

'Top 50' Professional and Career Women Awards Sri Lanka 2020

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Women in Management, IFC Launch Tenth *Professional and Career Women Awards 2020*, Promoting Women's Business Leadership in Sri Lanka

Colombo, Sri Lanka, August 18, 2020—Marking the tenth year of honoring inspiring Sri Lankan women, Women in Management (WIM), in collaboration with Women in Work, a partnership between IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, and the government of Australia, today launched the **'Top 50' Professional and Career Women Awards 2020**.

The move marks IFC's sixth consecutive year in co-hosting the awards which recognizes and celebrates Sri Lankan women who have excelled in their careers, businesses, and everyday life, inspiring others.

With over 420 past award winners, representing a wide array of professions such as banking and finance, hospitality, media, legal, logistics and supply chains, the 'Top 50' Professional and Career Women Awards, demonstrates the significant role women play in bringing about transformational change as employees, entrepreneurs, and business leaders.

"The decade of recognizing women leadership in Sri Lanka by WIM has open many closed doors for women as well as corporates to find best talents and it has delivered profitable results to the country economy," said Dr. Sulochana Segera Founder/Chairperson of WIM. "It's not about the night of the award that matters, it's all about finding the hidden success of women and bringing them out to appreciate their silent leadership and also to encourage them to mentor more men and women towards gender equality."

For IFC, gender equality is not only a social and moral imperative, but also makes business sense. Globally, companies are increasingly recognizing that they can gain greater competitive advantage and improve profits by targeting women as employees, entrepreneurs, consumers and business leaders. Increasing the share of women in corporate leadership roles is associated with higher company profits and improved environmental and social outcomes.

"We believe recognizing women who have demonstrated success in their chosen career creates a legacy that inspires others," said Sarah Twigg, Program Manager for Women in Work, IFC. "These awards challenge traditional views of women's roles as business leaders, and help prompt companies to take action to create more gender equal workplaces."

In IFC's 50-years of operations in Sri Lanka, WIM has been a longstanding partner. Together, IFC and WIM continue to provide skills-building and training opportunities for women in senior management, middle-management and those entrepreneurs who lead, or work in, micro and small businesses in Sri Lanka. These initiatives, including the 'Top 50' Professional and Career Women Awards 2020, are instigated under the IFC-DFAT Women in Work program.

"Supporting women to participate the economy and build a sustainable future for their country is very important, particularly in the time of COVID-19. In Sri Lanka, this participation is celebrated through the Professional and Career Women Awards, and we are proud to partner with WIM in highlighting the achievements of Sri Lankan women," said David Holly, Australian High Commissioner for Sri Lanka. "It is exciting, alongside many high profiled judges, to be part of the Awards judging panel."

The awards, which have expanded globally with presence in Canada and the Maldives, are not only a catalyst for the award winner's own career or business trajectory, but also encourages many other aspiring women to shatter the glass ceiling, propelling them to reach higher in their chosen field.

This year's panel of judges, chaired by Shiromal Cooray, Chairman & Managing Director of Jetwing Travels, include H.E. David John Holly, High Commissioner of Australia to Sri Lanka, Nadija Tambiah, Executive Vice President of John Keells Group, Dr. Rohantha Athukorala, CEO of Clootrack Sri Lanka/Maldives & Pakistan, Sarah Twigg, Program Manager of Women in Work, Nisthar Casim, Editor of Daily Finance Times, Jayanthi Dharmasena, Managing Director of Hayleys Agriculture Holdings Ltd, Kumara Samarasinghe, Marketing Consultant, Thamari Senanyake, Associate Director Corporate of Regulatory Affairs & Consumer Care Fontera Brands Lanka (Pvt) Ltd, Rohan Maskorala, CEO of Shippers Academy Colombo (Pvt) Ltd.

The nominations for the awards are open until 15th September 2020, and can be made by visiting www.womeninmanagementawards.org.

About IFC

IFC—a sister organization of the World Bank and member of the World Bank Group—is the largest global development institution focused on the private sector in emerging markets. We work in more than 100 countries, using our capital, expertise, and influence to create markets and opportunities in developing countries. In fiscal year 2019, we invested more than \$19 billion in private companies and financial institutions in developing countries, leveraging the power of the private sector to end extreme poverty and boost shared prosperity. For more information, visit www.ifc.org.

About WIM

Dedicated to the success of women, Women in Management (WIM) unites Sri Lanka's women professionals and entrepreneurs through a unique networking platform, leveraging their skills into global success.

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