbaik untuk mengembangkan perniagaan adalah dengan *mewujudkan rangkaian yang luas dan berkesan*.
- iv.* Rata-rata usahawan wanita yang berjaya *mempunyai sikap yang positif* untuk maju dalam perniagaan.





- v. *Kemahiran berkomunikasi* dengan penuh keyakinan merupakan keperluan utama untuk berjaya dalam perniagaan.
- vi. Kunci kejayaan bergantung kepada *kecekalan yang tinggi* dan *sedia untuk belajar dari setiap cabaran* yang ditempuhi.
- vii. Usahawan wanita yang berjaya *berani mengambil risiko yang strategik* untuk menerokai bidang yang baru.

Elizabeth Carlassare mengakhiri pembentangannya dengan mengatakan bahawa terdapat banyak peluang pekerjaan dan perniagaan yang boleh diterokai oleh wanita. Bidang keusahawanan merupakan satu bidang yang telah membuktikan bahawa wanita mampu untuk bersaing dengan cemerlang.



ROWING UPSTREAM



DIANA ROSE

DIANA ROSE MERUPAKAN SEORANG ANAK PERIBUMI NEGERI SARAWAK DARI KETURUNAN MELANAU. BELIAU MEMPUYAI MINAT YANG MENDALAM UNTUK MENGHIDUPKAN KEMBALI BUDAYA KAUM MELANAU DI KALANGAN KOMUNITI BELIAU DI TELLIAN. PERMULAAN PERUBAHAN HIDUP BELIAU BERLAKU PADA TAHUN 1993 KETIKA BELIAU BERTUGAS SEBAGAI SEORANG WARTAWAN UNTUK AKHBAR *THE STAR*. SEMASA MEMBUAT LIPUTAN MENGENAI EMPANGAN BAKUN, BELIAU MENYEDARI KEPENTINGAN MENDOKUMENTASIKAN SEJARAH KAUM MELANAU. OLEH ITU, USAHA BELIAU BERMULA DENGAN PENUBUHAN KUMPULAN TARIAN BADAN BUDAYA MELANAU MUKAH PADA TAHUN 1997.

BERKAT USAHA DAN KEGIGIHAN BELIAU, DIANA ROSE TELAH BERJAYA MEREALISASIKAN IMPIAN UNTUK MEMBINA SATU RUMAH TRADISIONAL KAUM MELANAU YANG DINAMAKAN LAMIN DANA. RUMAH INI TELAH MENARIK MINAT PELANCONG UNTUK MERASAI PENGALAMAN HIDUP BERSAMA MASYARAKAT MELANAU DI TELLIAN. PADA TAHUN 2005, DIANA ROSE TELAH DIPILIH SEBAGAI SALAH SEORANG DARIPADA *DIGI'S AMAZING MALAYSIANS* DI ATAS KESUNGGUHAN DAN DEDIKASI BELIAU DALAM USAHA MENGEKALKAN WARISAN KEBUDAYAAN KAUM MELANAU.

Pada Sidang Kemuncak Wanita ini, beliau membincangkan topik bertajuk *Rowing Upstream*. Fokus perbincangan beliau ialah mengenai kepentingan seorang itu mempunyai impian dan menterjemahkannya melalui visi diikuti dengan misi dan perancangan. Beliau mengatakan bahawa impian beliau adalah mengembangkan pengetahuan mengenai budaya kaum Melanau.





Beliau telah berjaya mencapai impiannya dengan membina sebuah rumah Melanau tradisional yang dinamakan Lamin Dana. Rumah tersebut telah menjadi pusat tradisional untuk mengembangkan budaya Melanau.

Diana Rose juga memaklumkan bahawa untuk menjadikan impian sesuatu kenyataan bukan merupakan satu perkara yang mudah. Banyak rintangan yang perlu dihadapi seperti kekangan kewangan, kekurangan sumber manusia dan kesukaran mendapatkan sokongan daripada komuniti beliau sendiri. Kini, Lamin Dana dapat membantu menjanakan pendapatan masyarakat setempat. Dengan bantuan kaum wanita setempat, Diana Rose telah berjaya menarik minat dan sokongan kaum lelaki dan para belia. Beliau kini menerima bantuan daripada Kerajaan Persekutuan dan Kerajaan Negeri Sarawak untuk memajukan Lamin Dana.

Sepanjang usaha untuk mencapai impian beliau, Diana Rose telah memperolehi banyak pengalaman bagi mengatasi pelbagai rintangan yang dihadapi. Antara perkara yang telah dipelajari oleh Diana adalah seperti berikut;

- Mengenal pasti lokasi;
- Mengenal setiap lapisan masyarakat setempat;
- Mengenal persekitaran;
- Mempunyai visi yang jelas;
- Mempunyai komitmen dan semangat yang tinggi; dan
- Bersedia dari segi emosi, mental dan fizikal.

Diana Rose mengakhiri pembentangan beliau dengan mengatakan bahawa beliau telah mencapai impian beliau menerusi Lamin Dana yang kini bukan sahaja dikenali di luar negeri Sarawak, malah telah disenaraikan di dalam buku panduan *Lonely Planet*.

Hasrat beliau untuk mengekalkan dan memasyhurkan kebudayaan Melanau juga telah dicapai. Usaha beliau sekarang melibatkan tujuh buah kampung dengan seramai 21 penenun kain dan lebih 100 orang anak muda yang terlibat dalam tarian dan muzik tradisional.



S E S I S O A L J A W A B

1. PUAN SHARIFAH NORKAMSIAH

Beliau mencadang supaya diwujudkan satu 'caucus' kumpulan wanita yang telah berjaya untuk memberikan sumbangan, pandangan serta pengalaman mereka untuk membantu dalam usaha memajukan kaum wanita dalam pelbagai bidang.

2. PUAN RUBI AHMAD

Puan Rubi Ahmad mengatakan bahawa bukan mudah untuk keluar dari zon keselesaan.

Ahli panel berpendapat bahawa seseorang itu perlu mengambil risiko dan menganggap pengalaman yang baru itu sebagai satu pengembaraan. Semangat dan minat adalah penting bagi meyakinkan orang lain untuk turut sama terlibat dalam melaksanakan sesuatu yang baru.



" Any nation that hopes to realise its full potential needs to harness all of its human resources. Women in both the public and private sectors already play an important role in decision-making processes. Their **vision** and **leadership**, their **knowledge** and **skills**, their **energy** and **drive**, can and have, **benefitted** entire **communities**."

DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL



AN OVERVIEW OF THE WOMEN'S SUMMIT 2006

The fourth Women's Summit, held on August 24, 2006, was yet another stimulating instalment in this series of events run by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to address issues faced by women in the workforce. The theme *ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS? CHOICES, CHANCES AND CHALLENGES* provided an opportunity for the 1,400 participants to be inspired, motivated and challenged as high-calibre speakers engaged in a meaningful exchange with articulate and professional Malaysian women.

In her Welcome Address, the Ministry's Secretary General Datuk Faizah Mohd Tahir noted the disparity between the number of women in tertiary institutions and the number occupying top positions in practically all sectors of Malaysian society. The theme of the Summit, she explained, was chosen to deal with the fact that women are stopping short of leadership positions, or exiting the





workplace altogether. Datuk Faizah emphasised that the Summit would act to identify the causes of this trend so that the Ministry can formulate and implement more effective and relevant policies for women in Malaysia.

The Minister, Dato' Sri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, in her Keynote Address, drew attention to the fact that women bring important characteristics to leadership and decision-making positions. Their perspectives, creativity, collaborative and caring spirit are the very qualities needed to enrich the work environment in a developing nation. She hoped this Summit would lead to innovative approaches to help women navigate through the challenges of globalisation without compromising the quality of life and integrity of the family unit.

As traditional caregivers, many women are sandwiched between caring for young children and elderly parents. At the same time, they face an employment environment in which top level positions demand a willingness to dedicate themselves to work, often to the exclusion of almost everything else. In addition, women in Malaysia must contend with outmoded perceptions of gender-specific roles and expectations of women in society. For example, women with ambition are frustrated by notions that they should be content with playing a support role and it is 'unfeminine' for women to expect more.

"I believe our greatest challenge is to create mindsets that see women in leadership positions as an indispensable part of a dynamic, innovative, productive and caring society. We need men and women with a more inclusive approach to leadership, driven by values, meaningful outcomes and the common good"

– DATO' SRI SHAHRIZAT ABDUL JALIL



The Minister concluded by expressing her hope that the Summit would stimulate open and honest discussion on issues concerning women's progress at the workplace, leading to a better understanding of the challenges women face, and the changes that are necessary to optimise their capabilities.



The two Panel Perdana speakers, Dato' Dr Ng Yen Yen and Dr Noeleen Heyzer, captivated the participants with their accounts of what it means to take on leadership positions. Although both come from different experiences and professional contexts, Dato' Dr Ng, as Wanita MCA chairman, and Dr Heyzer, as the Executive Director of UNIFEM, are united in their conviction that the way to push for greater empowerment of women is for women to seek greater political participation. Women must contribute to decision-making at the highest levels if they want to become agents of positive change.

In the Expert Series, members of CEO Solutions, a consultancy comprising highly experienced chief executive officers, lent their expertise in a session called *Walking the Talk: What Works for Women – The CEO Factor*. This session was moderated by Tony Heneberry, founder and CEO of PDQ Group. In response to the question: "Why should there be more women in businesses?", Datuk Peter Wentworth, CEO of BP Asia Pacific, elaborated that businesses today don't see giving positions to women as a patronising concession. Instead, they view having women in such positions as a strategic advantage. "Businesses need more women in order to capture the full benefits of diverse thinking and problem solving, of making decisions and managing strategies." He explained that to be competitive in a global marketplace, businesses need to set in place a diversity & inclusion strategy to secure the best female talent, before some other company does!

Mohd Ashraf Iqbal, who recently served as the CEO of Federal Auto in Malaysia, urged women to be assertive in pushing for their unique needs. There must be a work environment that is supportive





of mothers and their need for flexibility. Advances in technology support the flexibility to work from home; it is time that employers embrace this as well. He challenged women to be creative in how they positioned their demands. For example, extended maternity leave arguably creates an excellent training opportunity for other women in the workplace, while the woman on leave has quality time with her new baby.

Dr Hamidah Marican, Diversity & Inclusion Manager for BP Asia and a single mother to a 14-year-old daughter, commented that there are no magic solutions. Women who want a career will always have to make sacrifices. She encouraged working women not to waste their time feeling guilty; instead they need to manage their time and set priorities. In the same vein, David Fuller, former CEO of Malaysian Oxygen, added women should not feel shy about their abilities or ambition. They should set targets and timelines for themselves and work towards advancing in the organisation to which they belong instead of expecting positions to be handed to them.



In the Summit's afternoon session, we heard from two very different women entrepreneurs who have taken the road less travelled towards personal and professional fulfilment. Elizabeth Carlssare, creator of *dotcomdivas.net*, has built a successful technology based business riding on the growth of the internet. Her recent book documents the role web-business is playing in opening up opportunities for women. Its inbuilt flexibility has enabled thousands of women to continue to work while being available to their families. Diana Rose is a former journalist who returned to her village in Mukah to empower the Melanau community by reconnecting them with their unique cultural heritage. In 1997, she formed a traditional cultural troupe and raised funds to build Lamin Dana, a traditional Melanau tallhouse where visitors can stay for an authentic experience of life in Tellian. Summit participants were enthralled by Diana's moving account of how, with passion and commitment, she turned her vision into reality.



PANEL PERDANA

WOMEN'S SUMMIT 2006 PROCEEDINGS

ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?

WOMEN LEADERS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

DR NOELEEN HEYZER

*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR
WOMEN (UNIFEM)*

NOELEEN HEYZER IS THE FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FROM A SOUTHERN NATION TO HEAD THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM), THE LEADING OPERATIONAL AGENCY WITHIN THE UN TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY. SINCE JOINING UNIFEM, DR HEYZER HAS WORKED ON STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY AND RIGHTS; PROMOTING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACE-BUILDING AND RECONSTRUCTION; ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN; AND COMBATING HIV/AIDS FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE. SHE ALSO PLAYED A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION 1325 ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY.

THROUGH HER LEADERSHIP, UNIFEM HAS ASSISTED COUNTRIES TO FORMULATE AND IMPLEMENT LEGISLATION AND POLICIES THAT REALISE WOMEN'S SECURITY AND RIGHTS. THIS HAS LED, FOR EXAMPLE, TO CHANGES IN INHERITANCE LAWS FOR WOMEN, BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR MIGRANT WORKERS, THE INCLUSION OF WOMEN AS FULL CITIZENS IN THE CONSTITUTION OF AFGHANISTAN AND FULL PARTICIPANTS IN SEVERAL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND ELECTORAL PROCESSES. UNIFEM HAS ALSO QUADRUPLED ITS RESOURCES, AND SUCCESSFULLY ADVOCATED TO PUT ISSUES AFFECTING WOMEN HIGH ON THE AGENDA OF THE UN SYSTEM.





Are women ready for leadership? This is the wrong question for our time. This year we are celebrating two historic victories, the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first woman President in Liberia, and Michele Bachelet as the first woman President of a new democratic Chile.

They are not alone. Women in high-level political leadership positions include 11 elected heads of state or government, 23 foreign ministers and 12 defence ministers. In Rwanda, women make up 49 per cent of seats in both houses of parliament – the highest of any country in the world. In India, women head up nearly 1.5 million of the village level decision-making bodies, the *panchayats*.

Moreover, there are twice as many women in powerful economic decision making positions than there were five years ago – including 20 ministers of finance; 10 ministers of economic planning and development, 45 ministers of trade and industry and 11 ministers or secretaries of state addressing budgets, taxes, auditing, investment and revenue.

In the private sector, women's leadership power is increasing. Among the *Fortune 500* companies, 10 are now run by women, up from 9 last year. Of the *Fortune 1000* companies, 20 are run by women, up from 19 last year.

These leaders are important role models. Beyond that, they can be powerful agents of change. With the increase in official development assistance expected to help countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the roll-out of the new aid effectiveness agenda, they can be the building blocks of a power coalition to reshape political and economic priorities – building a world free of violence, inequality and discrimination.



The challenges they face are serious. Today's world is one of unprecedented wealth, with increasing poverty and inequality; a world that boasts enormous advances in knowledge, with no parallel increase in wisdom, of innovation and technology with little increase in health and well-being in most of the world. And an increased importance of religion and spirituality, with a parallel increase in fear and hatred of 'the other' in everyday life.

So the question we should be asking is, rather, can women provide a new kind of leadership? And what kind of world do they want to shape?

WOMEN LEADERS AND CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE

Let me first look at the political arena. While in the 44 years between 1945 and 1989 there were only 20 women presidents or prime ministers, there have been 50 between 1990 and 2006 – more than double. Yet in 2005 there were still only 20 houses of parliament and 17 cabinets that have reached the 30 per cent benchmark set at the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women in 1995 – a critical mass to bring about change. Women political leaders are still lone individuals in male terms. And most are elected or appointed to implement a party or national agenda – rarely, until recently, to promote women's interests.

In order to influence politics in women-friendly directions they need to be supported by a strong women's constituency and influential male allies, both inside and outside of government. We saw in Liberia the way a strong constituency demand propelled a committed leadership response. When Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was forced into a run-off after the first round of voting, it was women, especially grassroots women and market vendors supported by





the Minister of Women's Affairs in partnership with UNIFEM, who mobilised to get women to the polls – and realise her victory. At her inauguration, she acknowledged their role. She pledged to enforce a new law against rape; to encourage families to educate their female children; and to “provide economic programmes that enable Liberian women – particularly our market women – to assume their proper place in our economic process.”

What we have seen is that, given a leadership role, and with strong constituency support, women can not only make needed changes through strong partnerships, they are able to bring together the ideas, leadership and resources needed to make them sustainable.

An example is the work to amend the Family Law in Morocco, where we engaged at multiple levels – legal, institutional and personal. As in all of our work, we identified change agents, including women members of parliament, and invested in their leadership, linking women at grassroots with those in the mainstream, and also providing support from the international community. This helped us to build public and institutional awareness and work with local communities to gain reforms in the Family Law, such as raising the age of marriage for women from 15 to 18 years, allowing women to contract marriage without male approval, and limiting men's rights to unilateral divorce. The new law also gives a key role to the judiciary, mandating the state prosecutor be party to all legal actions involving enforcement.

Another powerful example is seen in UNIFEM's programme with Indian Railways, where women and men leaders formed a partnership to bring about the institutional changes needed to break through the silence and stigma that surrounds issues of gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS. The initiative engages the system at all levels, including workers' unions, central level policy makers and middle level management – affecting the lives of some



1.3 million people. It provides free anti-retroviral drugs to people living with HIV/AIDS; offers jobs to wives of men who have died of AIDS; and support to their livelihoods through credit and enterprise in railway schools, increasing awareness among 4,200 students.

The participation of women as decision-makers and as change agents is particularly important in crisis and conflict situations. For this reason, UNIFEM took a strong leadership role and worked closely with members of the Security Council in their formulation and adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, which recognises the impact of war on women and their important role in peace-building and reconstruction. The impact of this resolution can be seen in Afghanistan and Burundi, Sudan, Liberia and the DRC. But the transition from conflict to post-conflict and reconstruction is always fragile, as we have seen in Timor Leste, and in Afghanistan. This makes women's participation and leadership all the more critical.

In this context, a group of Israeli and Palestinian women asked me to convene them in the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Palestinian and Israeli Peace, which unites women political and civil society leaders on both sides in a partnership with prominent international women to leverage high-level support for a negotiated, mutually secure and sustainable peace. Next month, they will meet with several of the elected women heads of state and government to try to jump-start the peace process through an international conference.



*WOMEN LEADERS AS CHANGE AGENTS IN
THE ECONOMIC SPHERE*

Turning to the economic arena – women have taken advantage of the norms and standards established through UN convention and the commitments to women made through a series of UN conferences. They have proven to be powerful change agents in economic life. When we look at the places where women are not





in political leadership, we find that they are often the places where there are no agreed standards, no regulations or codes of conduct, in political life. Many women refuse to engage on such terms, and instead look to the economic sphere to make a difference.

In today's global world, the political realm is not the only arena in which a new kind of leadership is needed. As key players in the global economy, corporations also have a vital role to play. Because corporations affect capital flows, employ so many people and affect the life of so many communities, they exert tremendous influence and can be a force for socially responsible business and investment.

Women are entering the paid labour force in greater numbers, in both developed and developing countries. In emerging economies in Southeast and East Asia, the *Economist* pointed out in their article on *Women Economy: A Guide to Womenomics*, there are now 83 women for every 100 men in the labour force – higher than the average in OECD countries. Women are a major reason for the success of their export industries, accounting for 60-80 per cent of jobs in sectors like textiles and clothing.



The increase in female employment has also accounted for a large part of global economic growth – adding more to GDP than either capital investment or increased productivity. Rough calculations indicate that women's increase in employment in developed economies has contributed even more to global growth than China according to the *Economist* article.

The importance of women's contributions to the economy has also caught the attention of the World Economic Forum, as seen in their report on *Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap*, which ranked countries in terms of opportunities for, and participation of, women in economic and political life.

At the same time, women are still primarily responsible for household and care-giving tasks. This in part explains why they tend to be clustered in the part-time or temporary jobs in the informal economy, where they have little job security, no benefits, and earn very low wages. This makes it important for women in both political and corporate leadership positions to show how to create more opportunities for women in formal employment and at the same time to extend benefits and protection to the informal economy.

Women who head up corporations can affect the conditions in which people live and work. They can improve and promote better and fairer management practices, balancing work and family life. They can reduce disparities within the workplace. Two years ago, UNIFEM partnered with the CEO of Calvert Women's Principles, a comprehensive code of corporate conduct focussed on empowering and investing in women worldwide. The Principles give companies a set of goals to measure progress, and investors a set of guidelines against which to assess corporate performance on gender equality. They cover such issues as gender gaps in hiring and promotion, in wages and benefits, in health, safety and violence, business and supply chain practices, along with civil and community engagement and management and governance.

At the end of the day, what is needed is social and legal protection for workers in both the private and the public sectors, the formal and informal economy. The United Nations has taken the lead in bringing the private sector into partnership, creating a new Global Compact. This partnership asks participants to embrace, support, and enact within their sphere of influence a set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, environmental sustainability and anti-corruption. It urges them to promote an inclusive and sustainable globalisation process in order to realise a shared vision of the global economy that benefits all of the world's people and advances a new understanding of the relationship between business and society in support of development.





UNIFEM has forged such partnership with women leaders in the private sector to create skilled job opportunities for younger women, to increase funding for innovative approaches to end violence against women, and to enhance market opportunities for women entrepreneurs. We currently partner with CISCO Systems in Jordan to enhance women's access to and control over new Information and Communications Technologies – training women to compete in this expanding sector. The partnership is now expanding to other countries and attracting additional corporate partners including Microsoft. We have engaged Johnson & Johnson in supporting the work of the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate Violence Against Women – to implement strategies that work. And we are partnering with a coalition of women business leaders and Macy's Department Stores to improve the livelihoods of widows who survived the genocide in Rwanda, enabling them to market their hand-woven baskets in the global marketplace.

In concluding, I want to highlight what we have learned in over three decades of support to promote women's leadership – at all levels of society. It is important to recognise that social, economic, cultural and political factors influence the participation and leadership of women – meaning that women must be accepted as both political and economic players, with full economic and political rights.



PANEL PERDANA

WOMEN'S SUMMIT 2006 PROCEEDINGS



ARE WOMEN READY FOR KEY POSITIONS?

THE MALAYSIAN CHINESE WOMEN'S POLITICAL JOURNEY

DATO' DR NG YEN YEN

DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER 1 & WANITA MCA CHAIRMAN

DATO' DR NG YEN YEN QUALIFIED WITH A BACHELOR OF MEDICINE & SURGERY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA AND PRACTISED MEDICINE FOR 26 YEARS. SHE LEFT THE PROFESSION IN 2000 TO DEDICATE MORE TIME TO HER POLITICAL CAREER. DATO' DR NG ENTERED POLITICS AS THE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR OF TEMERLOH, PAHANG IN 1981. IN 1993, SHE WAS MADE A SENATOR, AND IN 1999 SHE BECAME A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. THE SAME YEAR, SHE WAS APPOINTED AS DEPUTY CULTURE, ARTS AND TOURISM MINISTER. SHE ASSUMED HER PRESENT PORTFOLIO AS DEPUTY FINANCE MINISTER I IN 2003.

Dato' Dr Ng Yen Yen shared a personal perspective of her own journey as a Malaysian Chinese woman with a desire to make a positive contribution to the country and to improve the welfare of her fellow Malaysians. She emphasised the importance of women's participation in politics as this is the only way to ensure greater involvement in decision-making, to uphold the ideals of democracy and to empower other women. Women, after all, bring a unique feminine perspective to the political process and, therefore, their participation needs to be enhanced.





She recalls that the 70s and 80s were both decades that were not favourable to women. A defining moment for her was when she was politely informed that she did not have the authority to sign the application for her son's identification card. That experience galvanised her to become active in politics and to address gender inequality within our laws and regulations.

Dato' Dr Ng noted that there have been some major milestones in the struggle for gender equality since then:

- In the 1970s, there was a move towards ensuring equal pay for women;
- In the 1990s, the laws were changed to recognise mothers as legal guardians of their children, thereby enabling them to sign documents such as the NRIC application;
- From 2000, a review of the National Constitution has been under way to eliminate laws that perpetuate gender discrimination.



In her opinion, women are more than prepared to occupy key positions of leadership if you take into consideration their education levels, economic participation and development of skills. However, the ability of women to take on these roles is heavily influenced by other factors such as family, career, society, policies, laws and traditional mindsets. A major challenge to progress in gender equality is changing attitudes to women's roles. In addition, women themselves have to step out of the entrenched mindset that they should not 'over-excel' or outshine men!

Malaysia still has a long way to go towards meeting the target set for 30 per cent participation in political decision making. The choice to become a political leader cannot be enacted unless someone has awareness, interest, a strong will and the motivation to take action. According to Dato' Dr Ng, 'choice' is the right of



all women. These choices would not have existed in the early 1900s when Chinese women bound their feet to be able to wear tiny 'lotus' shoes. Today's Chinese women can run! She encouraged women to build their leadership skills by challenging traditional mindsets and thinking analytically, constructively and creatively.

She touched briefly on the *Basket Movement*, one of Wanita MCA's programmes to get women thinking about their needs. The shopping basket used by women to go to the market to shop for her family was powerfully used to represent other issues and needs such as the women's movement, health and well-being, economic participation and so on.

Presently, the government is trying to encourage positive change by supporting childcare facilities at work. For example, the Ministry of Finance allows tax exemptions for the provision of childcare facilities. She wanted to encourage more corporations to take advantage of this incentive.

She admits that women face complex challenges as they strive to balance their responsibilities to their families, and husbands, and political involvement. As the mother of three sons, she acknowledges the critical role that mothers play in the lives and development of their children. In order to take on a role in the political arena, a woman needs to enlist the support of those closest to her. She is especially thankful for the support of her family, but concedes that her relatively late entry into the political arena was due in part to the demands of career and family while her children were still young.

Dato' Dr Ng Yen Yen encouraged more women to become involved in political representation and concluded that the ability to work towards a better future is a choice that is in our hands.



PANEL PERDANA

Q & A

Q: Do we have a political ceiling? When will or can Malaysia have a woman Prime Minister?

DATO' DR NG YEN YEN: For that to happen, we must first increase women representation in the Cabinet. This is the responsibility of all women, including women's NGOs.

Q: How can we change the mindset of men on a massive scale?


DR HEYZER: Through dialogue, education and the media. For example, men can be made aware of the use of rape as a weapon in war to humiliate both men and the community. The work on HIV/AIDS involves the development of gender equality: male support/peer groups rediscover humanity by not having to play macho, violent roles. We need to mobilise men and women as agents of change. We need to turn the issue of gender equality so that it encompasses human rights.

Q: How can we make our environment more secure for women?

DR HEYZER: Everyday security is an indicator of how healthy society is. So it is important to end violence against women. It is possible to achieve greater security – look at the example of New York, that was formerly crime-ridden but is now cleaned up and safe.

DATO' DR NG: We also need to accept that self-protection is our own responsibility. For example, we should support programmes like





Rakan Cop that involve public participation. The MCA Civic Society programme disseminates the teachings of Confucius to strengthen the moral values of society. We also need women-friendly police stations.

Q: How can women CEOs make the workplace more nurturing and less stressful?

PANEL: According to a report in the 12 April 2006 issue of *The Economist*, workplaces that are friendly to women are the most productive and profitable. One of the frustrations of women bosses is that men cannot multitask. Women, on the other hand, are generally good with details, are more dedicated and more caring.

Q: Glass ceilings are not a major concern in Malaysia. Would legislation create a situation of reverse discrimination? Would it become a case of just filling quotas?

DATO' DR NG: It's not true that there is no glass ceiling. Boards of Directors are still male dominated. There is a sticky floor that makes it hard for people to rise. Women need a handicap because we've had a late start. There is a need to institutionalise the gains we've made to make it easier for others that follow after, otherwise the gains will be lost.

DR HEYZER: Quotas are necessary because we are dealing with an unequal world, and we need to level the playing field. It is unlikely that it will become a matter of having more women just to fill the quota.

Q: Gender is an irrelevant issue. Quality is what matters.

PANEL: The problem is not that women are not good enough – the problem is that there are highly-deserving women who are not chosen for leadership because they are women, and it is this gender inequality that we are trying to address.

Q: The 30 per cent quota for women's positions in government – what levels are these at currently? Is there a time frame for achieving the target? Is MCA ready for the first woman minister?

DATO' DR NG: In the 9th Malaysia Plan, the 30 per cent quota is only up to the level of district councillors. I can say, however, that Wanita MCA is ready for a woman minister.



THE WOMEN'S SUMMIT EXPERT SERIES

WALKING THE TALK: WHAT WORKS FOR WOMEN

THE CEO FACTOR



This Expert Series proved to be a fresh approach to understanding the challenges of aiming for top positions from the point of view of men and women that have been quite successful in this regard.

The CEO Solutions panel discussion was expertly moderated by Tony Heneberry. Tony is the founder and CEO of PDQ Group, an integrated marketing services and relationship management business, which provides consultancy to a broad range of companies from sectors including financial services, automotive, manufacturing, consumer products, IT and healthcare. Tony is an expert in marketing communications and business development.

He started the session by briefly introducing each of the four panelists.



DATUK PETER WENTWORTH

DATUK PETER IS CEO OF BP ASIA PACIFIC AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR BP'S OPERATIONS IN MALAYSIA & PHILIPPINES. THIS IS A RM3 BILLION BUSINESS INVOLVING OVER A THOUSAND EMPLOYEES. HE HAS WORKED IN THE OIL AND GAS SECTOR FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS AND HAS NEARLY 15 YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN ASIA. HE IS A CHARTERED ENGINEER WITH EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN CORPORATE AND PROJECT FINANCE, PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.



DAVID FULLER

DAVID IS A PARTNER OF CEO SOLUTIONS AND THE FORMER CEO OF MALAYSIAN OXYGEN (MOX) WHICH IS AMONG MALAYSIA'S TOP 50 LISTED COMPANIES. HIS CAREER WITH THE BOC GROUP (MOX'S LARGEST SHAREHOLDER) HAS TAKEN HIM THROUGH THE FULL RANGE OF MANAGEMENT ROLES IN SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL LOCATIONS. DAVID'S AREA OF EXPERTISE INCLUDES EXPERIENCE IN MERGERS, ACQUISITIONS AND JOINT VENTURES, AND IN THE ATTENDANT ISSUES OF CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.



MOHD ASHRAF IQBAL

ASHRAF IS A PARTNER OF CEO SOLUTIONS. HE WAS PREVIOUSLY CEO OF PROTON CARS UK/EUROPE AND THE CEO OF FEDERAL AUTO IN MALAYSIA, THE MAIN IMPORTER AND RETAILER OF VOLVO CARS IN MALAYSIA. BOTH APPOINTMENTS INVOLVED THE TURNAROUND OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE. ASHRAF IS AN EXPERT IN BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION, UNDERSTANDING HOW COMPANIES MAY ALIGN THEIR BUSINESS PROCESSES WITH THEIR VALUE DRIVERS.



DR HAMIDAH MARICAN

DR HAMIDAH IS THE REGIONAL DIVERSITY & INCLUSION MANAGER FOR BP ASIA. SHE HAS AN MBA IN TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT AND A DOCTORATE IN VALUES BASED MANAGEMENT. SHE IS ALSO INVOLVED IN A UN SPONSORED LIVING VALUES EDUCATION PROGRAM (LVEP), AND HAS BEGUN A SMALL PARENTS GROUP ADVOCATING ONLINE SAFETY FOR CHILDREN.



The first questions fielded were:

*Why should there be more women in businesses? and
Why should there be more women board members?*

DATUK PETER WENTWORTH: We need more women in organisations in order to capture the full benefits of diverse thinking, debate and problem solving. There are very different ways of thinking about issues, of making decisions and of managing strategies. Women bring a different perspective and are valuable to businesses.

Having said that, in Asia and other parts of the world, there are many obstacles, some cultural, that discourage women from becoming leaders. For this reason, businesses need to be proactive by giving women more leadership positions to bring about change.

To address this, BP is working on a programme of Diversity & Inclusion. In order to prepare the company for the global marketplace, we have to diversify our employee base with particular respect to local representation of women and minority groups. I am very pleased to say that BP has recently won the Catalyst Award which honours the company's efforts in the recruitment, development and advancement of women. BP is at the beginning of a journey to doing something about it – to making it a reality.

How can women help themselves?

MOHD ASHRAF IQBAL: If women don't feel empowered, then there can be no change. Women must be assertive and take charge and not allow themselves to be bullied out.

He elaborated on his meaning by using the issue of extending maternity leave. The main aim of a corporation is to maximise productivity. Maternity leave is a direct cost to the company. In order to increase maternity leave, companies will either have to maintain or increase productivity. However, a positive opportunity can be achieved if organisations can change their perception of the issue. For example, one company forced to address the issue of maternity leave managed to increase its productivity threefold, just by sorting out its internal problems and preventing the loss of skilled staff and the need to recruit and retrain new hires.

Maternity leave can also be positioned as something positive if you look at it as a means of giving people a chance – training opportunities for employees standing in for their colleagues who will be away, for instance. It creates opportunities and forces companies to look at other means of productivity.





DR HAMIDAH MARICAN: There are huge development opportunities for women for training, learning and acquiring skill sets. Women therefore have to ask themselves what they can do to enhance their skills to further their development. There is also a need to change leaders' frames of mind in order to develop growing opportunities for women.

Women are generally better multi-taskers and account managers. Not all stereotypes are negative. Would you agree?

DAVID FULLER: The best companies have the best people because they move away from stereotypes. For this, diversity programmes are essential. In Malaysia, diversity programmes have to look at age, culture and not just gender. In the old days, successful global companies had board members that were purely 'transatlantic' but now a lot of female and Asian people sit at the top, both in government and the private sector. Success has to start at the top. The top levels of an organisation are responsible for the success of their company and as such, need an open/broad view – and they need to open the business to a broader group of people regardless of gender, ethnicity, race or religion.

DATUK PETER WENTWORTH: If you stick with the old ways, you limit yourself to a narrow set of decision making. The more women there are and the more diverse the company, result in the availability of different solutions and perspectives to decision making. There is unlikely to be change if you ask the same old people the same questions; broadening the workforce through diversity forces change.





What about the issue of mindset? How much does fear and guilt govern women? How do they change, limit or expand their own opportunities?

DR HAMIDAH MARICAN: Guilt gets especially loud when women have children. Most women feel bad and bring it into the workplace. This makes them poor co-workers and leaders. Women, therefore, have to decide if they want a career, and if so, they have to make sacrifices, and learn how to manage time and prioritise. Of course it helps when you have the support of a good spouse and extended family. There are also systems at the workplace that women can make use of. The workplace must be flexible enough to support working mothers, for example, to work from home when necessary.

If the support system is not there, then women need to speak up and say what they need, and the resources they require. It's not what you say but how you say it – that can make a world of difference.

MOHD ASHRAF IQBAL: Flexibility does exist in the workplace. Women have the skills and are themselves flexible, making them a greater resource than men. Women don't mind taking six-month contracts while men tend to confine themselves to long-term opportunities.

For women at executive or middle-management level – what are two or three things that they can do to advance themselves?

DR HAMIDAH MARICAN: Know who you are and what you want. Write it down, clearly identifying and defining your goals. Now is the time and there are support mechanisms in place to help you. The workplace is very dynamic. The ability to grow and learn new things is important. On your own initiative, go for what you want. There is no sense in waiting for it to come and find you.





Networking is critical to success – you need to connect with people who have special skills or knowledge, and people who can help you. Move away from your comfort zone, make time and make sacrifices.

What advice do you have for women at senior levels of a large organisation?

DAVID FULLER: Regrettably, gender discrimination still exists and manifests in a lack of recognition for the achievements and capabilities of senior women employees. However, women can still overcome these factors; but they need to be positive and proactive. They should set targets for the end point that they want to get to, and set a time frame for achieving this.

And what of small organisations?

MOHD ASHRAF IQBAL: Even small organisations need to get with the programme or they will be wiped out. Gender will no longer be an issue when today's organisations evaluate employees using a 'performance ranking'.

The economic reality is that productivity and diversity do make a difference. Great leaders are individuals with EQ (emotional intelligence) as well as IQ. Women are consistently top scorers of EQ. Women in management do bring a different perspective to solving problems and often a better one.

DR HAMIDAH MARICAN: Another thing businesses or organisations need to do in order to move forward is to take a look at people processes that were compiled 30 years ago (more often than not, by a group of men) and they will find certain inherent gender biases. These need to be identified and weeded out in order to bring about change.

Q U E S T I O N S & A N S W E R S

1. *MRS USHA DILLAI*, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

How do you ensure that your management starts thinking about and implementing Diversity & Inclusion in your organisation?

DAVID FULLER: Even for BP, the issue of Diversity and Inclusion is still at an early stage and has far to go. There is still a strong focus on stakeholder and shareholder interests.



2. *PN KHAIRIAH TALHA*, TOWN PLANNER

Khairiah shared her experience working as a town planner in the government service and with her own firm. Her opinion is that gender discrimination is still entrenched, even in the government service. This is glaringly evidenced by the absence of women leaders at local government level and the existence of a strong old-boys network which makes it impossible for women to break through. She emphasised that, as women tend to be more incorruptible, installing more female councillors and senior government officials would go far in restoring confidence in the transparency and conscientiousness at local government level.

In addition, she pointed out that the percentage of women students at tertiary level in local educational institutions was as high as 70 per cent. It would be a waste of the government's investment for this crop of skilled and educated women to be denied the opportunity to attain important positions because of the prejudices and gender discrimination that have yet to be eradicated.

DATUK PETER WENTWORTH: In BP, steps have been made to give equal opportunity to women through changes in our leadership structure. This has been something the organisation has emphasised although it has not been easy because it is a company with a strong engineering and technical orientation.





3. **DATUK RAJ KARIM**, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION, EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA & ASEANA REGION

What sort of capacity building is needed for high potential women to become aware of their potential?

ANSWER: In BP, the emphasis has been on nurturing the values of mutual understanding between men and women. Through programmes like Gender Speak, the company sees differences between the genders as something positive. This creates an enjoyable learning environment.



THE WOMEN'S SUMMIT EXPERT SERIES

JUMPING OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

7 SECRETS TO SUCCESS FROM WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS



The two women presenters have each achieved something remarkable. Elizabeth Carlassare has built a successful career in the Silicon Valley, while Diana Rose has succeeded in not only establishing a thriving eco-tourist business for her Melanau community, but also in creating pride among her community in their unique history, culture and traditions.

ELIZABETH CARLASSARE

ELIZABETH CARLASSARE IS A WRITER, SPEAKER, INTERNET STRATEGIST AND ENTREPRENEUR WITH MORE THAN 16 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WORKING IN SILICON VALLEY. MOST RECENTLY SERVING AS AN INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT MANAGER FOR SYMANTEC, ELIZABETH MANAGED CONTENT, PRODUCTION AND WEB PARTNERSHIPS FOR LARGE-SCALE WEBSITES AT COMPANIES INCLUDING ADOBE AND INTUIT. HER BOOK *DOTCOM DIVAS*, PUBLISHED IN 2000, FEATURES THE JOURNEYS OF 20 VISIONARY WOMEN FOUNDERS OF NET-BASED VENTURES.





Women's entrepreneurship is on the rise in the US and this includes the move into non-traditional sectors such as construction, finance and transportation. The growth of the internet is a big contributor to the increase of women's entrepreneurship. Although the number of women-owned businesses in the US is growing, we are still far from a level playing field. If you look at it from access to venture capital funding, nearly 7 per cent of start-ups have women founders, but they receive only 5 per cent of total venture capital.

She was motivated to write *Dotcom Divas* because she was curious about a small segment of women in the US and abroad who managed to raise capital to build successful internet companies. "During the tech boom, many women were jumping ship to start internet businesses." Other books like *eBoys*, *Silicon Boys* had been written, but they certainly weren't telling the whole story of women pioneers in this burgeoning sector. She found, in the course of researching for her book, that women were highly motivated to become entrepreneurs. Some, because they had ideas that they want to bring to life. Others wanted to break through the glass ceiling and lead their own empire.

The internet sector was proving to be the right forum for this because it is not tied to entrenched power structures. It has opened doors for entrepreneurs who don't fit the traditional mould.

There are now several avenues for women internet entrepreneurs to obtain support. For example, organisations such as www.fwe.org (the Forum for Women Entrepreneurs and Executives), Springboard and business incubators like www.wtc-sf.org (the Women's Technology Cluster) readily offer assistance. While previously, venture capital companies were reluctant to finance women entrepreneurs, things have changed with more women joining venture capital firms as partners or starting their own funds.



Elizabeth has found that women entrepreneurs share many common mindsets and approaches. These habits are likely to be as relevant for forays into entrepreneurship as well as finding success in our lives. Firstly, women entrepreneurs ‘think big’ and have a long-term view of how they intend to grow their businesses and reach new markets. They are also shrewd and intuitive in recognising opportunities and follow them up with careful research. Women have a special gift for networking, and successful entrepreneurs network very strategically. The other key factor is the ability to adopt a positive outlook. New businesses have their ups and downs and it is important not to be thrown off course by them. Successful women entrepreneurs are also, almost without exception, highly skilled communicators and know how to communicate with confidence.

Elizabeth shared that all of her research subjects had found ways to recover from and learn from setbacks. Successful women do *jump out of their comfort zones* – they take smart calculated risks, and they do things boldly. She concluded that, from what she has seen, women were capable of conquering practically every business and discipline. Entrepreneurship is just another of the areas within which women have had the opportunity to demonstrate excellence and the ability to be highly competitive.





THE WOMEN'S SUMMIT EXPERT SERIES

ROWING UPSTREAM



"Learning is like rowing upstream, not to advance is to drop back."

DIANA ROSE

BORN IN A SMALL VILLAGE, TELLIAN, IN SARAWAK, DIANA STUDIED MASS COMMUNICATIONS AT UITM, SHAH ALAM, AND HAD HER FIRST CAREER EXPERIENCE WITH THE BINTULU DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SARAWAK. SHE THEN HELPED SET UP A PR AGENCY FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN KUCHING. IN 1993, DIANA JOINED *THE STAR* AS A FEATURES WRITER. A SERIES OF ARTICLES ON THE BAKUN DAM WAS A TURNING POINT IN HER LIFE. WHILE TRAVELLING ALONG REJANG RIVER, PASSING BY MANY VILLAGES, SHE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF REALLY KNOWING ONE'S ROOTS. THAT IS WHEN THE IDEA OF DOCUMENTING MELANAU HISTORY AND OF REVIVING THE CULTURE AMONG HER COMMUNITY IN TELLIAN SURFACED. "NO MATTER HOW PEOPLE RESETTLE YOU, IF YOU KNOW YOUR ROOTS AND CULTURE, YOU WON'T BE SO MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY AFFECTED," SHE SAYS. DIANA FORMED A DANCE TROUPE, THE BADAN BUDAYA MELANAU MUKAH, IN 1997. SHE THEN PUT TOGETHER ALL HER SAVINGS, AND THAT OF HER RELATIVES, TO BUILD LAMIN DANA, A TRADITIONAL MELANAU TALLHOUSE WHERE VISITORS CAN STAY FOR AN AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE OF LIFE IN TELLIAN. THE HOUSE, COMPLETED IN SEPTEMBER 1999, IS TODAY MENTIONED IN *THE LONELY PLANET* AND ATTRACTS A FAIR NUMBER OF TOURISTS. IN 2005, DIANA WAS HONOURED AS ONE OF DIGI'S AMAZING MALAYSIANS FOR HER PASSION AND DEDICATION TO THE PRESERVATION OF HER CULTURAL HERITAGE.

At the Women's Summit this year, Diana Rose shared her personal experience of turning a dream into reality by translating it from a vision into a mission and drawing up a plan to bring it to fruition. Her personal dream was to revive interest in Melanau culture and identity among her own people, and to share this rich culture with the wider community, both local and global.

The tangible and symbolic focus of this dream became the building of a traditional Melanau tall house, or Lamin Dana. This building would create a core space to nurture traditional cultural forms such as performing arts and handcraft. She also envisaged that this centre would present Melanau culture to the world.

However, she was soon to find that accomplishing this dream was no easy task. She encountered numerous obstacles along the way. It was difficult to obtain a bank loan, and her personal lack of business knowledge was a handicap. She lacked financial resources, human resources and faced resistance from her own community.

Not to be defeated, she taught herself the rudiments of business plans and, for financing, she fell back on relatives who pooled their savings with her own. She gained ground by enlisting the support of the womenfolk for her vision and sharing it with the rest of their families. She engaged the men of her community by capitalising on their carpentry skills, and found that goodwill went a long way in helping to obtain quality building materials inexpensively! Through persistence and determination, she was able to secure additional funding from the Federal Government and the State Government to develop Lamin Dana.





Lamin Dana was finally completed in 1999 and has become well-known to international tourists. Today the project has grown beyond her original dream: there is a Melanau dance troupe to entertain visitors, and traditional music and dance have become part of the formal education of the Melanau children. Some of the local youth have taken the initiative to become involved in tourism by running food stalls to cater to tourists. To her amazement, the coastal town of Tellian has become a successful eco-tourism enterprise.

Diana's dream has given her community a sense of pride, the gift of self-reliance and, ultimately, hope for the future. Her journey towards making this dream a reality certainly taught her many lessons about how to set goals and conquer adversity. She offered some advice for anyone who might be inspired to follow her example – identify the most suitable location and get to know every member of the local community and the surrounding environment well. She shared that it is critical to have a clear vision, a strong sense of commitment and to be able to stay motivated. Finally, it is imperative to be prepared for the emotional, mental and physical challenges of seeing your vision through to the end.

Q U E S T I O N S & A N S W E R S

Comment from *PN SHARIFAH NORKAMSI AH*: There is a need for a caucus of successful business women to share ideas and experiences so as to find a means of moving the women's agenda forward.

Q: PUAN RUBI AHMAD

How does one get out of the comfort zone?

ELIZABETH CARLASSARE: Stretch yourself a little. Try getting comfortable with new things. Try doing new things even though you may initially find it uncomfortable. Treat risks and new experiences as part of a journey. Interest and motivation help give confidence to those who are trying something new with you.



