



Nermeen Varawalla

INSEAD

Received Sylff fellowship in 1999

My SYLFF Fellowship contributed to a one-year MBA at INSEAD in 2000 which was instrumental in my journey from academic clinical medicine to the healthcare and life science business sector. Since making this career transition I have held exciting and fulfilling roles in consulting firms, government, corporate multi-national pharmaceutical businesses and as the founder of entrepreneurial ventures. A key focus of my career has been the effective generation of clinical evidence to enable the global adoption of new treatments. Although my base has been in London, UK I have worked across the world, notably, in the US, India and Europe. I am a trustee of the Malaria Consortium, a medical charity that delivers Malaria control programmes in Africa and Asia.

I have had the privilege to participate in the SYLFF Leadership Workshop in Japan at an important juncture of my career. Following a major corporate transaction, I have moved on from my last role as Senior Vice President at BTG International and am exploring themes for the next phase of my professional life. I am passionate about the role that responsible business must play in addressing the many challenges that face our planet, particularly, sustainable eco-friendly development, global healthcare and a more equitable sharing of the benefits of global trade. The extra-ordinary opportunity to spend focussed time with nineteen SYLFF fellows from diverse academic, professional and cultural backgrounds, but sharing a common unified value and moral base has been a huge gift. Our candid thoughtful conversations in formal and informal settings has deeply shaped my ideas as to how business could be a responsible and impactful actor in numerous global settings both within and outside the food sector. Beautiful Japan with its rich heritage, gracious people, sophisticated infrastructure and spectacular landscape has been a perfect setting for these memorable deliberations. I have learnt a lot from Japan and am honoured to be able to play a small role in helping the rest of the world better recognise Japan's culture, history and achievements.

My early leadership style has been entrepreneurial, driven and analytical. However, it is

evolving to be visionary, inclusive and responsible as I seek to utilise my education, experience and talents to deliver positive impact on a wider stage with its multiple stake holders, increasing complexity and diverse agendas. For business to truly be a force for good, business leaders irrespective of the size of their businesses would need to recognise their larger responsibilities and potential for impact. There is a sweet spot where the objectives of wider populations, validity of logical thought and reasonable investor return can be realised. But in order to do so, business leaders must recognize and if necessary, design these sweet spots and navigate their respective businesses and teams towards them.

My SYLFF Fellowship and participation in the inaugural SYLFF Leaders Workshop has contributed enormously to my own journey towards becoming a visionary, inclusive and responsible business leader. For this I offer my deep appreciation to Mr Sasakawa, the SYLFF Secretariat and my co-participants.