

Upcoming Events

17 JULY 2024

WPN GAUTENG REGIONAL CSI
THE ALMOND TREE CHILDREN'S VILLAGE, BENONI



WPN Western Cape launches phase 2 of mentorship programme

Thank you Cliffe Dekker Hofmeyr Inc for hosting and sponsoring the launch of phase 2 of the mentorship programme in the Western Cape. A successful morning with mentees and mentors meeting up with one another and preparing for a journey into 2025 with one another.

"If you cannot see where you are going, ask someone who has been there before."
- J LOREN NORRIS



RICS AND WPN AFRICA Conference

We are thrilled to share highlights from the hugely successful Africa Conference, which was hosted by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the Women's Property Network (WPN) on Wednesday, 19 June 2024, at the Sandton Convention Centre.

We thank our sponsors, IFC Edge, Fortress and Cushman & Wakefield | Broll for their invaluable support and investment.

Our host and moderator, Kura Chihota of eXp Realty, ensured an engaging, informative, and highly interactive event. We were privileged to hear from local and international keynote speakers and panellists, who emphasized the importance of intentional approaches to diversity, innovation, and sustainability in the property sector. The discussions also highlighted the necessity of fostering a growth mindset and enhancing collaboration across all industry sectors.

#Intentional #Mentorship #GrowthMindset





Thought Leadership

THE IMPERATIVE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION IN THE AFRICAN PROPERTY INDUSTRY.

JUDY RUGASIRA | MANAGING DIRECTOR | KNIGHT FRANK UGANDA

I had the pleasure and the honour to give a Keynote address to a gathering of distinguished Captains of Industry, and Property Professionals at the RICS WPN Africa Conference in Johannesburg on the 19th of June 2024. The presentation was on Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the Africa Property Industry. An interesting topic I must say, and one that is gaining prominence and relevance both as an agenda item at many a C-Suite board meeting, and as a Key deliverable on many Senior Executives' strategic papers year after year.

This growing relevance has grown for several reasons. Firstly, is the growing acknowledgement of the importance of DEI in all aspects of society, and more specifically, the workplace and the property Industry in general which has a reputation for poor gender equality. As a result, there is a concerted effort to change this narrative and promote social justice and fairness, by employing DEI practices as an important resource and tenet of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 to be precise.)

Additionally, more organisations in the African Property Industry, have realised that there is an imperative for DEI Practices in their workplaces given the positive Economic impact it can have on their business. A diverse and inclusive industry drives economic growth, innovation, and stability. - A diverse and inclusive property industry is a powerful driver of economic growth, innovation, and stability.

Diversity brings a variety of perspectives, ideas, and experiences, which can lead to innovative solutions and strategies in the property market. It can help the industry to better understand and meet the needs of diverse communities, leading to the development of more inclusive and sustainable properties.

Equity ensures that everyone, regardless of their background, has equal access to opportunities, which can lead to a more balanced and stable property market. Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging and respect among all stakeholders, which can enhance collaboration and productivity. Therefore, promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic business priority for the African property industry.

Furthermore, the business case for DEI practices in our property industry, is enhanced performance and Talent attraction and retention. Diverse teams outperform homogeneous ones. Varied perspectives lead to better decision-making and problem-solving. For example, in the property industry, a team with diverse

backgrounds might include individuals with experience in urban planning, environmental sustainability, local cultural practices, and financial management. This diversity can lead to a more holistic approach to property development. Homogeneous teams can miss out on diverse perspectives potentially leading to oversights or missed opportunities. Thus, diversity is not just about fairness, it's a strategic advantage that leads to enhanced performance.

Inclusive workplaces attract top talent. Inclusive workplaces in the African property sector have a competitive edge in attracting and retaining top talent. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to be engaged, productive, and loyal to the organization. It is a fact that companies which prioritize inclusion, often have lower turnover rates, as employees feel a sense of belonging and are less likely to seek opportunities elsewhere. Thus, fostering an inclusive workplace is not just ethically right but also beneficial for the organization's growth and success in the African property sector.

Significant progress has been made in the promotion of DEI practices in the African Property Industry, but there are several impediments to notable success. In this instance I would like to briefly point out ignoring cultural readiness in the DEI implementation journey. This concept revolves around the idea that simply increasing diversity through recruitment is insufficient. To be successful, organizations need to create an environment where diversity is not just tolerated but celebrated and nurtured. A culture unprepared to embrace diversity can not only lead to a toxic workplace environment but also affect employee retention and satisfaction. This conveyor belt syndrome, where diverse talent leaves as quickly as they join, can be detrimental to an organization's morale and its DE&I aspirations. It is therefore imperative that organisations take time to ensure that the culture is conducive and prepared to embrace a diverse workforce.

Finally, to foster cultural readiness in an organisation, there needs to be an understanding that diversity does not just pertain to issues related to race, ethnicity and gender. It also addresses challenges facing employees based on age, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, gender identity, socioeconomic status, language, religious commitment, or political perspective. DEI also addresses physical, cognitive, and social-emotional abilities. Until this is fully understood and appreciated, achieving a successful DEI strategy may take longer than anticipated. My personal view is if we treat each other with respect, and in a way, we would like to be treated, we can transform the industry through increased social cohesion and a more sustainable property market