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Sunday Times

Business Day

# WOMEN

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2026

**INSIDE:**  
SOUTHERN AFRICA  
2025 WINNERS  
AND FINALISTS  
ANNOUNCED

CELEBRATING  
**20**  
YEARS

**Business Engage**



Africa & Middle East

## Gender Mainstreaming Awards

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# JOIN THE MOVEMENT

**R**eal change in business does not happen by accident. It happens when commitment is recognised, progress is measured and leadership is visible.

The Gender Mainstreaming Awards was established by Colleen Larsen, CE of Business Engage, to acknowledge private sector organisations and individuals who are actively advancing gender diversity, fostering inclusion and embedding a genuine sense of belonging into the mainstream of business. More than a recognition platform, the awards serve as a benchmark for meaningful transformation across the continent.

Organisations are invited to participate by submitting entries and nominating individuals who are driving change within their sectors. With categories that reflect different stages of the diversity journey, the awards recognise that progress looks different for every organisation. Whether you are laying the groundwork or building on years of deliberate effort, there is space to be acknowledged and challenged to go further.

While gender diversity remains an emerging focus in many markets, the need for action is clear. The awards provide an opportunity to reflect, learn and elevate transformation efforts through visibility and accountability.

Spanning East Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa, the Gender Mainstreaming Awards bring together leaders committed to shaping more inclusive workplaces and economies. Finalists are required to attend the awards events, reinforcing the importance of presence, dialogue and shared responsibility.

Transformation is a journey. Recognition is one way to accelerate it. ●

*Raina Julies*

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**GENDER  
MAINSTREAMING  
AWARDS**

ENTER HERE



CELEBRATING WOMEN

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# LEGACY IN MOTION

## WHY LEGACY IS NOT A DESTINATION, BUT A DAILY PRACTICE

There is a common misconception about legacy; that one day you arrive. That after years of work, sacrifice and perseverance, you cross an invisible line and can finally say: "This is my legacy". However, legacy does not work that way. By **COLLEEN LARSEN**, CE of Business Engage

Legacy is not a title conferred at the end of a career, nor is it defined by awards, milestones or moments of public recognition. Legacy is something much quieter and far more demanding. It is shaped daily through consistent choices, deliberate leadership and an unwavering commitment to purpose, even when no one is watching.

That belief sits at the heart of my book, *The Strelitzia Way*, and it is why I created *Legacy in Motion*, a series of leadership spotlights woven throughout the book. These stories are not included to honour completed journeys, but to recognise leaders who are crafting their legacy in real time.

### LEGACY IS BUILT IN MOTION, NOT IN RETROSPECT

When I founded Business Engage in 2005, I did not set out to build a legacy. I set out to solve a problem: how to meaningfully embed gender mainstreaming into the fabric of business, not as a compliance exercise, but as a strategic imperative.

What followed was not a linear ascent, but a long journey of learning, recalibrating and choosing to stay the course. Business Engage did not grow because of a single bold moment. It grew because of thousands of small, intentional decisions: showing up, building credibility, listening deeply and remaining anchored in purpose even when the road was uncertain.

Looking back now, I can see that legacy was being shaped all along through sustained commitment. That is precisely what I see reflected in the women featured in *Legacy in Motion*: Amelia Beattie, Carina Wessels, Dharshni Padayachee, Dr Shirley Zinn, Florence Ekong, Jo-Ann Pohl, Lynda Smith,

Mamokete Ramathe, Nkhonde Fumbeshi, Shaleenah Marie, Sienna Dutkowski and Wendy Mahoney, alongside many others who are crafting their legacy every day.



Colleen Larsen

### THE POWER OF PARALLEL JOURNEYS

These women come from diverse sectors, disciplines and geographies across Africa. Some are corporate leaders. Others are entrepreneurs, strategists, healers, innovators and system-shapers. What connects them is not a shared destination, but the way they lead, with intention, consistency and a deep sense of responsibility.

Each of these women contributes beyond herself. None of them speaks about legacy as something to be claimed later. Instead, they live it daily through mentorship, courage and the quiet work of changing systems and creating space for others to rise.

**LEGACY COMPOUNDS OVER TIME. IT IS STRENGTHENED BY RELATIONSHIPS, SHARPENED BY ADVERSITY AND SUSTAINED BY VALUES THAT DO NOT SHIFT WITH CIRCUMSTANCE.**

Their stories affirm a truth I have come to believe deeply: legacy compounds over time. It is strengthened by relationships, sharpened by adversity and sustained by values that do not shift with circumstance.

### LEGACY IS COLLECTIVE, NOT SINGULAR

One of the most important lessons from my Business Engage journey is that legacy is never built alone. While leadership may begin with one person's vision, it is sustained through collaboration, trust and shared ownership.

The *Legacy in Motion* stories remind us that leadership is not about visibility. It is about the choices leaders make when no applause is expected and the standards they uphold long after the spotlight has moved away.



**PURCHASE**  
TO PURCHASE YOUR COPY OF  
*THE STRELITZIA WAY*, SCAN THIS QR CODE

**BUSINESS ENGAGE DID NOT GROW BECAUSE OF A SINGLE BOLD MOMENT. IT GREW BECAUSE OF THOUSANDS OF SMALL, INTENTIONAL DECISIONS: SHOWING UP, BUILDING CREDIBILITY, LISTENING DEEPLY AND REMAINING ANCHORED IN PURPOSE EVEN WHEN THE ROAD WAS UNCERTAIN.**

In many ways, these women mirror the philosophy that has guided Business Engage for two decades. Real impact comes from consistency, not urgency, from depth, not noise, and from planting people, not just ideas.

### BECOMING, NOT ARRIVING

The *strelitzia* flower, the symbol at the heart of my book, does not bloom all at once. It emerges in stages, unfolding when conditions are right, rooted deeply enough to withstand pressure.

So too with legacy.

You do not wake up one morning having arrived. You become your legacy through perseverance, humility, learning and the courage to keep moving forward even when the outcome is unclear.

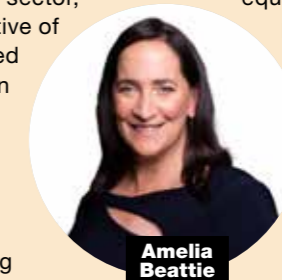
The women of *Legacy in Motion* are not finished stories. Neither am I. And neither are you.

Legacy is not something we leave behind one day. It is something we live in motion, every single day.

IMAGES SUPPLIED

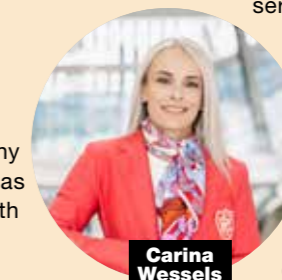
# LEGACY IN MOTION CHAMPIONS

With 21 years in the property sector, **Amelia Beattie**, chief executive of Liberty Two Degrees (L2D), led the company's transformation from a Trust REIT in 2016 to a Corporate REIT in 2018 and positioned it for sustainable growth. Under her leadership, L2D co-owns iconic South African shopping centres, including Sandton City, Nelson Mandela Square, Melrose Arch and Liberty Midlands Mall, creating experiential spaces for generations. A committed industry advocate, she is also a founding member of WITS University's Industry Advisory Board, strengthening ties between academia and the property sector.



Amelia Beattie

**Carina Wessels** is chief governance, risk and compliance officer and executive: Impact Advisory, leading with purpose, empathy and impact. Her leadership has evolved from guarded strength to vulnerability, shaped by high-pressure experiences, including investigating CEOs under board instruction, and personal challenges, such as overcoming burnout and serious health issues. Wessels builds teams where people feel safe, accountable, and empowered to grow, reflecting her belief that leadership is about making a difference, not dominating. Guided by faith, family and resilience, her message to future leaders is simple: "The future is not certain, it is in our hands."



Carina Wessels

**Dharshni Padayachee CA(SA)** is a seasoned finance and human capital leader with more than 20 years of experience in finance, operations and human capital. Driven by a passion for inclusion, equality and human development, she began her career at PwC before joining RMB, where she led gender

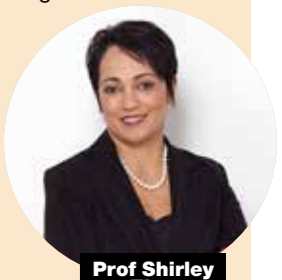


Dharshni Padayachee

equality initiatives, the RMB parental programme and founded the first LGBT+ affinity group. She is committed to mentoring and community impact and believes change is an active process. Equality, creativity and community guide her leadership.

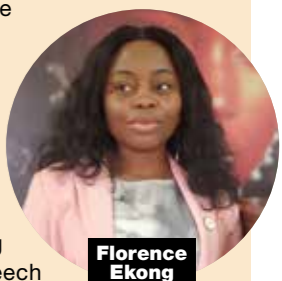
**Prof Shirley Zinn** is a veteran HR and leadership strategist

with a career spanning top executive roles at Woolworths Holdings, Standard Bank, Nedbank and SARS. She founded Shirley Zinn Consulting to provide advisory services in HR, transformation, leadership and education, and serves as adjunct professor at UCT and extraordinary professor at the University of Pretoria. She holds numerous board positions and is deeply committed to social impact through charities and advisory roles.



Prof Shirley Zinn

**Florence Ekong** is a holistic health advocate, author and founder of Painease, empowering women and girls to manage menstrual pain naturally while providing sanitary pads to underprivileged communities. She supports individuals with special needs, including autistic and dyslexic



Florence Ekong

children, collaborating with UK-based speech therapists to enhance learning. A Positive Role Model at the Gender Mainstreaming Africa Awards, Ekong champions mental and emotional wellbeing through education, writing, speaking and community initiatives. >

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING AWARDS/LEADERSHIP AND LEGACY

**Jo-Ann Pohl CA(SA)** is a seasoned C-suite executive and board member with 20-plus years in financial services and ICT, specialising in strategic planning, business transformation, compliance and digitisation. She has led start-ups and listed corporates across local, regional and global markets, driving growth through operating model design, organisational restructuring and business optimisation. Passionate about diversity, equity, inclusion and sustainability, Pohl champions initiatives, such as the 30% Club, Women's Network, enAble Network, and promotes financial inclusion and alternative energy solutions.

**Lynda Smith** is the founder of Refirement Network and 50Plus-Skills, empowering individuals over 50 to learn, serve and earn as they navigate their next chapter. After a personal crossroads at 50, she turned her experience into a mission: helping older employees and communities thrive through lifelong learning, mentoring and engagement. A former leader in the parenting and early childhood sector, she now advises companies on strategy, HR and marketing to better engage the growing over-50's market.

**Mamokete Ramathe** is founder and CEO of Mamor Capital, an investment company driving digital adoption in Africa through ICT, digital payments and e-commerce start-ups. With 19-plus years in financial services, she combines investment banking expertise with entrepreneurship, having co-founded a telecom infrastructure business and led two strategic acquisitions. She serves on multiple local and international boards, focusing on governance, sustainability and small and medium enterprise finance. A passionate advocate for women's empowerment and personal leadership, she has been recognised with awards, such as the South African Women Leaders Award (2021) and CEO Global Most Influential Women in ICT (2019).



**Jo-Ann Pohl**

**Nkhonde Fumbeshi** is a Zambian lawyer, founder and CEO of Money Media Africa and a gender and climate justice advocate. With 20-plus years of experience across legal practice, business strategy, media and property, she provides advisory services in corporate law, regulatory compliance, mergers and acquisitions and media law while also drafting legislation and serving on boards, promoting sustainability and equity. Recognised as the 2024 Africa & Middle East Gender Mainstreaming Inclusive Leader Award winner, she combines legal acumen, policy influence and entrepreneurial leadership to drive sustainable, gender-responsive impact.

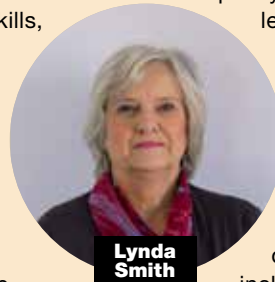


**Nkhonde Fumbeshi**

**Sienna J. Dutkowski** is a diversity champion, entrepreneur and advocate for social impact. She serves as director of community and social affairs at Lady Askari and sits on the Global Cyber Security Advisory Group. With a background in education, including as deputy chief administrator at the American School of South Sudan, she combines leadership, mentorship and community engagement. Passionate about empowering women and promoting security, Dutkowski drives initiatives that create lasting positive change.



**Sienna J. Dutkowski**



**Lynda Smith**

**Shaleenah Marie** is a transformational leader with 10-plus years in learning and development, leadership and diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEI&B), creating inclusive environments where diverse talent thrives. She has led high-impact initiatives, such as the Siemens-UN Women African Girls Can Code and Siemens EmpowerHER programmes, using DEI&B to drive lasting change. Passionate about education, mentorship and social impact, she builds pathways for talent to excel and champions lifelong learning across organisations.

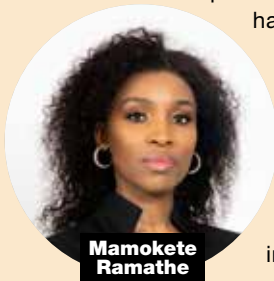


**Shaleenah Marie**

**Wendy Mahoney** is an innovation behavioural specialist and MD of Newmella Holdings, a consultancy driving corporate change and innovation. She leads Business Engage KZN, serves on the KZN NBI Council and is a nonexecutive director for Dare Restoring Worth, mentoring youth. Mahoney is a seasoned speaker, including TEDx, and is completing her PhD in brand innovation. Her corporate experience spans leadership roles at CNBC, Forbes Africa, Trudon SA, TDS Namibia and European Times.



**Wendy Mahoney**



**Mamokete Ramathe**

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Africa & Middle East  
**Gender  
Mainstreaming  
Awards**

20  
YEARS

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**IMPACT THAT ENDURES.  
STORIES THAT MATTER.  
LEADERSHIP THAT LASTS.**

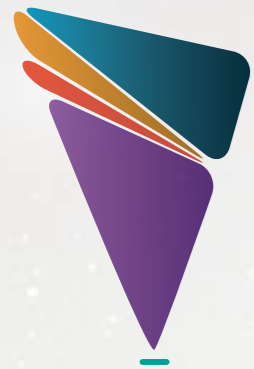
Legacy is built over time. This edition celebrates organisations that have consistently invested in people and purpose, creating impact that compounds across sectors, borders, and generations.



KEARNEY

AECI





## Africa & Middle East Gender Mainstreaming Awards

### AWARDS CATEGORIES

The **Gender Mainstreaming Awards** by **Business Engage** invite companies to take real action in embedding gender mainstreaming into business. This is about more than representation; it's about integrating gender considerations into leadership, strategy and operations.

With categories for every stage of the journey, the awards recognise practical progress and meaningful initiatives. Whether you're just starting out or further along, this is your opportunity to reflect, improve and lead.

#### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS CATEGORY

##### INCLUSIVE LEADER

The **Inclusive Leader Award** recognises individuals from any sector who demonstrate a strong commitment to advancing inclusion and belonging, particularly gender, through action and influence. The award honours leaders who translate advocacy into impact by shaping policies, developing talent and fostering inclusive cultures that drive innovation, performance and positive social change.

##### POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

The **Positive Role Model Award** recognises women who inspire and uplift others through their actions, character and dedication to making a meaningful impact. This award celebrates those who embody integrity, compassion and leadership, serving as an example for their community or peers to follow. They achieve personal excellence, but also empower others to do the same. By showcasing their stories, we hope to inspire a ripple effect of positivity and leadership.

##### INSPIRE CATEGORY

The **Inspire Category** honours individuals whose leadership motivates others through example, empathy and action. These are leaders who show what's possible by uplifting those around them, creating ripple effects of confidence, courage, and inclusive growth of women on the board.

##### THE BEACON CATEGORY

The **Beacon Category** recognises senior leaders who stand as visible role models in their industries. Like a guiding light, they illuminate the path for others, setting the benchmark for inclusive leadership and showing what sustainable change looks like at scale.

##### RMB AFRICA'S FEARLESS THINKER

The **RMB Africa's Fearless Thinker Award** celebrates a visionary individual (male or female) whose bold, transformative ideas are reshaping the landscape of gender mainstreaming in Africa. This award honours a trailblazer recognised by their peers and community for pioneering thought leadership that challenges conventions, breaks barriers and drives meaningful change. Finalists are selected across Africa, and one winner will be named at the GMA final event.

##### LEGACY AWARD

The **Legacy Award** honours leaders whose impact has been shaped over time through sustained commitment, principled leadership and the courage to lead with integrity. This award recognises individuals who have consistently broken barriers, influenced systems and modelled ethical leadership in complex environments.

Recipients of the Legacy Award are not defined by a single achievement, but by a body of work that reflects resilience, balance and moral clarity. Their leadership leaves a lasting imprint, not only through what they have achieved, but also through the standards they have set and the example they continue to model for future generations of leaders.

##### LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

**Leadership Excellence** recognises leaders who demonstrate sustained impact, strategic clarity and principled decision-making, inspiring others and delivering meaningful, measurable outcomes.

##### COMPANY AWARDS CATEGORY

The **Women on Boards Award** recognises organisations that have made meaningful progress in increasing female representation on boards and board subcommittees, while ensuring appointments are based on expertise, experience and strategic contribution. The award honours companies that deliberately build diverse, inclusive and high-performing boards through clear policies, measurable progress and strong leadership pipelines.

The **Women on Executive Committees in Multinationals Award** recognises multinational companies that have made meaningful progress in advancing gender diversity at executive level through the appointment of women into senior leadership roles and the development of strong leadership pipelines. The award honours organisations that demonstrate measurable outcomes, intentional succession planning and systemic approaches that ensure women are recognised for their expertise, leadership and strategic contribution, while creating sustainable pathways for future female leaders.

The **Equal Representation and Participation Award** celebrates organisations that achieve gender mainstreaming by setting clear targets, building women's capacity, engaging men as allies and establishing robust support mechanisms. The focus is on creating systemic change.

The **Women Empowerment in the Workplace Award** recognises organisations that implement impactful strategies to empower women by enabling autonomy, skills development and meaningful career progression. The award honours workplaces that create inclusive environments where women can shape their career paths, access growth opportunities and contribute fully to organisational success, while advancing gender mainstreaming within the broader workplace ecosystem.

The **Economic Empowerment Award** recognises organisations that advance women's economic empowerment through entrepreneurship, enterprise development and inclusive supply chain practices. The award honours initiatives that enable women to achieve financial independence, grow sustainable businesses and access equitable economic opportunities, while delivering measurable outcomes. It also recognises organisations that actively support women-owned enterprises through targeted development programmes or procurement strategies that enable growth, scale and long-term impact across communities and generations.

The **Mainstreaming Gender and Disability Award** recognises organisations that intentionally integrate gender and disability considerations into their policies, programmes and practices to advance the inclusion, empowerment and economic participation of women with disabilities. The award honours organisations that address systemic barriers through inclusive design, targeted initiatives and measurable outcomes, creating equitable environments where women with disabilities can access opportunities, develop skills and thrive as valued contributors.

The **Empowerment of Women in the Community Award** recognises organisations that implement impactful initiatives to empower women in underserved communities by enabling self-reliance, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. The award honours strategies that provide access to economic and social resources, deliver measurable outcomes and create lasting positive impact for women, their families and their communities.

The **Investing in Young Women Award** recognises organisations that implement impactful initiatives to empower young women through education and leadership development. The award honours strategies that deliver measurable outcomes, such as improved access to education, strengthened leadership capability and the removal of socioeconomic barriers, particularly for young women from underserved or marginalised communities, enabling equitable pathways to future leadership.

The **Gender Reporting of JSE-Listed Companies Award** recognises JSE-listed companies that demonstrate strong compliance with the JSE requirement to promote gender diversity at board level, introduced in January 2017. The award honours organisations that go beyond technical compliance by meaningfully advancing gender diversity, transparently reporting on progress and demonstrating commitment to sustainable pipeline development for future female board talent. It also acknowledges that companies are at different stages of maturity and evaluates entries based on progress, accountability and continuous improvement.

##### Gender Mainstreaming Champion Award

This award represents the pinnacle of recognition for outstanding commitment to advancing gender equality and inclusivity across the continent. Companies and individuals vying for this coveted award have demonstrated exceptional leadership and innovation in gender mainstreaming as a business imperative. The Overall Africa Champion Award serves as an inspiration, highlighting the critical role of gender mainstreaming in driving positive change.

##### The Africa Impact Champion Award

recognises organisations that have demonstrated long-term commitment to driving meaningful, measurable impact across Africa. This award honours institutions that have consistently invested in inclusive growth, shared value and sustainable development over time, while continuing to showcase and scale impact across multiple African markets.

Recipients of this award exemplify what it means to remain purpose-led over decades, translating commitment into action and telling authentic stories of progress, partnership and impact across the continent.

# INDIVIDUAL AWARD WINNERS AND FINALISTS: SOUTHERN AFRICA

**GENDER MAINSTREAMING CHAMPION: SOUTHERN AFRICA**  
Santam Limited



**AFRICA IMPACT CHAMPION 2026**  
ABSA GROUP LIMITED



## AWARD: WOMEN ON BOARDS

**Finalists:**  
A Seat at the Table  
African Women Financial Inclusion Initiative  
Santam Limited  
Spur Corporation Limited

**Overall winner:** BMW Financial Services (South Africa)

## DELIBERATE AND MEASURABLE COMMITMENT

BMW Financial Services (South Africa) earned the Women on Boards Gender Mainstreaming Award for its deliberate, measurable commitment to gender diversity at board and leadership level. Through inclusive governance, strong pipelines for women leaders and accountability at the top, the organisation is setting a benchmark for transformation in the financial services sector. In 2024, women accounted for **90 per cent of board leadership, 47 per cent of senior management and 52 per cent of professionally qualified roles** – outperforming the 2025 financial services benchmark of **36 per cent women on boards and 28 per cent in executive roles**, and proving a measurable pipeline for women leaders.



## AWARD: WOMEN ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

**Finalists:**  
Old Mutual Investment Group  
London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG)

**Overall winner:** FNB

## INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP

FNB's Women on Executive Committees win is reflective of its commitment to strengthening women's presence in senior decision-making and driving real accountability at leadership level. While women hold only **27.4 per cent of executive roles across the JSE Top 40 in 2025**, FNB continues to push beyond industry norms through intentional leadership development and greater visibility for women in senior decision-making.



## AWARD: EQUAL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION

**Finalists:**  
Tiger Brands Limited  
FNB  
Pfizer South Africa

**Overall winner:** BMW Financial Services (South Africa)

## MOVING BEYOND COMPLIANCE

The Equal Representation and Participation Award highlights BMW Financial Services' impactful efforts to move beyond compliance toward active inclusion, fostering pathways for women to enter, flourish and lead within the organisation. Through leadership development programmes, mentorship frameworks and strategic talent development initiatives, the company is setting a benchmark for equitable participation in the financial services sector.



## AWARD: WOMEN AND DISABILITY

**Finalists:**  
Absa Group Limited  
Assmang Black Rock Mine  
BAT Southern Africa  
eThekweni Municipality  
FNB

**Overall winner:** Santam Limited

## IMPACT AND INTENT

Santam Limited was honoured for its proactive approach to gender inclusion and diversity in the workplace, particularly its efforts to uplift women and support employees with disabilities. The company's recognition in this category underscores a **broader commitment to embedding equity and inclusion** into its organisational culture and people strategies. Santam's award reflects not just advocacy, but also measurable progress in representation and inclusive practices. According to the company's own diversity disclosures:

- Women are significantly represented in governance structures, with **46 per cent of board positions held by women**, demonstrating strong leadership engagement in gender diversity.
- The insurer reports that **2.2 per cent of its workforce comprises employees with disabilities**, highlighting ongoing efforts to ensure workplace access and participation for people with disabilities.

These figures align with the organisation's broader transformation and environmental, social and governance commitments, which include substantial investment in skills development and equitable employment opportunities.



## AWARD: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

**Finalists:**  
Absa Group Limited  
Tiger Brands Limited  
Clicks Group Limited  
African Women Financial Inclusion Initiative

**Overall winner:** African Bank

## DRIVING REAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

African Bank's win in the Economic Empowerment category reflects its measurable impact on women and historically marginalised groups. Through initiatives, such as the **Women Entrepreneurship Development Programme** and the **22 On Sloane Hub**, the bank equips women with business skills, access to finance and networks, helping them grow sustainable enterprises. The bank also invests in **skills development for over two per cent of its payroll** in black employees and supports more than **300 high school learners** through education programmes, creating pathways to economic participation. By combining enterprise support, financial inclusion and community investment, African Bank turns policy into tangible results, making it a deserving winner.



## AWARD: EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY

**Non-listed finalists:**  
African Women Financial Inclusion Initiative  
New Revelation Children's Hope  
Resurrect Magazine  
Centre for Supplier Development  
LaJoya Holdings (Pty) Ltd  
Scatec Africa (Pty) Ltd

**Non-listed category winner:** Scatec

**Listed finalists:**  
Absa Group Limited  
Nedbank Group Limited  
Santam Limited  
Spur Corporation Limited

**Listed category winner:** RCL Foods Limited

**Overall winner:** RCL Foods Limited

## EMPOWERING WOMEN, TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES

RCL Foods' win in the Empowerment of Women in the Community category reflects its real, measurable impact. Through initiatives, such as **Basadi Bereka**, the company equips women employees with skills, leadership training and networks to thrive in male-dominated sectors. Its **Do More Foundation** amplifies this impact in communities, providing **nutritious meals to over 30 000 children** and supporting women caregivers with training and resources. By combining workplace empowerment with community upliftment, RCL Foods creates lasting change, making it a truly deserving winner.



## AWARD: WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

**Non-listed finalists:**  
BMW Financial Services (South Africa)  
eThekweni Municipality  
Sandock Austral Shipyards

**Non-listed category winner:**  
Pfizer South Africa

**Listed finalists:**  
FNB  
BAT Southern Africa  
RCL Foods Limited  
Sibanye Stillwater Limited  
Spur Corporation Limited

**Listed category winners:**  
Santam Limited  
Absa Group Limited

**Overall joint winners:**  
Absa Group Limited  
Santam Limited

## EMPOWERING WOMEN AT EVERY LEVEL

Absa won Women Empowerment in the Workplace by turning gender equality into measurable results. In 2022, **64 per cent of promotions and over 50 per cent of new hires were women**, while the **eKhaya Colleague Share Scheme**, empowered **63 per cent of beneficiaries** with ownership stakes. Programmes like **IgniteHer** and **Women in Tech** also upskilled **130 women in cloud technology**, proving Absa creates real pathways for women to lead and innovate.



## LEADING WOMEN FORWARD

Santam's Women Empowerment in the Workplace win reflects its dual focus: internal inclusivity and external support. The **Santam Women of the Future Awards** have helped women entrepreneurs grow businesses through **mentorship, cash prizes and networks**, impacting communities and boosting female-led enterprises. Santam is creating opportunities that extend beyond its walls, empowering women to thrive professionally and economically.



## AWARD: INVESTING IN YOUNG WOMEN

**Non-listed finalists:**  
Amaatla Foundation  
Beacon Foundation  
Ked-LiphiBw  
Mophato Theatre

**Non-listed category winner:** ABSIP Women in Focus


**Listed finalists:**  
Absa Group Limited  
Old Mutual Investment Group  
Spur Corporation Limited  
Tiger Brands Limited


**Listed category winner:** Santam Limited


**Overall winner:** Santam Limited

# INDIVIDUAL AWARD WINNERS AND FINALISTS: SOUTHERN AFRICA


## AWARD: POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

CATEGORY: BEACON	
PRM Botswana	Neo Mooki-Watson
<b>PRM Gauteng</b>	<b>Dr Lulu Gwagwa</b>
PRM KZN	Nompumelelo Nyawo
PRM Western Cape	Na-ilah Kippie
PRM Zambia	Charity Zimba
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>DR LULU GWAGWA</b>
	



CATEGORY: IGNITE	
PRM Gauteng	Rionna Roni
PRM KZN	Devashnie Govender
PRM Western Cape	Anne Hartsliel
PRM Botswana	Shanel Monyere-Nikolic
<b>PRM Zambia</b>	<b>Kalumbu Kearns</b>
Community Catalyst	Phumzile Victoria Mgojo
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>KALUMBU KEARNS</b>
	

CATEGORY: LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE	
Botswana	Selwana Motlatsi Motsemeng
Gauteng	Barati Mahloele
Gauteng	Khanyisa Phika
<b>Gauteng</b>	<b>Lebogang Qangule</b>
Western Cape	Erica Terblanche
Zambia	Mary Mutupa
Western Cape	Mbali Phewa
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>LEBOGANG QANGULE</b>
	

## POSITIVE ROLE MODEL SOUTHERN AFRICA


<b>OVERALL WINNER</b>	<b>DR LULU GWAGWA</b>
	


## LEGACY AWARDS


<b>GAUTENG</b>	<b>PROF PARMi NATESAN</b>
	
<b>BOTSWANA</b>	<b>CATHERINE LESETEDI</b>
	

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING AWARDS/INDIVIDUAL RESULTS


## AWARD: INCLUSIVE LEADER AWARD

CATEGORY: BEACON	
IL Botswana	Catherine Lesetedi
IL Gauteng	Stefan Schuett
IL KZN	Rob Kelso
<b>IL Western Cape</b>	<b>Val Nichas</b>
IL Zambia	Mary Mutupa
IL Zimbabwe	Michel Zondo
<b>OVERALL WINNER</b>	<b>VAL NICHAS</b>
	


CATEGORY: IGNITE	
IL Botswana	Kedumetse Liphi
<b>IL Gauteng</b>	<b>Doreen Rwakungu-Musiime</b>
IL Gauteng	Lindiwe Monyae
IL KZN	Sylvanas Moodley
IL Western Cape	Colleen Car
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>Doreen Rwakungu-Musiime</b>
	

CATEGORY: LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE	
Botswana	Kaene Disepo
South Africa	Thembi Manyike
<b>South Africa</b>	<b>Sithembiso Mabuto</b>
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>SITHEMBISO MABUTO</b>
	

## INCLUSIVE LEADER SOUTHERN AFRICA

<b>WINNER</b>	<b>VAL NICHAS</b>
	

## AWARD: RMB AFRICA'S FEARLESS THINKER

RMB AFRICA'S FEARLESS THINKER	
Nigeria	Dr Kemi DaSilva-Ibru
South Africa	Stefan Schuett
Nigeria	Olawunmi Adelusi
South Africa	Khethiwe Nkuna
South Africa	Prof Parmi Natesan
<b>WINNER</b>	<b>Dr Kemi DaSilva-Ibru</b>
	

# SOUTHERN AFRICA: JUDGES



**ADVAITA NAIDOO**



**HILARY DAVIES**



**NICOLETTE JACOBS**



**SHALEENAH MARIE**



**CARINA WESSELS**



**JO-ANN POHL**



**NKHONDE FUMBESHI**



**SHEPHERD SHONHIWA**



**DHARSHNI PADAYACHEE**



**KAREN SMIT**



**PARMI NATESAN**



**SINQOBILE KHULUSE**



**DIONNE KERR**



**MALCOLM LARSEN**



**PAULA QUINSEE**



**SUBASHNEE MOODLEY**



**ELMARIE BISSETT**



**MELISSA EVANS**



**PERUSHA PILLAY**



**TSHILO FARISANI**



**ENRICO BALDASSARI**



**MICHAEL JUDIN**



**PRECIOUS NKULA**



**UYANDA SIBIYA**



**GAVIN FITZMAURICE**



**MICHAEL PRYKE**



**REABETSWE MOTSHEGARE**



**WENDY-ANNE NAIDOO**



**HELENA CONRADIE**



**NAOMI WILLIAMS**



**REFILOE NKADIMENG**



**WILLIAM SURMON**