



EMPOWERING YOUNG LEADERS

FROM THE REGIONS OF SRI LANKA



Learn and Lead



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What is Learn and Lead?

“Learn and Lead” is a programme launched in January 2008 by the Business for Peace Alliance, BPA, Sri Lanka’s network of regional Chambers of Commerce, as a Corporate Social Responsibility Programme. It is supported by the Secretariat for Co-ordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP).

The programme is guided and directed by a high powered steering committee chaired by Mr Jayantha Dhanapala (Former UN Under Secretary) and Mr Mahendra Dissanayake, Immediate Past Chairman, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce who serves as the Vice Chairman.

The first year of “Learn and Lead” focused on providing leadership development through scholarships for outstanding students in regions affected by the conflict and poverty to pursue secondary education in leading private schools in the cities. The students also received a full package consisting clothing, special leadership skills development, extra curricular activities, accommodation in school hostels, mentoring by

peers and guardians and all facilities for them to enjoy a happy carefree school life and develop as future leaders of Sri Lanka.

Through a comprehensive and transparent assessment system, involving respected educationalists and Principals from acclaimed Sri Lankan schools, eight children were identified for the year 2008 - four boys and four girls from all ethnicities, from the districts of Anuradhapura, Badulla and Trincomalee.

These children are currently following Advanced Level studies in leading schools such as St. Thomas’ College, Mt Lavinia, Ladies’ College, Colombo, Holy Family Convent Bambalapitiya, St. Benedict’s College Kotahena and Methodist College, Colombo.



Learn and Lead

Phase Two

The “Learn and Lead” scholars have all settled down well in their new schools. They have excelled in academic performance and extra curricular activities and amply demonstrated their leadership traits. As a regionally owned network BPA pays special attention to inculcate a sense of responsibility towards regional development amongst the scholars.

While “Learn and Lead” was being implemented, a workshop was organised by BPA in collaboration with the Secretariat for Co-ordinating the Peace Process and UNESCO to enhance knowledge of a wider group of 60 student leaders from the host schools of the “Learn and Lead” scholars on issues relating to peace building on the occasion of International Peace Day.

A programme to enhance leadership skills and foster commitment towards peaceful co-existence of the communities for youth leaders in schools in the border villages in the Polonnaruwa district and a programme to provide books to libraries in

schools in the Jaffna District, are other activities under the “Learn and Lead” banner.

While continuing the scholarship scheme, BPA and the Steering Committee will undertake Phase Two of this programme which includes development of leadership skills and commitment towards peace building amongst outstanding students in the regions and providing facilities and equipment to schools in regions affected by the conflict and poverty. Programmes will be implemented in partnership with the regional business community through BPA’s regional member chambers. Hence a “bottom up” approach based on the real needs in the regions will be adopted.

Invitation for collaboration

You are cordially invited to join in this programme to empower the future leaders of Sri Lanka.

EMPOWERING REGIONAL YOUTH LEADERS FOR NATION BUILDING

How you can help

- Provide financial assistance to sponsor a “Learn and Lead” scholar through a full scholarship or contribute to part of a scholarship
- Provide financial assistance towards costs of regional youth empowerment projects
- Include “Learn and Lead” Scholars in leadership and empowerment programmes organised by organization/s represented by you (subject to approval of steering committee and school)
- Use “Learn and Lead” as a channel to implement special CSR programmes tailored to meet your objectives for youth in the regions.
- Volunteer to be a mentor to one or more of the scholars (subject to approval by the steering committee)
- Any other way in which you feel you can help!

How you will benefit

- You will be part of a prestigious multi stake holder programme to empower Sri Lankan youth who will be the future leaders of our nation.
- You will gain direct access to the regions
- You will gain excellent promotional mileage through all literature, forums, media engagements and documentary films, and also from joint branding on our merchandising.

- The programme is an investment in the longer term future of the country, through educating the next generation and therefore appeals to broader Corporate Social Responsibility. However although sponsors are visibly linked with the programme, the rights of the child necessitate that the children themselves cannot be used for promotional purposes.

Nature of the Investment

The programme does not view a child’s education as a cost but as an investment. The total investment per child for two and a half years is Rs.700,000. (Seven lakhs).

Sponsors are invited either to invest in the full education of a child, or to contribute towards the scholarship fund. Since the investment is spread across the course of the child’s A level studies, you could also contribute in installments.

You could also contribute towards the general fund to meet costs of other projects in “Phase Two”

Steering committee

Chairman

Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala

Former Under Secretary General - UN

Vice Chairman

Mr. Mahen Dayananda

Former Chairman - Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha

Secretary General- Secretariat for Co-ordinating the Peace Process

Dr. Hiranthi Wijemanne

Advisor- Child Protection Authority

Rev. Dr Theodore Warnakulasuriya S.J.

Senior Lecturer- Open University

Mr. Ashroff Ali

Past President- Rotary Club of Colombo Midtown

Dr. Devanesan Nesiah

Member- Presidential Committee on Human Rights Violation

Deshabandu Jezima Ismail

Chancellor, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

Mr. Mohammed Halith

Attorney-at-law

Ms. Anushya Coomaraswamy

Former Group Finance Director, JKH

Ms. Manique Mendis

Secretary General / CEO
The Business for Peace Alliance

Dr. Markus Mayer

Country Director - International Alert

“Learn & Lead” is an imaginative and innovative experiment to provide educational opportunities on merit-based criteria for youth of all ethnic and religious groups in conflict-affected parts of Sri Lanka. It lays the foundations of durable peace for a pluralistic society with these young leaders acting as catalysts for change in their communities.”

Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala

Former Under Secretary General - U.N.

“Learn & Lead is an extremely useful initiative which facilitates the placement of young students from the less developed districts of Sri Lanka in our leading private Colleges.”

Mr. Mahen Dayananda

Past Chairman - Ceylon Chamber of Commerce

“Learn and Lead is an exciting initiative that gives talented youngsters from deprived areas the benefits of high quality education in leading schools. The Peace Secretariat is grateful to the Business for Peace Alliance for taking up the Project and developing it so productively.”

Prof. Rajiva Wijesinha

Secretary General

Secretariat for Co-ordinating the Peace Process

For further information contact

The Project Co-ordinator

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