

February 2026 - Business & Lifestyle Magazine



ISHKAMA

G L O B A L C H A N G E

Valentines Day Feb 14th

Redefining what
love truly means.

African Empowerment

Two women shaping
the future of African
Youth

Quantum Healing

Learn more with
Dr. Angela Soong.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HON. DATUK (SIR) SK. LINGAM P.M.W

President of ASEAN U.K. Business Forum
(AUBF), Chairman Malaysian Link U.K.
(MLUK). Intl. Corporate Consultant

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From the Founder's Desk



**Prof. Dr. Amb.
Abhnash K Bains**
*CEO and Founder -
IGC/ Ishkama Ltd*

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." – African Proverb

To our dedicated editors, talented writers, valued contributors, supportive partners, and loyal readers – thank you. Your commitment, creativity, and belief in our mission continue to inspire the growth

of this international platform. At IGC, we have always been passionate about bringing inspiring stories, transformative ideas, and meaningful conversations to our global audience. Our purpose remains clear: to highlight impact-driven leadership, community excellence, and voices that create positive global change.

This month, I had the honour of attending The Business Growth Crowd – Global Podcast Networking event as a guest of Victoria Beale (SKY TV Presenter). It is a pleasure to attend and support the Valentine Fun Feast event organised by Amb Dr Minakshi Koch and Arunima Roy, IGC Country Chair for Sports, UK, championing opportunities for underprivileged girls and women who are determined to build their future through hockey. IGC is proud to sponsor this initiative. I am also delighted to support the event on Rudra Varenyam at Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, organised by Ragasudha Vinjamuri to promote and celebrate Indian heritage. Throughout this month, we have also observed and

acknowledged significant global moments, including Chinese New Year, Ramadan, and Children's Mental Health Week – each reminding us of the importance of cultural appreciation, reflection, and collective wellbeing within our communities.

I am also pleased to share that planning for the IGC Convention 2026 in India is progressing steadily. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all our IGC Chairs for your continued commitment and collaboration. My heartfelt thanks to Dr Lipika for graciously taking on the role of Chair of the Organising Committee for the IGC Convention, and to Dr Jalpa Lala for recommending Gujarat as one of the proposed venues. I also wish to acknowledge Aritra Mukherjee for her valuable suggestions, along with all our other IGC Chairs for your thoughtful contributions and insights. Your dedication, professionalism, and tireless efforts in planning, organising, and streamlining this landmark convention are truly commendable.

My thanks also go to Dr Sandeep Marwah for kindly offering to host a pre-lunch meeting and networking session to help finalise the convention planning. Your leadership and collaboration are instrumental in shaping what promises to be a significant international gathering for our community.

If you are interested in becoming an IGC Chair and joining one of the fastest-growing global business community networks, we warmly invite you to get in touch with us.

Also, if you would like to contribute an article to IGC Magazine, please get in touch with our Editor-In-Chief Vanessa Haripersad. you can reach her at vanessa@ishkama.co.uk

Your feedback is invaluable to us, and we encourage you to continue sharing your thoughts, ideas, and stories as we grow together.



Editor's Note

*Welcome to February,
the month of love.*

This February edition may be one of my favourites, as a special celebration falls in this month – Valentines day. It is this time of year my heart feels especially full as I reflect on love in all its quiet, powerful forms – the love we offer our families, the compassion we extend to ourselves when life stretches us, the courage we choose when rebuilding, and the vision we hold for a kinder, more connected world. That is the version of love I enjoy.

I'm excited to share that we started a new series to showcase our Ishkama Global Board Members, and its only fitting that we start with our Founder and CEO Prof Abhnash Bains on ethical leadership that puts people first. You will also meet leaders who live this love every day. On our cover, The Honorable Datuk (Sir) SK Lingam P.M.W shares decades of bridge-building between Malaysia and the UK, a beautiful reminder that true partnership is rooted in empathy, patience and shared purpose. We will also meet Francisco Gaffney who brings timely clarity on why ESG is now a business imperative, not an option. Later we celebrate women of quiet strength like Indraja Rachamadugu, who rebuilt her life far from home with grace and resilience, and Esther Wagaki Muchiri, who is mentoring the next generation with presence and heart. Wendy Silinyana is intentionally shaping young African futures through MiniBoss Business School, while Dr Angela Soong shows us how ancient wisdom and quantum technology can work together to heal and uplift.

What runs through every story is the same gentle truth I hold close in my own work at Shankara People Solutions: real transformation begins with self-awareness, continues with courage,



Vanessa Haripersad
Editor-in-Chief

and blossoms when we choose to lead from the heart. Whether through self-love, intergenerational mentorship, conscious innovation, or building bridges across continents, these leaders show us that love, when practised with intention, becomes the most powerful force for global change.

My deepest hope is that as you turn these pages, something inside you stirs – a soft reminder of your own strength, a spark of possibility, and a quiet invitation to show up more fully in your own life and leadership.

Thank you for being part of this growing community of conscious hearts and minds. May this edition warm you, inspire you, and gently challenge you to lead with greater compassion and clarity.

With love and gratitude,
Vanessa Haripersad | email: vanessa@ishkama.co.uk
Editor-in-Chief



ISHKAMA GLOBAL CHANGE
Registered Office: 32 Colwyn Crescent,
Hounslow, London, TW3 4AW
Telephone: 020 8572 1412
Email: ishkama.igc@hotmail.com

Chief Editor: Vanessa Haripersad
Creative Director: Rinki Sharma
Designer: Arundhuti Dey
Editor: Broomling Technologies
Sub-editor: Sharda Patidar
Distribution: Ishkama Global Change
Founder: Abhnash Bains
Contributors: Abhnash Bains, Rinki Sharma, Vanessa Haripersad, Seshasai Kotipalli

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Redefining Valentines Day through Self Love, Compassion and Self Care



VANESSA HARIPERSAD
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This Valentine's Day, love looked different to me. It did not look like candlelit dinners or quiet tables for two. Instead, it looked like sacrifice, a flight to my hometown, and a family reunion filled with colour and laughter.

I travelled with my family to attend my niece's wedding to witness the beginning of her love story. There is something profoundly hopeful about young love. This year, my son sacrificed his usual Valentine's traditions with his fiancée so that we could travel together and be present for his cousin's wedding. In that small but meaningful act, I was reminded that love is often demonstrated not in grand gestures, but in quiet sacrifices.

It reminds us that despite

uncertainty, heartbreak, and the weight of the world, human beings still choose partnership, commitment, and love. And perhaps that is the most courageous act of all.

How Love Evolves

Valentine's Day has meant many different things to me over the years. In the early days, it was a celebration between my boyfriend and I – flowers, chocolates, dinners, quiet romance. When he became my husband and the father of my children, the meaning shifted, love expanded. Valentine's Day became a family ritual.

We exchanged chocolates and flowers, but we also bought teddies and treats for our children, while always including my parents. What began as romantic love grew into generational love and became shared and inclusive love.

Love did not diminish when it expanded – it deepened.

Love After Difficulty

The past two months have been personally challenging. Seasons of difficulty have a way of testing our strength, clarity and faith. They stretch us emotionally and spiritually. They force us to confront our limits. And yet, this Valentine's Day also marked something else:

A return.

After a period of strain, I am finally

finding my way back to the work I love – the work of leadership, transformation, mentoring and impact. There is a quiet triumph in returning to yourself after hardship. In rebuilding energy. In restoring belief.

That, too, is love.

Because love is not only about how we show up for others. It is also about how we show up for ourselves when we are exhausted, uncertain, or healing.

The Radical Practice of Self-Love

We speak often about love in relational terms - partner, spouse, family, children. But how often do we truly practice self-love?

Self-love is not indulgence, nor selfishness and not performance. Self-love is the disciplined practice of honouring your emotional, physical and spiritual needs.

It is self-compassion when you fall short. It is self-care when your body whispers for rest. It is self-awareness when your soul asks for recalibration.

Transformative Love

In leadership, in parenting, in entrepreneurship and especially in service-oriented work, we can so easily pour from an empty cup. We give, mentor, build, support, nurture, but sustainable impact demands internal restoration.

To love yourself is to take

responsibility for your healing. To practice compassion toward yourself is to interrupt harsh self-criticism. To care for yourself intentionally is to ensure you can continue contributing meaningfully to the world.

Expanding the Definition of Valentine's Day

What if Valentine's Day was not limited to romantic gestures?

What if it became a celebration of family bonds, a reminder to honour parents and elders, or a moment to express gratitude to children. A personal audit of your self-care practices and a conscious reset toward emotional wellbeing.

Love evolves and matures, as it widens its reach.

As I stood in Durban celebrating my niece's new beginning, I realised something powerful: love is cyclical. We witness it at it's start, nurture it through seasons, rebuild it after hardship. And sometimes, we must redirect it inward to restore ourselves.

A Personal Invitation

This Valentine's Day, I invite you to redefine love.

Celebrate your partner, yes.

Celebrate your family.

Celebrate young love and long-standing commitments.

But also celebrate yourself.

Acknowledge the battles you have survived. The resilience you have cultivated through them. The healing you are still navigating. And the growth you cannot yet see but is quietly unfolding.

The most enduring love story you will ever have is the one you build within yourself. And you deserve to have tenderness in that story.





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Global Advisory Board Member Series

This month it is: **Founder and CEO - Prof Abhnash Bains**



members who want to create real impact?

Board members today need vision, humility, and courage.

Vision to see possibilities.

Humility to listen and learn from others.

Courage to make decisions that are right, not just easy.

They also need emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and a strong sense of responsibility. Good leaders bring people together and help create change that truly matters.

4. How do you stay resilient and clear-minded during uncertain or challenging times?

I stay grounded by taking quiet moments to reflect, practising gratitude, and reconnecting with the purpose behind the work. I also surround myself with people who offer honesty, support, and wisdom. When things feel uncertain, I return to my values—they help me stay focused and calm, even in complex situations.

5. What legacy do you hope Ishkama Global Change will leave for future generations?

I hope Ishkama leaves a legacy of unity, empowerment, and compassion. I want it to be remembered as a platform that lifted people up, encouraged honest conversations, and inspired leaders to act with heart. If future generations feel more confident, more connected, and more hopeful because of Ishkama, then our work will have truly made a difference.

1. What personal experience or moment shaped your vision for Ishkama Global Change, and how has that vision grown?

My vision came from seeing how many people carry silent struggles yet still show incredible strength. That realisation made me want to create a space where people feel seen, valued, and supported. Ishkama began as a personal mission to uplift others, but over time it has grown into a global community. Today, it brings together people from many backgrounds who all believe in kindness, dignity, and positive change.

2. What guides your decisions when balancing new ideas with ethical responsibility?

I rely on three simple principles: care for people, honesty, and long-term good.

I make sure any new idea respects people's wellbeing.

I stay accountable, even when decisions are tough.

I think about the long-term impact, not just quick wins.

For me, innovation only matters if it helps people and stays true to our values.

3. What leadership qualities are important for board



The Honorable Datuk (Sir) SK. Lingam P.M.W

President of ASEAN U.K. Business Forum (AUBF), Chairman Malaysia Link U.K. (MLUK). Intl. Corporate Consultant

Building Bridges Across Continents

In today's fast-changing world, it is truly heartwarming to speak with leaders who see beyond borders and focus on genuine human connection. I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with the Chairman of Malaysia Link UK and long-serving President of the ASEAN-UK Business Forum – a visionary who has devoted nearly three decades to nurturing the special relationship between Malaysia and the United Kingdom.

A Deep Passion for Malaysia-UK Ties

When I asked what drives his unwavering commitment, his answer came with quiet enthusiasm and sincerity: "I am passionate about strengthening Malaysia-UK ties. This stems from seeing the massive potential in our partnership, from trade and investment to

cultural exchanges and innovation collaboration. I am keen on building bridges between our two nations and fostering mutual growth."

Unlocking Opportunities for SMEs Through CPTPP

As we explored how our two nations can create a partnership that is both economically strong and socially meaningful, he spoke with clear focus about the work of Malaysia Link UK.

"Under Malaysia Link UK we propose collaborative opportunities between SMEs in the UK and Malaysia. This is where our current focus is."

He highlighted the powerful foundation provided by the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which the UK joined in 2023. This landmark agreement connects 11 countries

(including Japan, Canada and Australia) creating a vibrant market of approximately 586 million people and a combined GDP of around US\$15 trillion, making it the world's fourth-largest free trade area.

The Human Qualities That Sustain Leadership

With 17 years as Chairman of Malaysia Link UK and 29 years leading the ASEAN-UK Business



Datuk SK with His Excellency the Singapore High Commissioner



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Forum, he shared the inner qualities that have guided him through every challenge: emotional intelligence, vision and foresight, resilience in difficult times, empathy, mindfulness of cultural sensitivities, authenticity, a creative mind, strategic thinking, and the quiet confidence that comes from deep knowledge.

What True Bridge-Building Really Requires

For him, Malaysia Link UK has always been about more than trade, it is a platform for lasting relationships. When I asked what meaningful and sustainable bridge-building truly needs, he offered a beautiful and heartfelt response: empathy, active listening, open-mindedness, respect for diversity, clear and respectful communication, flexibility, patience, cultural intelligence, trust-building, and shared goals.



Datuk SK with Lord Leong and Lord Hermer KC the Attorney General

Mentoring the Leaders of Tomorrow

One of the things that touched me most was his deep passion for mentoring emerging leaders. "Mentoring future leaders is vital," he said warmly. "It is my belief that the students and youths of today will be the future corporate and political leaders." Many of the students he mentors at UK universities come from different countries, naturally creating the

understanding and networks that will shape stronger bilateral collaboration and long-term nation building.



Datuk SK with the High Commissioner of Jamaica

Preparing Young People for a Global Future

He believes governments, organisations and business leaders must invest in practical steps, especially youth exchange programmes where young people can visit, live and study in each other's countries. "This process would build friendship bonds, understanding and future collaboration," he explained with genuine hope.

The Power of Diaspora and Private Sector

He also emphasised how diaspora communities serve as honorary ambassadors of their home countries, urging private sector leaders to engage closely with them. Such interactions, he believes, will naturally deepen both diplomatic and economic cooperation.

Wisdom for Uncertain Times

When I asked how leaders can navigate today's geopolitical shifts while staying anchored in purpose, his advice was both practical and wise: strike a sensible balance between reality, practicality and national interest – a thoughtful compromise that allows progress

even in challenging times.

A Legacy of Empowerment
Looking to the future, he hopes his work will be remembered through the young people he has mentored. Many of his mentees have already stepped into high-ranking roles with excellent opportunities, gaining valuable skills, networks and confidence along the way.

Finding Joy and Balance

On a more personal note, although he doesn't have many traditional hobbies, he finds real joy in mentoring, giving talks on contemporary topics, and reading widely – "as knowledge is supreme." He loves listening to classical music, watching documentaries, taking peaceful walks, spending quiet time with loved ones, and cheering on his beloved Arsenal.

Our conversation left me inspired and hopeful. True international partnerships are built not only on agreements and statistics, but on warmth, trust, shared vision and the patient nurturing of the next generation. Through his dedicated work, the Chairman of Malaysia Link UK continues to show us how beautiful and powerful those bridges can be, one genuine connection at a time.



Datuk SK with the High Commissioner of Mauritius

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DR. ANGELA SOONG

- +447833 291552
- quantumtechhealingcentre@gmail.com
- angelasoong888@gmail.com
- 654 Streetsbrook Road, Solihull, B9111B, UK
- @YouTube: Quantumhealingcentre

When Spirituality Meets Science

From quantum technology and hypnotherapy to humanitarian leadership and global peace advocacy, Dr. Angela Soong bridges ancient wisdom and modern science, transforming lives through energy, innovation, and cross-cultural unity

Dr. Angela Soong’s journey into founding the Quantum Tech Healing & Wellness Centre emerged not from strategy alone, but from what she describes as a lifelong calling to serve as a healer, a light worker. Long before the Centre opened its doors, she had already established herself across multiple therapeutic and consciousness-based modalities, including Rapid Transformational Therapy, hypnotherapy, spiritual forgiveness practice, and deep quantum field work. Those who have worked with her often describe her presence as intuitive, compassionate, and deeply attuned – qualities that shaped the foundation of her work long before technology became part of the equation. While wellness has always been her passion, Dr. Soong’s background extends far beyond the healing space. She is also a seasoned entrepreneur who built a successful property portfolio from the ground up.

has also been acknowledged internationally as a United Nations Peace Ambassador and was honoured by the African AIDO Worldwide Diaspora with the historic title of the first non-African Chinese Royal Queen Mother Chief, recognising her advisory role in cultural, diversity, spiritual, and peace initiatives. At the heart of her work, however, is a deeply personal commitment to one-to-one healing. As an empath, Dr. Soong often found herself acting as a conduit for what she describes as universal light and consciousness. Clients frequently came to her carrying emotional burdens, physical pain and suffering, chronic stress, trauma, and what many refer to as “stored” energetic weight or meta-physical energy.

Yet this intensity came with a cost as an empath. Holding space for large numbers of people in deeply vulnerable states required enormous energetic output. Over time, Dr. Soong began to reflect on sustainability of her own health – not just for her clients. She recognised that if she was to continue serving at scale, she needed a model that supported both her wellbeing and the wellbeing of those she helped.

Her academic and humanitarian contributions reflect this dual path. She earned two doctorates – one in Quantum Technology Healing and another in humanitarian studies, recognising her philanthropic efforts and service contributions. She



In prayer and intention, she asked for a way to serve more people without depleting her own physical resilience. What followed was, in her words, a sequence of aligned encounters — introductions, invitations, and connections that opened new doors to find the ultimate tool of life. When one wants to serve the universe will always support.

Through involvement in elite networking circles in London's Mayfair district and engagement with family offices and private investment groups, Dr. Soong gained exposure to how high-level wealth networks operate. This observation resonated deeply. Rather than acquiring another property investment, she chose to invest in what she describes as a longevity and human evolution advancement tool that works in the quantum field not just physical realm, the RASHA quantum technology system.

The RASHA system is designed around advanced mathematical architecture incorporating base-12 frameworks and base-10 physical models. It integrates geometric principles such as Metatron's Cube and the Flower of Life, representing harmony, coherence, and structural balance. At its core, the technology operates as a frequency-based relaxation system. Through targeted vibrational and sound resonance patterns, it aims to help the nervous system downshift from sympathetic "fight-or-flight" activation into parasympathetic calm. When the body is no longer operating in survival mode, natural regulatory systems — including hormonal balance, inflammatory response, modulation, and cellular repair processes — can function

more efficiently. The RASHA system was introduced into the Quantum Tech Healing & Wellness Centre as a complementary support tool. Sessions are non-invasive and structured around guided relaxation while the technology delivers patterned frequency inputs. Clients often report entering deeply relaxed states, describing sensations of clarity, calm, or emotional release.

Importantly, Quantum Tech Healing services are positioned as complementary wellness experiences and not as medical treatments or substitutes for professional healthcare. No guarantees are made, and outcomes vary, as with any wellness modality or even the existence medical care system. The emphasis is on supporting the body's innate self-regulation rather than replacing medical care. Dr. Soong views this integration of intention and technology as the next evolution of her service. Rather than relying solely on her personal energetic capacity, she now facilitates an environment where human consciousness and supportive healing tools work together. In her philosophy, healing occurs most effectively when calm, clarity, and coherence are restored. The Centre welcomes individuals facing physical pain/suffering discomforts, emotional overwhelm, chronic stress, and spiritual disconnection.

For Dr. Soong, the Centre represents alignment between spiritual insight, entrepreneurial courage, and technological advancement. It reflects her belief that wealth, influence, and innovation can be channelled into service. Instead of keeping advanced tools confined to private



wealthy circles, she chose to make them accessible to humanity and a broader community seeking relief, less suffering and pain, growth, and transformation.

Ultimately, the Quantum Tech Healing & Wellness Centre is built on a vision of aiding healing and empowerment. Clients are not positioned as passive recipients, but as active participants in their own recalibration. The technology serves as a catalyst, Intention, mindset, lifestyle, and personal responsibility remain central to outcome. The RASHA tech helps to reprograms your energy. Transforming your inner frequencies to output outer new frequencies vibrations. You will flow new frequencies and energy.

Dr. Soong often asks a simple question: how many people continue to live in unnecessary suffering /pain because they have not yet explored supportive alternatives that align with them? While not every modality resonates with every individual, the expansion of options allows people to find what best supports their unique journey. Whether someone seeks relief from overwhelm, pain / suffering disease, enhanced performance, emotional clarity, or deeper spiritual alignment, the Centre offers an invitation to pause, recalibrate, and explore quantum possibilities. If the elite, wealthy and successful uses this as a personal tool to enhance their being, why not take this opportunity to try yourself?



IGC

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FRANCISCO GAFFNEY
BOARD ADVISOR

ESG Is No Longer Optional. The Clock Is Running

ESG reporting has shifted from voluntary to essential, making it a key factor in your company's market success and growth opportunities.

He specialises in helping boards integrate actionable initiatives that close capital attracting gaps, accelerate commercial growth, and navigate ambiguity in strategic decision making, while driving measurable stakeholder value and sustainable growth.

With new UK and EU frameworks already in effect and mandatory standards just months away, leaders who still treat ESG as a communications exercise rather than a data management responsibility are falling behind.

For example, the FCA's SDR requires asset managers with AUM over £50 billion to disclose by June 2025, and listed companies must comply with the UK SRS by January 2027. Understanding these deadlines helps SMEs plan proactively.

The Current Landscape

The UK is building its sustainability disclosure system around two pillars.

1. The Financial Conduct Authority's Sustainability Disclosure Requirements (SDR): Asset managers with over £50 billion in AUM made their first entity-level disclosures in June 2025, with those managing over £5 billion required to follow by the end of 2026.

2. The UK Sustainability Reporting Standards (UK SRS), drafted in early 2026 and aligned with the ISSB's IFRS S1 and S2 frameworks, are now open for voluntary adoption, with mandatory application for listed companies expected by January 2027 (pending FCA consultation).

Internationally, ISSB standards now cover around 60% of global GDP, establishing an informal global baseline. In the EU, the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) remains in force. However, the Omnibus I simplification package, expected to be finalised by mid 2026, proposes limiting mandatory requirements to companies with over 1,000 employees and €450

million in turnover, while delaying Wave 2 reporting to the 2027 financial year.

The Value Chain Effect on SMEs

Small and medium-sized enterprises face an unpleasant reality: Regulatory exemptions do not equal market exemptions.

Large companies reporting under CSRD must disclose Scope 3 emissions, the indirect greenhouse gas emissions generated across their supply chains. Up to 80% of a company's total emissions often originate upstream, and that data must come from suppliers. UK SME businesses already receive procurement questionnaires requesting Scope 1 and 2 emissions figures, energy



use, workforce diversity metrics, modern slavery statements, and supplier traceability data.

The EU's Omnibus package caps value chain information requests for companies with 1,000 employees or fewer, but this sets a floor, not a ceiling. Buyers can still request additional data commercially. A UK supplier with 50 employees may not fall under any mandatory regime, but it still plays a critical role in its FTSE 100 customers' compliance picture.

How to Prepare

1. Governance first. Assign ESG ownership at the board and executive level now to build confidence and demonstrate leadership in compliance and risk management.

2. Build a data foundation. Audit what you already hold on energy use, emissions, workforce composition, supplier relationships, and environmental incidents. Most SMEs have the underlying operational data but

lack an organised way to report it consistently. A structured spreadsheet is a perfectly valid starting point; dedicated software comes later, when data volume demands it. This approach helps SMEs manage resources effectively while preparing for compliance.

3. Conduct a materiality assessment. Before collecting data on every possible metric, identify which ESG topics genuinely matter to your business, those that carry financial risk or opportunity, and those where your operations create meaningful external impact. Both GRI Standards and ISSB S1 offer structured frameworks for this.

4. Engage your supply chain. Map your Scope 3 categories and identify which suppliers contribute most to your emissions profile. Offer templates and guidance rather than bare data demands. If you are an SME, get ahead of incoming questionnaires by preparing

a concise sustainability data sheet covering Scope 1 and 2 emissions, energy use, basic workforce statistics, and key policies. This proactive engagement reduces surprises and builds supplier cooperation.

5. Prepare for assurance. Limited mandatory assurance over sustainability disclosures is coming for large reporters. Begin documenting data sources, calculation methods, and internal controls now. Assurance requires an auditable trail, not just a number, The Bottom Line

For SMEs, the message is straightforward: you may not yet face a regulator, but you will face your customers. Companies that build clear, reliable sustainability data now will secure contracts and financing on better terms than those scrambling to comply in 2027. ESG is no longer a reporting obligation; it is a core business competency. Treat it accordingly. And you can make it your competitive advantage.



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INDRAJA RACHAMADUGU

She Carried It All: Building a Life Far From Home

She boarded a flight to a new country with her husband, carrying far more than luggage. She carried ambition, uncertainty, and the quiet determination shared by countless women who rebuilt their lives far from home.

The transition tested her resilience as she navigated loneliness, identity shifts, and the challenge of adapting to new traditions while honoring her roots.

Her story reflects the everyday heroism of women abroad—those who learn to balance career aspirations, family responsibilities, and the tender chaos of new motherhood. Life in a foreign land often begins with disorientation. For her, even simple tasks—finding a grocery store, navigating public transport, understanding local customs—felt like small tests of resilience. Before marriage, she had never gone grocery shopping alone; now, she was confidently traveling by herself, discovering

Across Borders and Beyond: One Woman's Journey of Resilience, Courage, and Reinvention

independence she never knew she had. Each challenge became a quiet reminder of her growing strength.

Finding a job was another mountain to climb. With her husband's support, she managed to secure work, but settling into a professional role abroad required more than technical skills.

It demanded emotional adaptability. At work, she wore yet another hat, learning to navigate expectations shaped by a different culture while trying to prove herself in an unfamiliar environment..

Then she became a mother. The joy was immense, but so was the uncertainty. She managed her home and supported her husband independently, but for delivery, she invited her mother, knowing she needed help. With a newborn came sleep deprivation, hormonal changes, and postpartum anxiety. Insomnia and mood swings strained her marriage, testing her emotional reserves.

Returning to work after maternity leave felt overwhelming. Finding childcare that aligned with her values and budget was difficult. She was fortunate to have a supportive family—her parents and in-laws took turns caring for the baby, allowing her to breathe and rebuild her routine.

“Balance isn't a fixed destination but a rhythm.”

What grounded her was the realization that balance isn't a fixed destination but a rhythm. Some days, work took precedence; on others, motherhood demanded everything. She learned to celebrate small victories. Navigating healthcare systems, securing childcare, and building a support network from scratch became milestones of growth.

Women like her redefine what it means to thrive abroad. Their strength lies not in perfection, but in showing up—tired, determined, and full of love. And for every woman walking a similar path:

You are not alone. Seeking help is a strength, and with support, it is possible to grow, heal, and truly thrive.

Indraja Rachamadugu is a IGC UK Regional UK Regional Chair of MiddleSex. A results-driven Head of Operations and Quality who excels at optimizing processes and leading cross-functional teams. She combines data-focused leadership with strategic QA expertise to drive efficiency, business alignment and sustainable growth.



ESTHER WAGAKI MUCHIRI
 FOUNDER & CEO,
 EMENTORING AFRICA

“Effective mentorship,” she observes, “must constantly evolve and adjust to remain relevant.”



eMentoring Africa Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges for Inter-Generational Collaboration

In a world shaped by swift generational shifts and digital disruption, mentorship has never been more vital—or more nuanced. Esther Wagaki Muchiri, Founder and CEO of eMentoring Africa, has spent years refining what it means to guide the next generation. For her, mentorship today unfolds across a rich tapestry of Gen Z, Millennials, and the emerging Gen Alpha, each bringing distinct ways of thinking, learning, and connecting.

“Effective mentorship,” she observes, “must constantly evolve and adjust to remain relevant.” It is no longer about delivering answers from on high, but about meeting people exactly where they stand—emotionally, socially, and digitally—and walking alongside them through uncertainty. Over time, Muchiri’s own understanding has deepened into something flexible, adaptive, and deeply relational.

Her greatest teacher remains her late father. Through his quiet example, he instilled integrity, discipline, faith, and responsibility. “He lived his values consistently,” she recalls, “and that shaped my understanding of leadership. From him, I learned that leadership is

not about position, but about character.” That single lesson still anchors every decision she makes, even—and especially—when the path is difficult.

Muchiri draws a clear line between two approaches to mentoring. A transformational mentor invests in long-term change: character, mindset, and confidence. This work demands time, patience, and genuine presence. A transactional mentor, by contrast, chases quick wins and short-term targets. At eMentoring Africa, where most mentors volunteer their time freely and practical support is offered only where truly needed, the organisation proves daily that real transformation springs not from money but from commitment, consistency, and care. Through flagship initiatives such as the Student Leaders Ambassadors Program (SLAP), the organisation intentionally pairs young leaders in schools and communities with mentors who walk with them on questions of leadership, values, and responsibility. When young people receive steady, early support, they mature into confident, ethical leaders who, in turn, strengthen their communities. “Mentorship provides both roots and wings,”



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Muchiri says simply.

She is quick to address common misconceptions. Many still picture the mentor as a “know-it-all” with every answer ready. In truth, the best mentors remain lifelong learners—honest about their limits, generous with their networks, and willing to connect mentees to wider opportunities. Another myth is that mentors must appear flawless. Authenticity, Muchiri insists, builds far deeper trust. When mentors share their own struggles and failures, real connection takes root.

Striking the balance between guidance and freedom is an art she has mastered through storytelling. She often shares her own missteps and missed turns, showing mentees that growth rarely follows a straight line. When a young person chooses a different path, the team steps back, keeps the door open, and continues to watch with care. Some return stronger; others take longer routes; a few truly struggle. In those moments, she says, “sometimes all you can do is pray for them and wish them well, trusting that the seeds planted will eventually grow.”

Emotional intelligence, she emphasises, sits at the heart of every effective relationship—particularly when mentoring young people from disadvantaged backgrounds or those carrying the weight of hardship. Mentors must bring empathy, patience, and sensitivity, while also equipping mentees with tools for their own emotional resilience through reflection, storytelling, and carefully chosen challenges.

In multicultural and global settings, humility and cultural awareness are non-negotiable. eMentoring Africa’s digital

The screenshot shows the eMentored website. At the top, there are navigation links: SELF-MENTORSHIP, BECOME A MENTOR, FIND A MENTOR, and LOGIN. The main banner features the headline "Secure Your Spot and Start Your Journey" and a sub-headline: "Our Sponsored Programs connect you with industry mentors and organizations investing in your future. Receive one-on-one guidance, cutting-edge curriculum, and valuable network connections – all at no cost to you. Start your journey today." Below this is an "APPLY NOW" button. To the right is an image of a young woman and a man looking at a device. Below the banner, the text "Ready, Signup, Go!" is followed by three icons representing "Interact", "Set Goals", and "Win". A paragraph below explains: "eMentored is a safe-space for youth to learn and grow from experienced and passionate mentors. We believe there is an opportunity for every youth to identify and tap into their full potential by connecting to a mentor. Our mentors' drive is to share their journey and to see growth and transformation in the youth." At the bottom of this section are the same navigation links. To the right is a mobile phone displaying the app interface, which shows a profile for "Dorcas Njeri" and an "Availability" section with options like "Weekend-Evening", "Weekend-Mid Day", and "Weekend-Mornings".

platform, eMentored.com, connects mentors and mentees across borders. Every participant receives ongoing training in cultural sensitivity, communication styles, and respectful engagement. “This is not a one-time lesson,” Muchiri notes. “It is continuous learning.”

Organisations that treat mentorship as more than a once-off initiative reap measurable rewards. When embedded in leadership development, performance management, and everyday culture, mentoring improves staff retention, lifts workplace happiness, and drives productivity. “Indeed,” she says, “mentorship becomes part of how the organisation lives and works.” eMentoring Africa is currently partnering with a large corporate, and the results are already evident.

Muchiri’s own legacy is already taking shape. Young people she mentored fifteen years ago are now leading impactful initiatives,

mentoring others, and influencing systems. She smiles at the thought of a “snowball effect” that crosses borders, touches communities, and multiplies impact for generations to come. If her story inspires you to act, the invitation is open. Individuals can sign up as mentors or mentees through the website: ementoringafrica.or.ke.

Organisations and supporters can also contribute financially to reach marginalised communities and provide the extra push many young people need. Because, as Esther Wagaki Muchiri believes, mentorship truly thrives when the whole community chooses to invest in it.

In a time of constant change, her message is both timeless and timely: the most powerful leadership gift we can offer the next generation is not perfection, but presence—and the quiet courage to walk with them, roots and wings intact.



“Wendy Silinyana’s leadership journey is anchored in one clear conviction: the future must be shaped with intention.”

WENDY SILINYANA
FOUNDER/ CEO OF MINIBOSS
BUSINESS SCHOOL



The Boss of Mini-Boss Architect of Influence Futures for Africa

Across entrepreneurship education, women’s economic empowerment, and ecosystem development, her work reflects a powerful philosophy – “Influence Futures”. It is the belief that influence is cultivated early and leadership must be prepared, not postponed. One of many defining points in Wendy’s journey came in 2021 when she was invited to serve as a Jury Member at the global StartUp World Cup Championship. By then, she was already deeply embedded in entrepreneurship development and ecosystem building across South Africa. Yet nothing prepared her for what she witnessed on that international stage. Children as young as seven articulated revenue models and scalable solutions with confidence and fluency. It was inspiring, but unsettling. She realised she was the only person of colour on the jury panel, and there were no African children participating. Africa was absent from a global conversation about youth innovation. Wendy understood immediately that the gap was not talent – it was exposure, structure, and access. That moment became a mission. Determined to ensure Africa was represented, Wendy acquired the license to establish MiniBoss Business School Johannesburg, serving as Director and Franchisee. MiniBoss forms part of a global network of international

business schools under the International Business Academy. By launching the Johannesburg campus in March 2023, Wendy ensured that African children could access the same world-class entrepreneurial education as their global peers.

MiniBoss operates as a transformational leadership laboratory for children and teenagers. The curriculum integrates 12 types of deliberate practice – from ideation and customer discovery to financial simulations, negotiation training, branding development, sales execution, and live pitch presentations. Students do not merely learn entrepreneurship; they practice it with discipline and purpose. Simultaneously, the school develops eight core intelligences that shape holistic leaders:

- IQ (Intelligence Quotient) – analytical thinking and structured problem-solving.
- EQ (Emotional Quotient) – emotional awareness, empathy, and resilience.
- CQ (Creative Quotient) – innovation and imaginative solution-building.
- TQ (Technology Quotient) – digital fluency and adaptability to emerging technologies.
- SQ (Social Quotient) – collaboration, communication, and influence.
- MQ (Moral Quotient) –



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- integrity and ethical decision-making.
- PhQ (Physical Quotient) – discipline, stamina, and performance wellbeing.
- XQ (Execution Quotient) – the ability to implement ideas and deliver measurable results.



The goal is not to produce pressured young executives, but confident, emotionally intelligent, ethically grounded future leaders who understand both profit and purpose. And the results have been extraordinary.

Since launching in March 2023, MiniBoss Johannesburg students have risen onto the global stage. At the 2025 StartUp World Cup Championship, learners from South Africa secured UN SDG Gold Medals, affirming their alignment with global sustainability goals and demonstrating that African youth innovation competes – and wins – internationally.

In the same championship, Wendy was honoured with Director of the Year, while Parent of the Year recognition also came from South Africa – a testament not only to institutional excellence, but to a culture of family-supported entrepreneurship. What was once an absence in 2021 became representation, recognition, and gold-medal achievement just four years later.

Recognising the importance of progression, Wendy also serves as Director and Franchisee of BigBoss Business School Johannesburg, part of the same international network. BigBoss provides a pathway for youth and young adults to transition from early entrepreneurial exposure to scalable venture development. Beyond business education, Wendy is the Founder of Virtue Business Solutions, operating within innovation and impact ecosystems that strengthen SME development and access to capital for women and youth. Through Table of Influence and her leadership of World Woman Club South Africa, she convenes strategic platforms positioning women for governance, wealth creation, and decision-making power.

At its core, Wendy's work is about legacy. Influence Futures is not a slogan – it is a leadership architecture preparing individuals and systems for long-term impact. The future does not simply arrive.

It is influenced – in classrooms, in boardrooms, and on global stages. And through her leadership, Africa's next generation is not asking for permission.

They are preparing to lead.



Important Dates of February:

- **2 FEBRUARY:** World Wetlands Day
- **4 FEBRUARY:** World Cancer Day
- **10 FEBRUARY:** World Pulses Day
- **15 FEBRUARY:** World Hippo Day
- **20 FEBRUARY:** World Day of Social Justice
- **21 FEBRUARY:** International Mother Language Day
- **27 FEBRUARY:** World NGO Day

World Cancer Day: A Reminder to Care, Support, and Hope

“You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice.”

- **BOB MARLEY**

For most of us, life moves quickly. We worry about exams, jobs, deadlines, and daily responsibilities. But for someone diagnosed with cancer, life suddenly slows down. Everything changes in a moment. Priorities shift from plans and ambitions to treatments and recovery. World Cancer Day, observed on February 4 every year, reminds us to pause, reflect, and stand beside those who are fighting one of the toughest battles of their lives.

Cancer is not just a medical condition. It is an emotional journey that affects not only patients but also their families, friends, and loved ones. The word “cancer” often brings fear, uncertainty, and many unanswered questions. Patients go through physical pain, emotional stress, and mental exhaustion. Families silently carry their own fears while trying to remain strong for their loved ones. This makes cancer not just an individual struggle, but a shared human experience.

The main purpose of World Cancer Day is to spread awareness and educate people about cancer. Many people still do not know that early detection can save lives.

Regular health check-ups, paying attention to unusual symptoms, and consulting a doctor at the right time can make a huge difference. In many cases, cancer can be treated successfully if detected early. Awareness gives people the power to protect themselves and their families.

Prevention is also an important part of the fight against cancer. Healthy lifestyle choices can reduce the risk significantly. Avoiding tobacco, eating nutritious food, exercising regularly, and maintaining a healthy weight can help protect our bodies. Small daily habits can have a big impact in the long run. World Cancer Day encourages people to take responsibility for their health and make better choices.

However, fighting cancer is not only about medicines and treatments. Emotional support plays a very important role. Patients often feel lonely, scared, and anxious about their future. During such times, love and support from family and friends give them strength. A simple conversation, a smile, or being present with them can make them feel less alone. Sometimes, emotional support becomes as powerful as medical treatment.

World Cancer Day also reminds us to show kindness and compassion. Many cancer patients face social stigma and isolation. Some people do not know how to react, and others distance themselves out of fear. But what patients need



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“Sometimes, emotional support becomes as powerful as medical treatment.”

most is understanding and support. Treating them with respect, encouraging them, and being there for them can make a meaningful difference in their journey.

At the same time, this day honors cancer survivors. Survivors are symbols of courage and hope. Their journeys inspire others and show that cancer can be fought. They remind us that strength comes from within, and that hope should never be lost. Their stories encourage people to stay positive and never give up, no matter how difficult the situation may seem.

World Cancer Day is not just about

patients. It is about all of us. It reminds us to value our health, to care for others, and to spread awareness. Each one of us can contribute by learning more about cancer, supporting those in need, and encouraging healthy living.

In the end, World Cancer Day teaches us an important lesson: life is precious. We must take care of ourselves and support those who need us. Together, with awareness, compassion, and hope, we can create a world where fewer people suffer and more people survive. Cancer may be a difficult journey, but with support and hope, no one has to face it alone.



World NGO Day: When Helping Others Becomes a Way of Life

Not all heroes wear uniforms or stand on stages. Some walk quietly through crowded streets, visit forgotten villages, and sit beside people who feel invisible. They listen, they help, and they care. Their work may not always be seen, but their impact changes lives every single day. These heroes are the people behind NGOs. World NGO Day, celebrated on February 27, is a day to recognize their efforts and remind us of the power of kindness and service.

Non-Governmental Organizations, or NGOs, are organizations that work independently to improve the lives of others. They do not work for profit, but for people. Their mission is to support communities, protect the environment, promote education, and provide healthcare and relief. They focus on helping those who are often left behind or overlooked by society. Their work is driven by compassion and a strong desire to make the world a better place.

“World NGO Day reminds us that change begins with care and compassion.”

Many people around the world face challenges such as poverty, lack of education, hunger, and poor health. For them, NGOs become a source of hope. NGOs

organize food drives, provide clean drinking water, and offer education to children who cannot afford school. They conduct health camps and provide medicines to people who cannot afford treatment. These efforts may seem simple, but they bring real change to people's lives.

Education is one of the most powerful tools NGOs provide. When a child receives education, it opens the door to opportunities and a brighter future. NGOs help children stay in school by providing books, uniforms, and safe learning environments. They believe that education can break the cycle of poverty and empower individuals to stand on their own feet.

Healthcare is another important area where NGOs make a difference. In many remote areas, hospitals and medical services are limited. NGOs bring doctors, medicines, and awareness programs to these communities. They teach people about hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention. Their work saves lives and improves the overall well-being of communities.

NGOs also play a vital role during emergencies and disasters. During floods, earthquakes, or pandemics, they provide immediate relief. They distribute food, clothes, and medical supplies. They help families rebuild their lives and give emotional support during difficult times. Their quick response brings hope and stability when people

need it most.

World NGO Day is also a day to appreciate volunteers. Volunteers are ordinary people who choose to give their time and energy to help others. They work without expecting rewards or recognition. Their dedication shows that one person's effort can make a big difference. Volunteers remind us that kindness is one of the strongest forces in the world.

NGOs also raise awareness about important issues such as environmental protection, human rights, and social equality. They encourage people to protect nature, respect others, and work together for a better future. Their efforts inspire communities to become stronger and more responsible.

This day is not only about celebrating NGOs but also about inspiring everyone to contribute. Each of us can make a difference in our own way. Helping someone in need, supporting a cause, or volunteering can create positive change. When people come together with a shared purpose, they can achieve great things.

World NGO Day reminds us that change begins with care and compassion. NGOs show us that helping others is not just an action, but a responsibility. Their work brings hope to the hopeless and strength to the weak. They prove that even small efforts can create a better world.

In the end, NGOs represent the true spirit of humanity. They remind us that the world becomes better when people help one another. Their service teaches us that kindness, empathy, and unity have the power to transform lives and build a brighter future for all.



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March 2026 Horoscope: A Month of Fresh Energy and Gentle New Beginnings

March arrives with a quiet promise of change. It's the time when life begins to feel lighter, brighter, and full of possibility. After months of waiting, planning, and reflecting, many people will feel ready to move forward. This month encourages patience, hope, and trust in yourself. Not everything needs to happen quickly—sometimes, steady progress brings the strongest and happiest results. March 2026 reminds us that every small effort matters, and every new day is another chance to grow.

ARIES: This month brings strong motivation and fresh confidence. You may feel ready to start something new or take an important step forward. Your energy inspires others. Just be mindful of acting too quickly—careful thinking will bring better results.

TAURUS: March brings calmness and comfort. You may enjoy spending more time at home or with loved ones. Financial matters remain steady. Trust your slow and steady approach—it will continue to protect your peace and stability.

GEMINI: You'll find yourself drawn to conversations and new ideas. Meeting new people or reconnecting with old friends brings happiness. Stay open, but don't forget to take breaks. Rest will help you stay balanced and focused.

CANCER: This month helps you feel emotionally stronger. Confusion fades, and clarity replaces it. Support from family or close friends makes you feel safe. Trust your heart—it knows what you truly need right now.

LEO: Confidence returns, and you feel ready to shine. Your efforts may finally be noticed by others. This brings joy and motivation. Keep believing in yourself, but also remember to give yourself time to rest and recharge.

VIRGO: You'll feel more organized and clear-minded this month. Tasks feel easier to handle. This is a good time to plan your goals and work toward them patiently. Your dedication brings steady progress and satisfaction.

LIBRA: Harmony enters your life again. Relationships improve, and misunderstandings begin to fade. This month encourages you to focus on joy, peace, and meaningful connections with those who truly care about you.

SCORPIO: You are becoming emotionally stronger and wiser. Letting go of past worries will bring you peace. Trust yourself and stay open to new opportunities that slowly begin to appear in your life.

SAGITTARIUS: Adventure returns slowly and sweetly. You may explore a learning path, travel idea, or new friendship. Curiosity leads you somewhere exciting. Trust your instincts—they guide you toward new opportunities.

CAPRICORN: Your hard work starts showing results. Progress may come quietly but meaningfully. Stay patient and focused. This month reminds you that your effort is building something strong and lasting for your future.

AQUARIUS: Creative energy flows easily now. You may feel inspired to share your ideas. People appreciate your unique thinking. Trust yourself and don't hesitate to express what makes you different and special.

PISCES: You'll feel calm and emotionally balanced. This is a good time for healing and self-reflection. Trust your intuition—it guides you gently. Peace and quiet moments will bring clarity and inner strength.

March 2026 is a month of quiet growth and hopeful movement. It may not bring sudden changes, but it brings steady improvement. Every sign is given a chance to heal, learn, and move forward. Trust the process, believe in yourself, and stay patient. The steps you take now, no matter how small, will lead you toward a brighter and more peaceful future filled with possibility and meaning.



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