



BPW International President's Message

Dear BPW members in Russia,

It's a pleasure for me to send you this message to celebrate BPW St. Petersburg 10th Anniversary. As you all know, BPW International Theme for 2005-2008 is "New Dimensions of Leadership". Leadership is like a journey where there are varieties directions from leader on various ways to reach the destinations. BPW AIMS to develop women professional and leadership potential at all levels. Our BPW world-wide which help enabling over 45,000 women to help themselves in the past decade already show that we are working hard to support this aim. But where is our destination? To me, such destination – or BPW AMBITION - is "Equal Participations of Women and Men in Power and Decision Making Roles".

To attain our ambition, we need "new dimensions" in addressing the same problem. Why equal participation in power and decision making is rarely observed in politic, in the public sector and in the private sector even when adequate numbers of qualified women are available? What are the missing gaps and how can we bridge them?

In the past 77 years, BPW have done a lot of lobbying at UN and government level already. Yet, in going forward, we should look into lobbying at corporate level. Corporations, especially International ones, are the new power house of this new century. To convince corporations to give more opportunities for women to rise to the top executive positions, for example, need persuasion, using profit and loss as evidences. We need to show them that there are financial benefits when ratio of women participation in management increased.

For this, we need data to illustrate "Return on Investment When Women Became Top Executives". I would encourage BPW members in Russia to collect case studies and statistics to illustrate performance of companies when more women become top executives. Such information can also be used to lobby companies and governments to open up more opportunities for women to rise to higher executive posts.

Further more, we also need to encourage capable women to have more confident in to take on higher executive roles. This includes making mechanisms that enable women to better balance their work and their life available, including things like Day Care Centers.

So BPW members, let's act on this. Let's make a difference in increasing women participation in power and decision making roles world-wide. Let shows the world that BPW true power is our power to make the differences!

Chonchanok Viravan
BPW International President
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