October 2026

IGC
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GLOBAL CHANGE



Noelene Kotschan

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

AFRICA AND NORTH AMERICA BUILD A NEW PROFESSIONAL LEARNING BRIDGE

Gebreegziabher Tadele

NAVIGATING THE POLYCRISIS

Mauro V. Polticchia

Top 3 INSPIRING STORIES

The World We Create
Hire AI Like You'd Hire a Person
Empowering Women for Peace & Justice

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Contents



5.

PINKDRIVE: BRIDGING THE GAP, PROLONGING LIVES

– Noelene Kotschan

3.

MESSAGE FROM IGC PRESIDENT TAMMY DAWSON-DOUGHTY

11.

AFRICA AND NORTH AMERICA BUILD A NEW PROFESSIONAL LEARNING BRIDGE THROUGH USAFI-PECB PARTNERSHIP.

– Gebreegziabher Tadele

14.

THE WORLD WE CREATE

– Dr. John Harrison

16.

NAVIGATING THE POLYCRISIS

– Mauro V. Polticchia

18.

HIRE AI LIKE YOU'D HIRE A PERSON

– Cynthia Lai

20.

EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

– Dr.Seyed Firdawoosbee Hanifdeen

22.

BEYOND SUCCESS

– Bivas Ambasada FRSA

24.

CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION

– Anomnuba Chiamaka Esther

...and more

From the Founder's Desk



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

"Meaningful change begins when we turn our values into action and our connections into opportunities for others."

Welcome to the October edition of IGC Magazine. October reminds us of the importance of inclusion, compassion and collective responsibility. From Black History Month in the UK and World Mental Health Day to the International Day of the Girl Child, World Food Day and United Nations Day, these occasions encourage us to reflect on equality, wellbeing, human rights and our shared responsibility towards a better world.

This month, I had the honour of speaking at the SPAC Symposium, Promotion and Award Ceremony, sharing perspectives and engaging in meaningful conversations. I also attended the Diversity Festival organised by my friend Martina Eni and Victor, an inspiring opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds and recognise the strength that diversity brings to our communities.

In another meaningful initiative, SurWee Foundation, in collaboration with IGC, organised a Diya Decoration and Candle-Making Workshop. Twenty children participated enthusiastically, creating beautiful diyas for upcoming Diwali stalls. The workshop encouraged creativity, learning and participation while giving children an opportunity to showcase their talents.

I also had the pleasure of meeting my friend Kalpana Saroj, along with her son and our friend Usha. It was lovely to spend time together and reconnect with friends.

At Ishkama Global Change CIC, we remain committed to building connections, encouraging dialogue and creating opportunities for positive social impact through our community initiatives, magazine and radio platform.

As we approach the final months of the year, let us continue working towards a more inclusive, compassionate and connected society.

We invite you to be part of the IGC community. If you would like to join us, contribute an article to IGC Magazine or be interviewed on Ishkama Radio, we would love to hear from you.

Thank you to our readers, contributors and collaborators for your continued support.



Editor's Note



Vanessa Haripersad
Editor-in-Chief

Dear Readers,

Some months ask us to lead from the front. October asked me to lead from a chair.

I spent most of this month with limited mobility, and I will be honest with you: it was humbling. As someone who measures her days in meetings, flights and conversations, being still did not come naturally. Yet stillness has a way of sharpening what matters. It reminded me that resilience is rarely loud. It lives in the quiet decision to keep showing up, in whatever form your body and circumstances allow.

And show up I did, twice. I was honoured to be invited by Prof. Ajay Jivan to the South African Board of People Practices (SABPP) Breakfast in celebration of National HR Day, a morning that reaffirmed why our profession exists: to place people at the centre of every organisation's story. Later in the month I joined the much-anticipated LnD Africa Rise conference, where the energy in the room spoke of a continent ready to invest boldly in learning, leadership and human potential. Both experiences were a gift, and I carried home a renewed sense of purpose from each.

October is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and this edition is dedicated to the courage it takes to face illness, and the compassion it takes to walk alongside those who do. Our cover honours Noelene Kotschan, founder of PinkDrive, whose vision has brought life-saving screening and education to women who might otherwise never have had access to it. Her story is one of turning conviction into movement, and of refusing to accept that where you live should determine whether you survive.

We also bring you an important feature on cervical cancer, one of the most preventable cancers, and still one of the leading causes of cancer deaths among women in Africa. Awareness, screening and vaccination save lives. Please read it, share it, and have the conversation with the women you love.

As 2027 approaches, Our President Tammy Dawson Doughty shares more on our upcoming IGC event The Women's Leadership Awards taking place at the House of Lordsin the first quarter of 2027.If you are interested please contact Dr Minakshi Koch at Kochminakshi@gmail.com

As you turn these pages, I invite you to reflect on your own health and your own pace. Book the screening you have been postponing. Check in on a friend. Rest when your body asks you to. Leadership begins with how we care for ourselves.

With gratitude and warmth,
Vanessa Haripersad
Editor in Chief, Ishkama Global Change Magazine

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Message from IGC President Tammy Dawson-Doughty

Celebrating Women Who Lead, Inspire and Create Change: IGC Looks Ahead to its 2027 Awards

Ishkama Global Change (IGC) is looking ahead to 2027 with an ambitious proposal to celebrate exceptional women whose leadership, determination and achievements are making a meaningful difference across business, industry and communities.

Plans are being developed for the IGC Women's Leadership Awards 2027, with a proposed prestigious evening at the House of Lords, bringing together inspirational women, business leaders, entrepreneurs, community champions and influential figures from across the United Kingdom and internationally.

The proposed awards will be more than a celebration of individual achievement. They will provide an opportunity to recognise the contribution women make to economic growth, innovation, community development and positive social change, while creating new connections and opportunities for collaboration.

Recognising Leadership in All Its Forms

Leadership is not defined solely by a job title, professional position or public profile. Some of the most remarkable women are those working quietly behind the scenes, building businesses, supporting communities, mentoring future generations and overcoming significant challenges to create opportunities for others.

At IGC, we believe these contributions deserve recognition.

The 2027 awards programme aims to shine a spotlight on women from different backgrounds, industries and stages of their careers, recognising not only what they have achieved but also the lasting impact they are creating.

From established business leaders and entrepreneurs to emerging changemakers and those championing their local communities, the ambition is to celebrate the breadth of female leadership and the power of

individual determination.

A Global Platform for Connection and Opportunity
As a community interest company with an international outlook, Ishkama Global Change is committed to connecting people, promoting leadership and supporting initiatives that deliver meaningful social impact.

Through its growing network, IGC President Meets series and magazine, the organisation provides a platform for individuals to share their experiences, exchange ideas and develop relationships that extend beyond geographical and professional boundaries.

The proposed 2027 awards will build on this ambition, bringing together individuals and organisations who share a commitment to empowerment, opportunity and positive change.

Importantly, the evening is intended to encourage conversations that continue long after the awards have been presented, creating opportunities for mentorship, partnerships, business collaboration and wider community engagement.

Celebrating Stories That Deserve to Be Told
Every successful woman has a story. Behind the achievements are often years of determination, difficult decisions, personal sacrifices and moments of extraordinary resilience.

The proposed awards will provide an opportunity to bring these stories to the forefront, recognising not only professional success but also the personal journeys, challenges and contributions that make each achievement significant.

By celebrating these experiences, IGC hopes to encourage others to recognise their own potential and pursue ambitions that may once have seemed beyond reach.

Recognition can be a powerful catalyst for change. When women's achievements are celebrated, their stories have the potential to inspire future generations and demonstrate what can be accomplished through ambition, perseverance and opportunity.

An Opportunity for Businesses and Partners to Make a Difference
IGC is also inviting businesses and organisations to become part of its 2027 vision through sponsorship and strategic partnerships.

Supporting the awards offers an opportunity to demonstrate a genuine commitment to women's leadership, equality of opportunity and community impact, while engaging with an international network of professionals, entrepreneurs and decision-makers.

Proposed sponsorship opportunities include:
- Gold Partnership – £2,000
- Silver Partnership – £1,000
- Bronze Partnership – £500

The sponsorship packages offer varying opportunities for brand visibility, magazine advertising and attendance at the proposed celebration.

Beyond commercial exposure, IGC hopes to develop lasting relationships with organisations that recognise the importance of investing in people.





PinkDrive: Bridging the Gap, Prolonging Lives

A journey of compassion, courage and commitment to making healthcare accessible to all, and how one South African woman put cancer screening on wheels.

Noelene Kotschan

When care comes to you

SOME JOURNEYS BEGIN with a plan. Others begin with a passion, a personal conviction and the determination to make a difference. PinkDrive's story is one of the latter.

In January 2026, Tygerberg Hospital in Cape Town faced a problem every public hospital dreads. Its mammography system was being replaced, and the women who depended on it had nowhere else to go. So a pink truck pulled into the hospital grounds and kept the screenings running.

That truck belongs to PinkDrive, the South African non-profit that has spent almost two decades taking cancer screening to the people least likely to reach it on their own. Its guiding message is a single sentence: early detection will help prolong a life.

The idea is simple. The execution, across one of the world's most unequal health landscapes, is anything but.

A belief that became a movement

Noelene Kotschan founded PinkDrive in 2009 on a simple but powerful belief: healthcare is a right, not a privilege. Where you live, what you earn or whether you have medical aid should never decide whether you can reach potentially life-saving cancer screening.



The need was stark. In much of the country, a woman with a lump in her breast faces long distances, long queues and little information. As PinkDrive puts it, the greatest barrier for many South Africans is rarely a lack of willingness to be screened. It is the absence of accessible facilities, resources and opportunities.

PinkDrive moved fast to close that gap. By 2012, only three years in, two pink mammography trucks carrying digital X-ray equipment were already rotating through 108 clinics in Gauteng, the country's most densely populated province. They had reached close to 50,000 people and screened 4,395 women.

What began as a breast cancer awareness initiative has since grown into one of South Africa's most recognised mobile cancer awareness and early detection organisations. The values Kotschan wrote into it read like a leadership charter: integrity, accountability, discipline, passionate giving, teamwork and open-mindedness.

Healthcare is a right, not a privilege.



Healthcare on wheels

PinkDrive takes healthcare beyond traditional medical facilities. Its specially equipped mobile units and clinical outreach programmes reach underserved and medically uninsured communities across South Africa, delivering education, screening and referrals where people live and work.

Certified medical and nursing practitioners offer cost-free services that include:

- **Clinical breast examinations** for women and men, paired with one-on-one teaching on self-examination.
- **Mammography**, mainly for women over 40 or those referred by a doctor.
- **Pap smears and HPV screening** to detect cervical cancer risk early.
- **PSA testing** for prostate cancer in men, through the More Balls Than Most programme.

The organisation also raises awareness of skin cancer, lung health, tuberculosis and other important health concerns. Yet PinkDrive has always been about more than the services it delivers. Its work is rooted in dignity, accessibility, education and giving people the opportunity to take responsibility for their own health.

The model works hand in hand with the public system. In Tshwane, a partnership that began in 2017 was renewed in 2024, committing PinkDrive to 25 free mammograms per visit and breast cancer education at 12 municipal clinics. Patients see their local clinic first and are referred to a scheduled PinkDrive service point when needed. That same flexibility is what put a mobile mammography unit at Tygerberg Hospital in early 2026.

Impact you can count

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among South African women. Kotschan cites an estimate that one in every 28 will be diagnosed in her lifetime, and she pairs it with the line that drives the whole organisation: caught early, it can be treated.

Over the years, PinkDrive has reached hundreds of thousands of people through screening and awareness initiatives and facilitated patient referrals for further care. Its published figures show how far the trucks have travelled since those first 4,395 mammograms in 2012.

PINKDRIVE BY THE NUMBERS

Service	Oct 2021	Apr 2024
Free mammograms	22,380	26,705
Clinical breast examinations	152,747	433,674+
Pap smears	—	10,669
PSA tests (prostate)	16,012	20,231
People educated on early detection	468,843	500,000+

2021 education figure combines 425,809 women on breast health and 43,034 men on prostate cancer. Sources: Top Women (Oct 2021); Pretoria News (Apr 2024).

None of this happens alone. PinkDrive has built partnerships with corporates, healthcare professionals, government departments, suppliers, volunteers and community organisations, all of whom its belief that access to healthcare should never be determined by financial circumstances.

The woman behind the wheel

As Founder and CEO of PinkDrive NPC, Noelene Kotschan has grown a small awareness initiative into a nationally respected mobile healthcare organisation offering cancer awareness, early detection, screening and patient support. Her expertise spans executive leadership, strategic partnerships, stakeholder engagement, resource mobilisation and organisational development, and she has built col-



laborations across government, healthcare, corporate and international sectors.

The world has noticed. When she was named Social Impact Influencer of the Year at the FLUXX Awards in Doha in October 2025, South Africa's Deputy Minister of Health, Dr Joe Phaahla, commended her contribution and reaffirmed the Department of Health's commitment to working with PinkDrive. Kotschan accepted it as a team prize, dedicating it to every healthcare worker, partner, sponsor and community member who stands with PinkDrive.

For Kotschan, the journey has never been about recognition or accolades. It has always been about the people behind the statistics: the woman receiving her first mammogram, the individual referred for further investigation and the family whose lives may be changed through an early diagnosis.

The leadership lens: resilience on the road

PinkDrive's story reads as a living case study in resilient leadership, and the qualities behind it are worth naming.

Kotschan knows exactly what PinkDrive exists to do, and she keeps the organisation anchored there. Every award that has come her way, she has handed back to her team, a leader secure enough in her purpose to share the spotlight.

"No woman left behind" is a promise PinkDrive acts on every day by taking care to the women who cannot take time off, pay for transport or afford private screening. Its chairperson, Bongumusa Makhatini, names Kotschan's compassion and determination as the forces shaping the mission.

The organisation also kept asking who else was being missed. A breast cancer project grew to include cervical and HPV screening, and its More Balls Than Most programme brought prostate testing to men, turning a single service into a family health movement. And it has done this without direct government fund-



ing. Every cost-free screening depends on corporate partnerships, donations, fundraising and individuals who believe in the mission. After almost two decades, the commitment remains unwavering: when PinkDrive commits to a community, it finds a way to deliver. When a hospital lost its mammography machine, a truck simply drove in.

For leaders everywhere, the lesson is clear. Purpose becomes impact when it is carried to people where they are.

Join the PinkDrive movement

Every contribution, regardless of its size, helps bring screening closer to someone who needs it. In 2026,

Behind every screening is a person.

the Totalsports Women's Race named PinkDrive its official charity again across Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg, and fundraisers such as Durban's Hope Blooms High Tea are helping pay for a new mammogram truck. There is a role for every IGC reader:

- Corporates can support PinkDrive through sponsorships, CSI initiatives and employee wellness programmes.
- Individuals can donate, fundraise or volunteer.
- Healthcare professionals and suppliers can contribute their expertise, equipment and services.
- Everyone can get screened, bring someone with them and share the message that early detection can help prolong a life.

JOIN THE PINKDRIVE MOVEMENT

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PinkDrive's message is simple. We cannot prevent every cancer diagnosis, but together we can improve access to early detection, education and screening, and help prolong lives.

Behind every screening is a person. Behind every referral is a potential life-changing intervention. And behind every partnership is an opportunity to reach someone who might otherwise have been left behind. One community, and one life, at a time.

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RECOGNITION

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Africa and North America Build a New Professional Learning Bridge Through USAFI–PECB Partnership.

Gebreegziabher Tadele

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Gebreegziabher Tadele is a sport journalist from Tigray Television,Tigray,Ethiopia. He has more than 12 years of experience. He certified by World Athletics, FIFa, and participated in difference organizations. He is also a global peace ambassador that certified by Institute for Economics and Peace, Global Peace Chain ambassador,UNPAF and received more 130 international certificates.

A strategic collaboration between US Africa Initiatives and PECB seeks to connect African institutions, professionals and universities with internationally recognized professional training, certification and standards-based expertise from North America.

A new strategic partnership between US Africa Initiatives, LLC (USAFI) and PECB is creating a platform aimed at strengthening professional capacity and institutional development across Africa while deepening connections with North American expertise.

The collaboration brings together USAFI's institutional networks and capacity-building experience with PECB's professional certification programs in areas including artificial intelligence management, information security, quality management and auditing.

At the center of the partnership is a shared focus on preparing professionals and institutions for an increasingly complex global economy—one shaped by artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital transformation, changing quality expectations and evolving

international standards.

Building capacity across continents
The partnership is designed to go beyond individual professional certificates. Its broader ambition is to connect professional development with workforce readiness, institutional strengthening and higher education.

Organizations across Africa increasingly require professionals who can translate international standards into practical organizational systems. Through the partnership, universities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, public institutions and emerging leaders can gain access to professional learning linked to internationally recognized standards.

USAFI envisions this as a professional-learning bridge between North America and Africa, helping connect expertise, education and workforce development across the two regions.

The partnership's initial institutional and regional relationships include organizations in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Ghana and Kenya, with references to Addis Ababa University, the University of Juba, Pentecost University, USIU/Kenya, tuiFUND and USAFI's regional hubs.

Responsible artificial intelligence becomes a priority
Artificial intelligence represents one of the partnership's immediate areas of focus.

USAFI's participation in PECB-certified Artificial Intelligence Management training in Toronto reflects the growing need for organizations to understand not only how to use AI, but also how to manage its risks and responsibilities.

One of the partnership's initial areas of focus is ISO/IEC 42001, an international standard for establishing, implementing, maintaining and continually improving an Artificial Intelligence Management System within an organization.

The framework addresses organizational approaches to responsible AI, including issues such as fairness, transparency, accountability and privacy.

For African institutions, the relevance is broad. AI is increasingly entering education, financial services, healthcare, government, business, development organizations and entrepreneurship. This creates demand for professionals who can connect technological innovation with governance, risk management and organizational accountability.

Beyond AI: security and quality
The USAFI-PECB collaboration is not limited to artificial intelligence.

Initial training areas also include ISO/IEC 27001, focused on Information Security Management Systems, and ISO 9001, focused on Quality Management Systems.



PECB Certified Artificial Intelligence Management training in Toronto, Canada. The training experience illustrates the professional-learning bridge USAFI seeks to expand through its partnership with PECB.

Together, these areas address three closely connected institutional priorities: responsible technology management, information security and organizational quality.

PECB's professional pathways cover different levels of responsibility, ranging from foundation-level learning to Lead Implementer and Lead Auditor programs. This creates potential learning pathways for students, emerging professionals, managers, technical specialists, organizational leaders and auditors.

Connecting universities with employers
A distinctive element of the collaboration is its potential

connection with universities and academic institutions.

USAFI is exploring ways to integrate specialized PECB professional training into university environments, allowing academic education to be complemented by competencies associated with international standards and changing industry requirements.

The concept addresses a longstanding transition between education and employment.
University education provides intellectual and disciplinary foundations, while professional certification can add applied knowledge connected to specific standards, systems and organizational responsibilities.

For students and early-career professionals, this model could provide additional opportunities to develop practical competencies alongside academic qualifications.

For employers, it creates a potential pathway toward a workforce familiar with international standards and contemporary organizational requirements.

From individual certification to institutional capacity
The longer-term significance of the partnership extends beyond the number of people who complete training.

A professional trained in AI management, for example, can contribute to stronger organizational governance. An information-security professional can support risk management and the protection of digital assets. Quality-management expertise can contribute to improved processes, accountability and service delivery.

In this sense, professional development becomes a tool for institutional capacity-building.

The partnership connects individual career development with organizational performance and broader workforce readiness. Rather than treating certification as an end in itself, the collaboration seeks to translate professional learning into practical institutional capabilities.

A North America-Africa learning bridge
The USAFI-PECB partnership also reflects a broader effort to strengthen professional and knowledge connections between North America and Africa.

Its success will depend on more than simply making training programs available. It will require strong institutional partnerships, understanding local workforce needs, accessible delivery models and the ability to connect professional learning with real organizational challenges.

The Toronto AI management training represents an early step in this process, providing USAFI with direct exposure to PECB's approach while helping inform how future programs can be developed for universities, organizations, professionals and emerging leaders across USAFI's networks.

As implementation develops, USAFI expects to provide additional information on training schedules, enrollment opportunities, institutional partnerships and geographic expansion.

Toward a more connected professional future
The collaboration comes at a time when Africa's professional landscape is increasingly connected to global standards, digital transformation and international markets.

For African institutions, access to professional learning in areas such as AI governance, cybersecurity and quality management can support efforts to strengthen organizational systems and prepare professionals for emerging demands.

For North American institutions and professional networks, deeper engagement with African universities, businesses and organizations provides opportunities to expand knowledge exchange and build long-term institutional relationships.

Ultimately, the USAFI-PECB partnership represents an effort to build a two-way learning bridge—linking North American professional expertise with African institutional needs, while creating opportunities for professionals and organizations on both sides to participate in a rapidly changing global economy.

Its central proposition is straightforward: when professional knowledge crosses borders and becomes embedded in institutions, certification can become more than an individual achievement—it can become a pathway to stronger organizations, stronger workforces and deeper Africa-North America cooperation.



The World We Create

Dr. John Harrison

About the Author:
M.Ed./ MBA/ Doctorate in Divinity
Education,Architect, Philosopher, Polymath, Author, Humanitarian, Counselor and a Servant Leader

Every human is born with an innate ability to create, in a state of unlimited potential. This potential is one of purity, vibrancy and expansiveness and needs to be curated, carved and nurtured every day. This potential is limitless because humans are spiritual beings who've been created in the image of God, in His likeness and for His pleasure. We are the only living beings on earth who are spiritual and blessed with a spirit. Everything spiritual is boundless. For example a new born baby is the purest form of divinity. This unbounded nature, deeply rooted and complimented by a philosophical mind, helps and enables us to retain and unravel our illimitable potential in our capability and power to create. However, this

"We are here to Thrive and simply NOT survive"

dynamic and exponential vibrancy could become muted and eventually die if not taken care of and this is what usually happens. We make the mistake to limit and restrict the very potential we should foster because we end up developing our outer or external world (outer being) rather than our inner world (inner being). Our inner unseen self is more powerful than our outer self which can be seen. For example a tree always grows in 2 directions. It grows down (unseen) and it grows up (seen). The unseen part is the root system and the seen part is the fruit system. How fruitful our life is all depends on our root system (values, wisdom, intellect, ethos, philosophy, mindset, self belief, etc.). How strong or how big the tree is above the ground all depends on how deep and strong the roots are. And especially the growth which happens in the dark (unseen self) is more meaningful, precious, worthy, long lasting than the one which can be witnessed by all (our physical, earthly and materialistic growth). The depth and growth which happens in the dark ensures how much we grow in the light (world).

In a world where we can really thrive, we simply survive.
What are we creating?

Humans actually have the power to create their own future. It's in our hands what sort of a world we want for ourselves. The words we speak, which express our thought process and emotions, have the power of life and death in them. Words are the architect of our future. Every spoken word is like a pen, use it wisely to write our own destiny or perhaps like the rudder of a ship which controls and steers us in the direction we are going in. The tongue is the gateway to our destiny. What we speak and proclaim is what we invite in our lives. You can't be talking like a slave and expect people to treat you like a king.

What are we inviting in our life? **Eventually what**



we invite is what we'll create.

We have the power to change. We have the power to create. Let's not limit or restrict ourselves.

Are we intellectually active? Does our intrinsic nature motivate us, inspire us, and empower us, bringing in positivity and strength?

Who are we?
We are **"Unlimited Beings"** having **"Unlimited Potential"**, why do we forget?

Once we've found and discovered our "real" self, lets unlock the potential of others by helping them in finding their purpose in life and giving it a significant meaning.

The world we create is in our own hands, let's make it beautiful.

WHY to simply survive when we can thrive.



Navigating the Polycrisis: Strategic Governance, ESG Integration, and the New Era of Institutional Leadership

Mauro V. Polticchia

About the Author:
Mauro V. Polticchia is a Global Leader and Senior Executive with over thirty years of experience in corporate and education governance, institutional relations, and ESG strategies. An officially accredited Global Expert Reviewer by the Americas Accreditation Council (AAC), he serves on international advisory panels driving cross-sectoral sustainable development.

In an era defined by unprecedented geopolitical shifts, ecosystem instability, and socio-economic transitions, the traditional paradigms of business and institutional management are no longer sufficient. We are living through a "polycrisis"—a web of interconnected challenges where environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and systemic inequalities amplify one another. To navigate this landscape, global leadership must evolve. It requires a highly innovative approach—one that is unfortunately rare today—capable of creating a perfect synthesis between short-term tactics and long-term strategy, seamlessly merging executive excellence with global diplomacy and sustainability.

At the core of this evolutionary shift are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which serve as a rigorous macro-economic framework for building resilience within complex systems worldwide. In these domains, sustainable governance is no longer an isolated regulatory compliance metric; it is a fundamental pillar for mitigating operational risks and protecting long-term organizational value. True innovation lies in the ability

"Preserving the empirical rigor and scientific truth of emerging methodologies serves as the vanguard for real-world application."

to orchestrate cross-sectoral partnerships, bridging the gap between high-level institutional policies and concrete on-the-ground execution, consistently guided by the principles of integrity and truth.

However, structural transformation cannot occur without a profound shift in leadership models. The modern institutional landscape demands a new, vanguard profile: the Ecosystemic Leader. This role requires managing complex, multi-stakeholder environments where organizational interests, governmental regulations, and civil society intersect. Translating high-level objectives into a vision strictly anchored in reality means mastering Strategic Influence and Executive Alignment—essential tools for fostering cohesion, building trust, and driving behavioral change across diverse cultural and geopolitical boundaries. Leadership is no longer just about directing internal resources; it is about building consensus across vast global networks.

The effectiveness of this approach does not rely on theoretical abstractions; it is firmly grounded in an extensive portfolio of field-tested case studies developed over more than three decades of executive experience. This empirical perspective highlights a critical systemic challenge today: the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria must penetrate the actual operational and financial DNA of organizations. Authentic ESG alignment rejects the asymmetries between formal reporting and managerial reality; instead, it demands a clear vision where strategic planning is intrinsically linked to both societal impact and financial viability, ensuring concrete resource allocation. By empowering individuals and building capacity from the ground up, institutions can cultivate structural resilience from the inside out.

Looking ahead, the responsibility of international reviewers becomes increasingly vital. Preserving the empirical rigor and scientific truth of emerging methodologies serves as the vanguard for real-world application. The current historical moment tests the resilience of our global structures. To achieve concrete milestones, leaders must move past formal commitments. We need an authentic convergence of institutional diplomacy, robust governance, and a steadfast dedication, rooted in integrity, toward human and environmental equity. Only through this unified, high-level approach can we turn systemic vulnerabilities into a resilient, sustainable, and shared global future.





Hire AI Like You'd Hire a Person

Cynthia Lai

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Cynthia Lai helps senior leaders, founders, and boards turn change, AI included, into systems that last. Former banking Executive Director, ICF-accredited (PCC) coach, Chartered Governance Professional, and Doctoral Student. cynthia@cynthialai.com

Many leaders aren't afraid of AI. They're stuck on where to start.

A senior executive came to me with exactly this problem. Her team was waiting for her to lead an AI-enabled change. She had no idea where to begin, and felt trapped, confused, and quietly behind.

I didn't hand her a tool list. I asked her to zoom out: "If you were bringing in a new hire, or a project manager for this initiative, what would you do first?"

She answered in seconds. Define the role. Decide what they own and what they don't. Check in often. Coach them. Then she paused. "I haven't done any of that with AI."

That pause is the shift. AI isn't a switch to flip. It's a new hire who needs a job description, boundaries, and a manager.

It also changed where she started. Before choosing any tool, she had to decide what she wanted help with. When she didn't know what to ask, she did what she would with a new colleague: ask the AI what it can do for her.

From insight to habit

An insight fades by Friday, so we turned it into a system. I call it ACT with STEP: Action, Cue, Track. The action has four steps:

- **Select** one small, repeatable task to start with.
- **Trace** the steps you take on autopilot.
- **Edit just one**: stop it, start something new, or continue what works.
- **Practise** the change for seven days, then adjust.

Then add a cue to prompt it and a way to track it, so autopilot can't quietly take over.

> *"Delegate without a clear brief and you get rework. Brief AI badly, and you will redo its work too."*

She chose one simple task and drew her line: what AI does, and what stays with her and her team. Her cue was a 30-minute block in her calendar every day, starting the next afternoon, to build it in small steps and adjust as she went.

The block was also her tracker: if she skipped a day, she deleted it, so the calendar always told the truth.

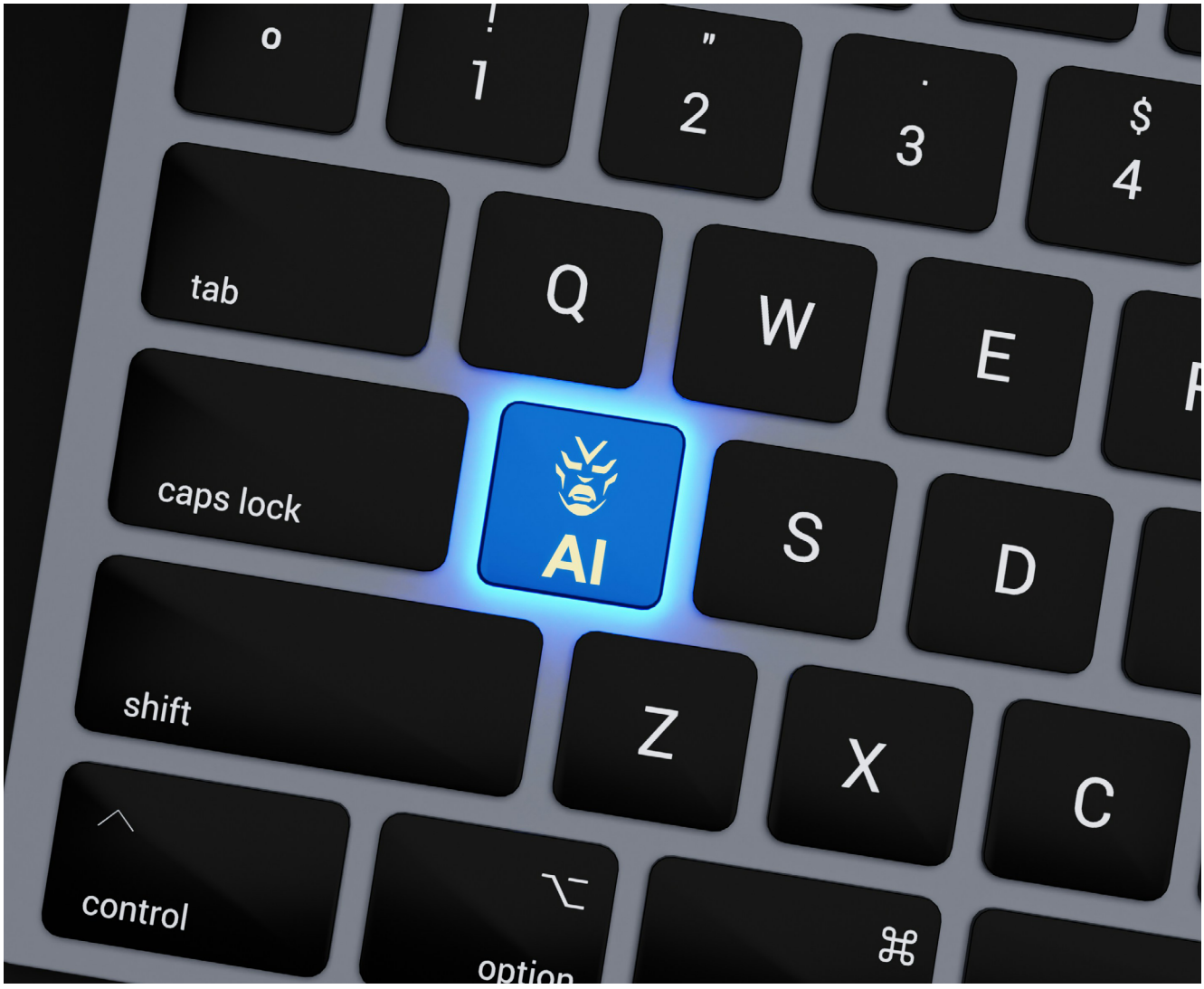
She asked the team member strongest in AI to co-build it with her. Two months later, the block is still there.

Where this comes from
I learned delegation through trial and error. I spent nearly 20 years in senior banking at HSBC, OCBC, and Bank of China, rising to Executive Director. It is one of the most important and hardest skills to master. Delegate without a clear brief and you get rework. Brief AI badly, and you will redo its work too.

How I help
People come to me in transition, unsure what's next or how to lead a change they have never led. We zoom out, find the real question, and build a system that makes the answer repeatable. They leave with a plan, and the confidence to keep moving.

Banking taught me how regulated institutions decide under pressure. Coaching taught me to ask before telling. I now research how leaders govern when AI sits between them and their teams, and the logic is the same in the boardroom: clear roles, boundaries, and oversight, whether the new team member is human or not.

Try it this week. Pick one task you do daily or weekly. Change one step. Test it for seven days. Your first step is probably smaller than you think.





Empowering Women for Peace and Justice: No Woman Should Be Left Behind. A Call to Turn Gender Equality into Action

Dr.Seyed Firdawoosbee Hanifdeen

About the Author:
H.E. Hajiani Ambassador Dr. Seyed Firdawooshee Hanifdeen is Founder and President of Global United for Peace and Justice (GUPJ), advocating for peace, social service, women's empowerment and human rights, ensuring no woman is left behind.

A girl's future should never be determined by her gender. No woman should be denied an education, an opportunity, a leadership position or the freedom to live with dignity simply because she is a woman. Gender equality must be more than words in international declarations. It must become a reality in every home, workplace, community and country.

As a social service activist for more than fifty years, I have learned that justice cannot exist where women are silenced, abused, economically dependent or denied equal opportunities. Sustainable Development Goal 5 calls for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. SDG 16 calls for peaceful, just and inclusive societies. Neither goal can be achieved while discrimination and injustice remain part of everyday life.

My commitment to humanity began in childhood. My father, who served in the military medical service, my grandmother, other family members and my teachers taught me the importance of compassion, fairness and respect for others. Their example helped shape my belief that every human being deserves dignity and that injustice must never be accepted simply because it has become customary.

In the early 1980 s, I participated in a Women's Day procession in Colombo. I remember police attempting to stop our peaceful procession and take our banner. I recall witnessing women activists being confronted, including one who was pushed to the ground. That ex-



In the 1980s, I joined women's collective action in Sri Lanka, marking a significant chapter in my lifelong commitment to social activism and women's empowerment.

perience strengthened my conviction that women must have the freedom to speak, organise and peacefully demand justice. Their voices must never be treated as a threat.

I also faced pressure in my working life after participating ino trade-union activities. When I was transferred away from Colombo, I continued working and standing up for workers' rights. I understood that a woman should not have to surrender her livelihood or her principles because she speaks out against unfairness. These experiences reinforced my belief that empowerment requires courage, independence and the protection of fundamental rights.



1970's historical photograph of Dr Hanifdeen (left) and her friend confirms that, as in other developing nations, Sri Lankan girls had access to education, empowering women through learning.

Education is power. Skills create opportunity. Knowledge of the law builds confidence. Economic independence protects dignity. Every girl deserves quality education, and every woman deserves opportunities to develop professional and practical skills. Whether through technology, office work, crafts, sewing, cooking or another occupation, women should have the means to earn a living and build a secure future. If one opportunity disappears, another skill can open a new door.

Women must also understand their legal rights, recognize discrimination and abuse, and know where to seek help. But responsibility cannot rest on women alone. Governments must enforce laws fairly. Employers must provide equal opportunities, fair wages and safe working conditions. Police and public institutions must protect victims without favouring the powerful. Men, boys, families and communities must challenge attitudes that excuse discrimination and violence.

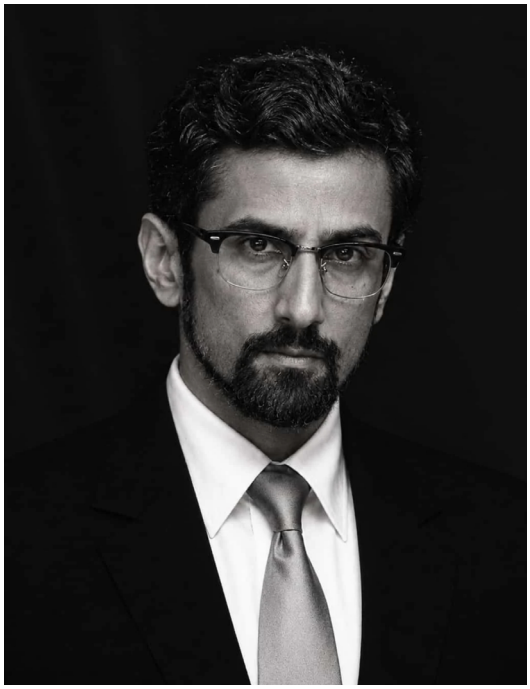
Women help sustain Sri Lanka's economy through overseas employment, plantations and garment factories. Their contribution deserves more than praise. It demands fair compensation, social protection, safe accommodation, healthcare and respect. No woman who helps support a nation's economy should be treated as though her dignity matters less than anyone else's.

To every woman who has been told that she is incapable, that her dreams are too ambitious, or that she must remain silent: your voice matters, your rights matter, and your future matters. Learn, develop your skills, understand your rights and support other women. Stand firm against injustice through peaceful and determined action. Empowerment is not about dominating others; it is about having the freedom and strength to live with dignity while respecting the dignity of others.

The world does not need more promises about equality. It needs action. Let us build a society in which no girl is considered less valuable than a boy, no woman is punished for speaking out, and no victim is denied justice because of poverty or social status. Peace and justice will become real only when women and girls can live safely, freely and equally.

When women rise with knowledge, courage and opportunity, society rises with them. Gender equality is not a favour to women. It is a responsibility to humanity.

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Beyond Success: Finding Purpose in the Stories We Tell

Bivas Ambasada FRSA

About the Author:
Bivas Ambasada FRSA is a British film executive producer, investor and founder of Ambasada Films, specialising in international film finance, co-productions and socially impactful storytelling. Credits include His'Story and The Force: The Michael Watson Story.

Throughout my career across film, entrepreneurship and civic life, I have come to believe that success should be measured not only by what we build, but by what we contribute to others.

My work in film has given me the opportunity to explore stories that reach beyond entertainment. In His'Story, which examines youth culture and knife crime in London, I was reminded that behind every headline is a human story. Young people are shaped by their circumstances, their opportunities, their families and communities, but also by the choices they make and the support they receive.

Stories can challenge assumptions, encourage understanding and create space for conversations that might otherwise never happen. They cannot solve every social problem, but they can help us see people differently, and sometimes that is where change begins.

This connects closely with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly quality education, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, and strong institutions. These goals are ambitious, but their achievement depends on the everyday decisions of individuals, businesses, educators, charities and communities. Progress requires more than policy; it requires participation.
As a film executive producer, investor and director, I have also learned that investment carries responsibilities beyond financial returns. The creative industries can generate employment, develop skills, preserve cultural identity and give a voice to people whose experiences might otherwise be overlooked. Projects such as The Force: The Michael Watson Story, which tells the story of British boxer Michael Watson, offer an opportunity to explore courage, resilience and the determination to seek justice in the face of adversity.

My civic involvement has reinforced another important lesson: lasting progress depends on trust, collaboration and a willingness to serve something larger than ourselves. Whether in business, the arts or civic institutions, meaningful change rarely happens in isolation. It comes when people bring different experiences and perspectives together around a shared purpose.

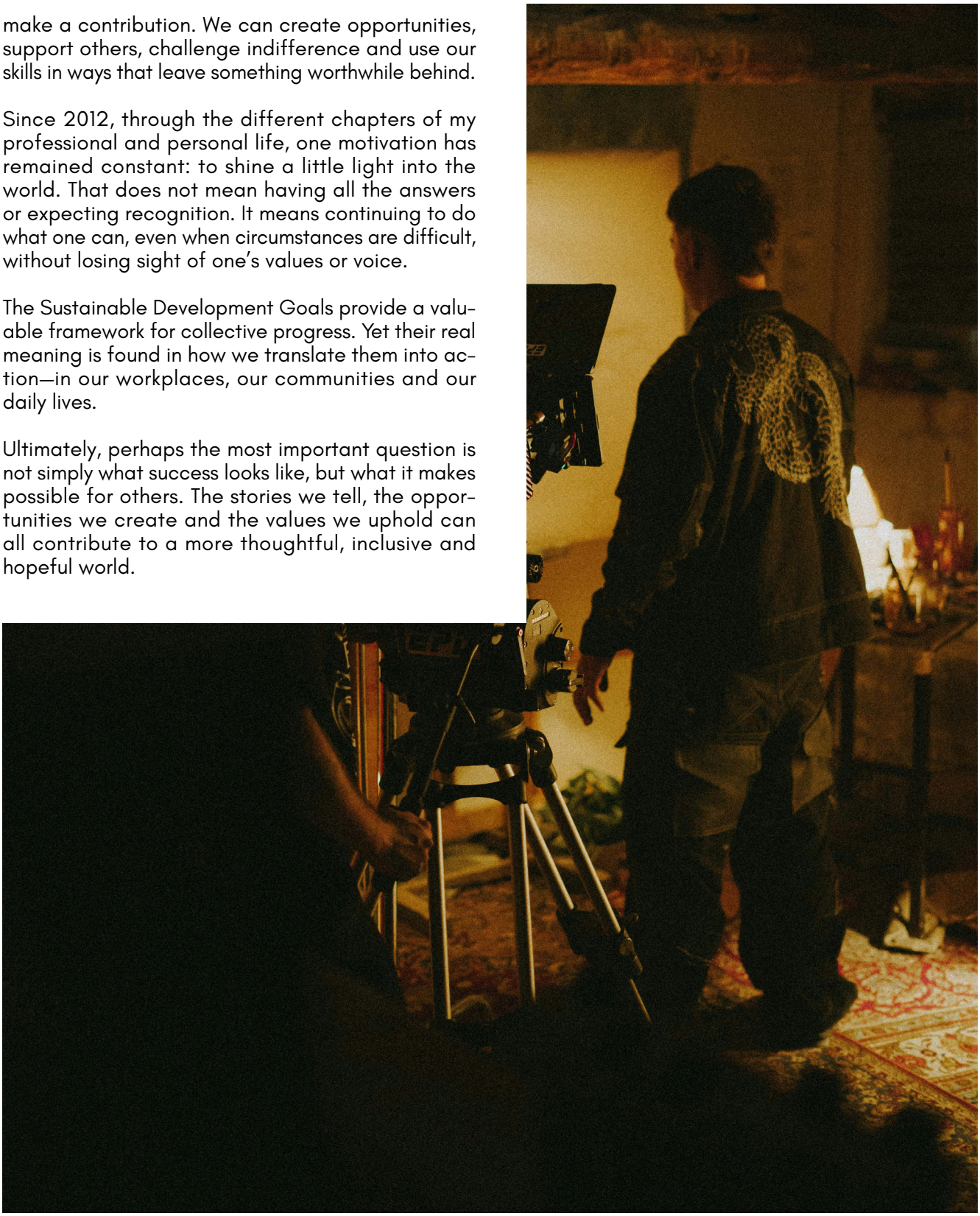
I do not believe any one person, film or organisation can transform the world alone. But each of us can

make a contribution. We can create opportunities, support others, challenge indifference and use our skills in ways that leave something worthwhile behind.

Since 2012, through the different chapters of my professional and personal life, one motivation has remained constant: to shine a little light into the world. That does not mean having all the answers or expecting recognition. It means continuing to do what one can, even when circumstances are difficult, without losing sight of one's values or voice.

The Sustainable Development Goals provide a valuable framework for collective progress. Yet their real meaning is found in how we translate them into action—in our workplaces, our communities and our daily lives.

Ultimately, perhaps the most important question is not simply what success looks like, but what it makes possible for others. The stories we tell, the opportunities we create and the values we uphold can all contribute to a more thoughtful, inclusive and hopeful world.





CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION: A WOMEN'S HEALTH PRIORITY FOR ACHIEVING SDG 3.

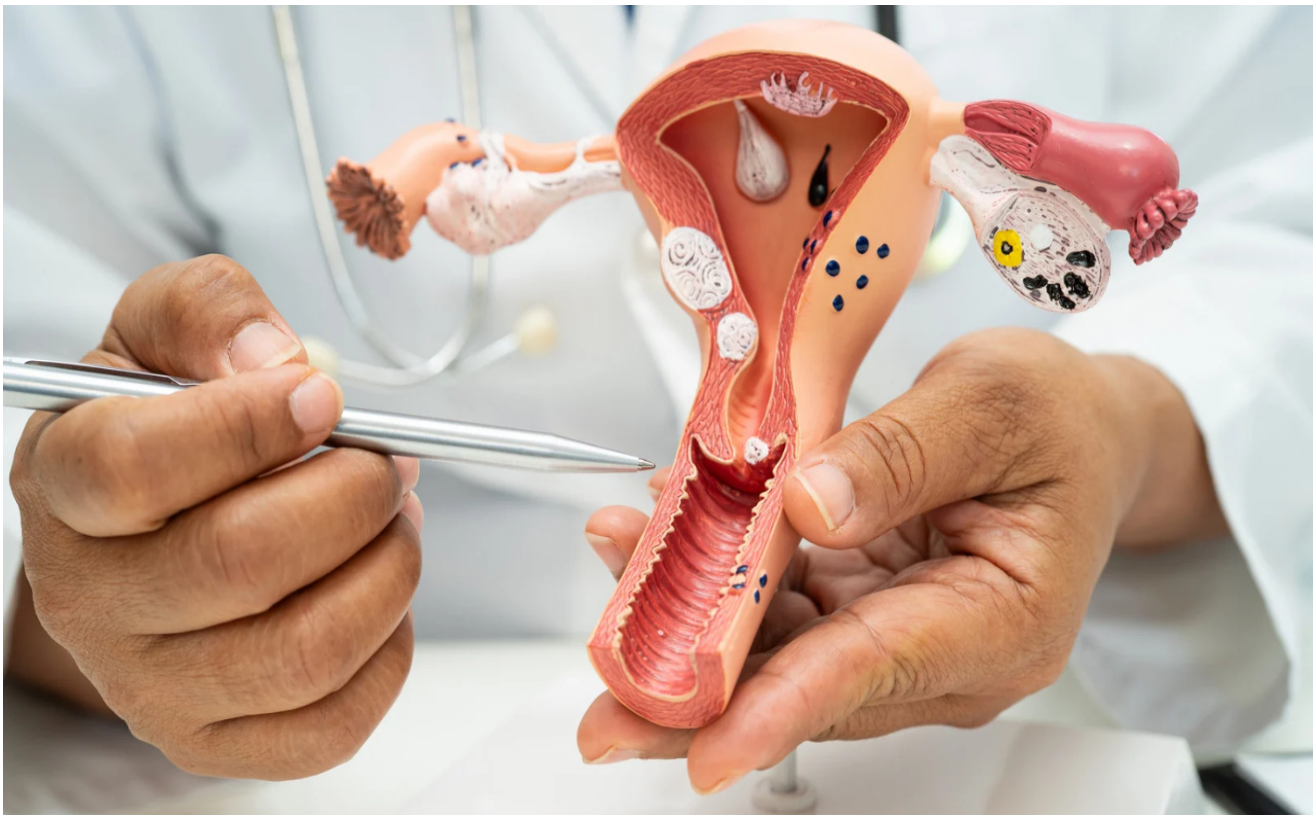
Anomnuba Chiamaka Esther

About the Author:
Anomnuba Chiamaka Esther, a nursing student at the University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, and a health writer focused on women's health, public health, and disease prevention, turning complex health evidence into accessible, practical guidance.

Despite being largely preventable, cervical cancer remains a major global health challenge responsible for significant illness and mortality. The primary driver is long term infection from high risk variants of the human papilloma virus (HPV), a widespread sexually transmitted pathogen (World Health Organization [WHO], 2026). Consequently, tackling cervical cancer is a critical step toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aims to secure health and wellbeing for everyone across all life stages (United Nations, 2026).

Globally, cervical cancer ranks as the fifth most frequent cancer in women, accounting for approximately 604,000 new diagnoses and 280,000 fatalities in 2024 (WHO,2026). This disease burden is distributed inequitably, with peak incidence and mortality rates concentrated in low and middle income regions where access to HPV immunization, screening and therapeutic services remains scarce (WHO, 2026). Furthermore, women living with HIV face heightened vulnerability, exhibiting a six fold increase in cervical cancer risk compared to HIV negative women (UNAIDS, 2022). Collectively, these disparities highlight that mitigating cervical cancer extends beyond clinical intervention to encompass broader public health and equity imperatives.

As a primary preventive intervention, the administration of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine to girls aged 9 to 14 serves as a highly effective measure against HPV infection, cervical malignancy, and other related cancers (WHO, 2026). Specifically, the vaccine targets high risk strains 16 and 18, which are responsible for roughly 76% of all cervical cancer cases (WHO, 2026). Initiating vaccination prior to sexual debut yields optimal protection and progressively lowers community level virus transmission over time. The secondary prevention strategy involves routine cervical screening, which enables the detection and



timely management of precancerous cervical lesions before they progress to malignancy (WHO, 2026). Current guidelines advise initiating screening at age 30 for the general female population, whereas women with HIV are recommended to start at age 23 due to their elevated suspectibility (WHO, 2026). Furthermore, periodic screening remains imperative even for vaccinated individuals, as immunization does not guard against all oncogenic HPV strains.

To eradicate cervical cancer as a public health threat, the WHO has established the 2030 global 90-70-90 targets: achieving full HPV vaccination for 90% of girls by age 15, high performance screening for 70% of women by ages 35 and 45, and appropriate treatment for 90% of individuals diagnosed with percutaneous lesions or invasive cancer (WHO, 2026). These benchmarks directly reinforce Sustainable Development Goal 3, particularly its commitment to universal health coverage alongside accessible, high quality care (United Nations, 2026).

In conclusion, mitigating cervical cancer represents a tangible strategy for safeguarding women's health equity. Governments must scale up vaccination, strengthen screening, improve treatment access and integrate care into primary healthcare systems. Simultaneously, communities and healthcare professionals must foster awareness, dismantle stigma, and promote early detection. Through vaccination, screening and prompt intervention, most cases can be averted, saving lives and promoting health equity for women and girls (WHO, 2026).

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Important Dates of October:

- **4 October:** World Animal Day

- **5 October:** World Teachers' Day, World Habitat Day

- **9 October:** World Post Day

- **10 October:** World Mental Health Day

- **16 October:** World Food Day

- **24 October:** United Nations Day



World Teachers' Day: More Than Lessons in a Classroom

5 October

"A teacher may teach a lesson in a day, but the impact of good teaching can stay with us for a lifetime."

Teachers are often among the first people outside our families to notice our strengths and encourage us to develop them. They guide us through challenges, answer countless questions and create spaces where young people can learn from both success and failure.

Today's teachers also work in a rapidly changing world. Technology has transformed the classroom, while students have different learning styles, experiences and needs. Alongside teaching academic subjects, educators often help students develop communication, creativity, confidence and the ability to work with others.

But teaching is not only about what happens inside a classroom. Teachers can become mentors, role models and trusted adults. A simple conversation or a few encouraging words at the right moment can sometimes stay with a person for decades.

World Teachers' Day is also an opportunity to think about the value of education itself. Access to quality education can open doors, create opportunities and help communities grow. Behind that opportunity are teachers who dedicate their time, knowledge and energy to helping others move forward.

If there is a teacher who made a difference in your life, this could be the perfect day to let them know.

Send a message. Make a phone call. Share a memory. Say thank you. Because while lessons may eventually fade from memory, **the feeling of being encouraged, understood and believed in can remain for years.**

This World Teachers' Day, let's celebrate every teacher who has helped someone take their next step.

World Mental Health Day: Give Your Mind the Same Care

10 October

We often ask someone how their day is going, but how often do we genuinely ask, **"How are you really feeling?"**

Modern life can be demanding. Work, family responsibilities, relationships, financial concerns and constant digital connection can leave little time to pause. Sometimes we continue with our daily routines

"Looking after your mental wellbeing is not a sign that you are struggling; it is a way of giving yourself the care you deserve."

even when we are mentally exhausted.
Mental wellbeing can look different for everyone. For one person, it may mean taking a quiet walk after work. For another, it could mean talking to a friend, spending time with family, practising mindfulness, getting enough sleep or simply taking a break from social media.

There is no single formula for feeling well all the time. Difficult emotions are a normal part of being human. The important thing is not to ignore them when they become difficult to manage.

One of the simplest things we can do is create more space for honest conversations. Listening without immediately judging, comparing or trying to "fix" someone can make a person feel less alone.

And if someone needs professional support, asking for it is a positive step. Counsellors, therapists, doctors and other trained professionals can provide appropriate support when everyday coping strategies are not enough.

Mental health awareness is not only about talking when something goes wrong. It is also about building healthier habits before we reach that point.

Take regular breaks. Stay connected with people who make you feel comfortable. Give yourself time away from screens. Make room for activities you enjoy. And remember that rest is not wasted time.

Most importantly, be kind to yourself.

We may not always know what someone else is carrying behind a smile, just as others may not know what we are carrying.

This World Mental Health Day, let's make conversations about mental wellbeing more normal, more open and more compassionate.

Sometimes, simply asking "Are you okay?" — and genuinely listening to the answer — can be a meaningful place to start.



World Food Day: Every Meal Has a Story

16 October

Food is one of the few things that connects almost every part of our lives. It brings families together, carries traditions from one generation to another and plays an essential role in our health.

"When we value food, we also begin to value the people, resources and effort behind every meal."

Think about a simple meal at home. Before it reaches our plate, someone has grown the crops, cared for the land, transported the ingredients and prepared them. There are countless people and resources involved in something that may take only a few minutes to eat.



For many of us, food is part of our everyday routine. But access to nutritious and sufficient food is not equally secure for everyone. World Food Day provides an opportunity to reflect on food security and the importance of making nutritious food accessible to communities around the world.

It also encourages us to think about food waste.

We often buy more than we need, cook too much or forget about food stored at the back of the fridge. Individually, these actions may seem small, but reducing unnecessary waste can help us make better use of the resources that go into producing our food.

There are simple ways to start. Plan meals before shopping. Store food properly. Use leftovers creatively. Buy realistic quantities. Choose seasonal ingredients when possible.

Food also has an emotional and cultural side. A family recipe can carry memories. A particular smell can remind us of childhood. Sharing a meal can bring people together even when words are difficult.

That is why World Food Day is not simply about what we eat. It is also about **appreciation, access, responsibility and community.**

As we sit down for our next meal, it is worth taking a moment to appreciate what is on the plate — and to remember the people and natural resources that helped bring it there.

A healthier food future will require both larger changes and everyday choices.

Waste less. Appreciate more. Choose thoughtfully.

This World Food Day, let's remember that every meal has a story — and every one of us can play a small part in making that story better.

November 2026 Star Predictions

November brings opportunities for reflection, renewed motivation, and personal growth. The stars encourage you to welcome change, nurture meaningful relationships, and move towards your goals with patience. Here's what November may have in store for each zodiac sign.

Aries: Your energy and determination can help you make progress. Be patient with important decisions and focus on one goal at a time.

Taurus: This month encourages balance between personal comfort and new experiences. Pay attention to finances and make choices that support long-term stability.

Gemini: Fresh ideas and conversations may bring exciting opportunities. Stay open to learning, but take time to think before committing to new plans.

Cancer: Focus on emotional well-being and relationships. Spending time with loved ones and setting healthy boundaries can bring greater peace.

Leo: Your confidence and creativity may attract new possibilities. Take initiative while remaining open to feedback and collaboration.

Virgo: November is a good time to organise priorities and complete pending tasks. Avoid putting unnecessary pressure on yourself; steady progress matters.

Libra: Relationships may need extra attention. Honest conversations, patience, and understanding can help strengthen important connections.

Scorpio: This month encourages transformation and renewed focus. Release distractions, trust your abilities, and give meaningful goals your attention.

Sagittarius: A desire for adventure and learning may inspire you. Explore new experiences while keeping your responsibilities in balance.

Capricorn: Your hard work can bring encouraging results. Stay committed to your plans, but be willing to adjust your approach when needed.

Aquarius: New perspectives may lead to interesting opportunities. Share your ideas, connect with others, and make room for creative thinking.

Pisces: Give yourself time for reflection and creativity. Trust your intuition and focus on relationships and activities that bring genuine happiness.

November is a reminder that growth often begins with small, thoughtful choices. Stay open to change, appreciate the people around you, and keep moving forward with confidence. Every step can bring you closer to a more meaningful direction.

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