

Profile of Lasantha Mendis

As an 18 year old after completing his primary and secondary education at S.Thomas' Preparatory School, Kollupitiya and Stafford International School, Colombo, respectively, Lasantha started his career in banking at ANZ Grindlays Bank PLC, way back in 1988.

From 1989 to 2000 he has been engaged in providing retail credit both in Colombo and suburbs when he served at Seylan Bank and Pramuka Bank in later years.

From 2002 to 2009 he was the Founder and Managing Director of Lak Jaya Micro Finance Limited (Lak Jaya) a private sector driven Micro Finance Institution (MFI) which was incorporated in 2002 with an initial equity of a mere Rs 05 million contributed by few a corporate leaders such as the late Messrs Michael De Zoysa and Michael Caderamanpulle, Messrs Mahendra Amarasuriya, Soli Captain, Nigel Austin, Vivendra Lintotawela, Jagath Fernando etc;

One year down the road Lak Jaya secured both commercial and semi-commercial loans and in a period of 05 years, Lak Jaya was among the top 05 MFI's in the county.

By 2009 Lak Jaya had disbursed over Rs 1.4 billion among 50,000 plus borrowers, by way of loans, and had an outstanding loan book of over Rs 400 million spread among 43,000 micro borrowers in 10 districts catered to by 43 branch offices, which were manned by just over 300 staff.

During his tenure in Lak Jaya, Lasantha commenced granting micro loans to the Estate sector, through 03 plantation companies in both low country and up country to about 2,000 estate employees.

The company was subject to a hostile take-over in 2009, which ended Lasantha's career with the company.

Through his company, Sri Lak Jaya Credit Plus Limited, which was established in 2010, Lasantha functions as the Process Consultant; managing the micro loan program of the Lanka Lions Foundation. Additionally, the company has been providing Consulting Services to Banks & Finance Companies in connection with promoting 'inclusive finance' solutions.

Through Yah Weh Holdings Limited, Lasantha has been operating a language assistance call centre, which is an exclusive value added service for mobile phone users of a leading Telecommunications Company; since 2011.

International Exposure and affiliations in the field of Microfinance.

During the period 2001 and 2009 the Lasantha gained wide exposure by visiting and studying numerous lending models in Bangladesh, India, West Africa, Cambodia and Vietnam.

He has also had the privilege of attending many seminars and conferences and had the good fortune of being exposed to eminent industry leaders such as Professor Muhamad Yunus (Grameen Bank) Hasan Abed (BRAC) Elaben(Sewa), Elizabeth Littlefield (CGAP) among many other well renowned speakers in the International microfinance industry.

Lasantha was also a Founder member and First Vice President, of the first and only Microfinance Association in Sri Lanka; The Lanka Micro Finance Practitioners' Association He also gained membership for Lak Jaya in two international microfinance net works, namely, INAFI and the Banking with the Poor Network.

Triodos Bank, Tripple Jump, Incofin are some of the foreign Microfinance funds whom Lasantha was in contact with a view securing funding for Lak Jaya, and continues to have access to similar foreign funders and experts in the International microfinance industry.

CURRICULAM VITAE

Name: Shirantha Antony Lasantha Mendis

Age / Date of birth 50 yrs/28th January 1970

Marital status Married

Address 118/3, Buthgamuwa Road, Kotuwegoda, Rajagiriya

Tel: 0112863429/0772497739

Primary education S.Thomas' Preparatory School, Kollupitiya 1976 to 1986

Secondary education Stafford International School, Colombo -1987 to 1988

Current occupation Director & Microfinance Specialist

Professional experience

2010 up to date Director Sri Lak Jaya Credit Plus Limited & Yah Weh Holdings Limited

2002 to 2009 Founder and Managing Director of Lak Jaya Micro Finance Limited

1998 to 2000 General Manager of Ichthus Holdings (Pvt) Limited

1996 to 1998 Manager Pramuka Savings & Development Bank Limited

1994 to 1996 Executive Director Intellect Insurance Brokers Limited

1990 to 1994 Executive Seylan Bank PLC

1988 to 1990 Sub Officer ANZ Grindlays Bank PLC