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Hope For Women  
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## **PRESS STATEMENT**

### **Hope For Women's Leadership Camp for Girls 2014**

**09. January. 2014**

On 3rd January 2014 Hope for Women in collaboration with UNDP and Institute of Governance and Development (IGD) began their Leadership Camp for Girls (LCG) at the Institute of Governance and Development at Bandos Island Resort and Spa.

In view of the fact that obstacles such as economic and social mobility, a lot of girls do not get to utilize the opportunities for higher education and end up marrying at an early age. The focus of this camp is to train young women between ages 16 to 19 on gender equality and women's human rights.

The objectives of the camp are to build the participants' understanding of gender equality, human rights, social justice, democracy and good governance and provide leadership training ; and aspire them and to motivate them in setting and achieving their ambitions.

Role models and experts from diverse areas including education, health, politics and leadership, judiciary, commerce and civil society facilitated the various thematic sessions. The 7 day long leadership camp came to an end on the 9th of January 2014, Thursday. Participants for the camp were selected through an open call for applications. Ideally, the target was to provide the opportunity for at least one girl from each atoll to participate in the camp, but communication and transportation challenges hindered in achieving a more nationally representative participation.

The aim of the LCG is to create a dynamic group of young women who are confident, empowered, socially competent and motivated to reach their true potential as future leaders. The LCG focused on making the participants more aware of their religious, political and legal rights. During the camp, the participants were provided with the basic training on project planning and implementation, to build their skills in organizing Social Action Projects (SAPs). Participants are developing SAPs which they can conduct within the communities. The purpose of the follow up SAPs is to give the participants the opportunity to apply the knowledge they have gained through the LCG and spread the best practices and lessons with the community. This will also help increase the girls' confidence and inspire others to become active members of the community.

A network of "Girl Leaders" will also be formed at the end of the camp. This will be an online social media platform which will allow the girls to continue the discussions on gender and share experiences from their island communities and unite to create solutions.

One of the main goals of Hope for Women is to educate the youth and mold the next generation into one that is gender sensitized and free from stereotypical views and attitudes which perpetuate violence and discrimination against women and girls. An empowerment and leadership camp targeting young girls can be instrumental in providing them with the ability to break free from submissive and inferior roles pre-determined by the society and give confidence to pursue influential positions in public life.

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