

Women leadership training workshop inaugurated

Our correspondent

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Many common misconceptions regarding basic qualities of leadership were removed at a four-day women leadership training workshop inaugurated on Saturday.

In interactive sessions, participants from different spheres of life discussed that true leadership serves both men and women, powerless and powerful and rich and poor. It is inclusive, participatory and horizontal. They reached to a conclusion that leadership is neither force not traditional, legal, or charismatic authority. Individual in command position may or may not be leaders.

They learnt that leadership is all about our attitude towards other, commitment to values, sensitivity towards the need of others, patience or perseverance, teamwork and team learning. It was discussed that leadership framework in any sphere must be gender inclusive, communicative, purposeful, democratic and egalitarian and means sensitive.

The training, organised by Aurat Foundation (AF), was

based on the curriculum developed by Women Learning Partnership, an international organisation that seeks to empower women and girls to re-imagine and re-structure their roles in their families, communities and societies.

Highlighting the need to empower women as leaders, AF Director Advocacy Rabeea Hadi said that women constitute majority of the world population and they have largely been excluded from the process that have shaped our lives in the past. "They must play a significant role in these processes in future if we want to create a better world for ourselves and our children," she said.

The group was informed about the status of women in leading positions in the world. The women participation in managerial and administrative posts in public sphere is 33 per cent in developed world, 15 per cent in Africa, 13 per cent Asia and Pacific. In most of the world, the work is segregated by sex. Women tend to be in clerical, sales and domestic service whereas men are in manufacturing and transport. Women work, on average and across the

world, more hours than men in manufacturing but their work is often unpaid and unaccounted for. Where women do the same work, they are paid 30 to 40 per cent less than men.

Participants identified issues that hinder women in taking lead. They termed mindset as main reason which stops women from accessing sources of leadership including education, knowledge, exposure, decision making etc. They said that sometimes, women fail to recognize that they are leading a situation.

They were of the opinion that communications revolution is changing the nature of power and women need to learn ways to communicate. They said that gender disparity does not result from any single historical condition such as social habits, religion, economic condition or laws but rather comes from a spectrum of causes.

They said that in societies such as Scandinavian countries, where a critical mass of women has entered the political arena, gender relations and, as a consequence, social relations generally, have become significantly fairer and more egalitarian.