

# kayana news



## Mucha Mlingo

Emotional  
Intelligence  
and Mentorship

INSIDE

From Trauma  
to Triumph

Creative  
Mentorship

Kayana Female  
MSME Awards



According to a recent study, 75% of professional men and women want a mentor, however only 37% have one.

Mentorship plays a critical role in career and personal development. Perhaps this could be due to the fact that mentoring the whole person takes more effort and therefore more time. One of my mentors *Monique Caradine Kitchens*, says, A mentor should be someone who is willing to be GENEROUS, with information, insights, and wisdom as it relates to your personal or professional development. A mentor is also someone who is willing to tell you whatever you need know.

Mentors are the greatest gift that you can have in this journey of life at every stage in life, having someone to speak to and to learn from their experiences is such a blessing.

## MENTORING A NEW GENERATION

### Mentoring is Caught not Taught.

We have all heard that 90% of communication is non verbal, what many mentors do not realize is that their lasting impact on a mentee is often how they conduct their life. Whether at work, home and many times on social media. Today in the workplace we find four sets of generations.

- Generation Z (1997–2012)
- Millennials (1981–1996)
- Generation Xers (1965–1980)
- Baby boomers (1946–1964)

One of the greatest requests from Generation z and Millennial is the need for **more mentors**.

Good Mentors should believe in their Mentees enough to take risks for them. This means introducing them to people who could be helpful in their careers,

- Passing on their resumes to your contact at a company,
- Letting them attend meetings with you or
- Pointing them towards a conference that could enrich their careers like Corrine did for me.

In this issue we highlight mentors as selected by their mentees. We hope that these interviews will inspire you to reach out and mentor someone!

#### Patricia Okelo

Co-founder Kayana Create.  
Founder Circles for Women in Business

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**COVER PHOTO**  
**Mucha Mlingo**

**A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.**

Maya Angelou

# Women to Watch 2023

**mentorship** noun  
*/men-tor-ship/*

the influence, guidance, or direction given by a mentor



The Kayana theme for this year's International Women's Day focuses on the importance of mentorship. Mentorship for women in Africa has become increasingly important in recent years, as more women seek to advance their careers and become leaders in their fields. Here are some key points about women mentorship.



**69%**

of women who have a mentor choose one of their same gender



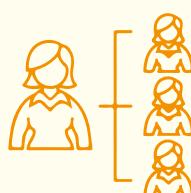
**78%**

of women in senior roles have served as a formal mentor



**67%**

of women rate having a mentor as extremely important to their career advancement



**80%**

of women who mentor other women report that they choose to mentor in order to be supportive of other women



A mentor is someone who allows you to see the hope inside yourself.

Oprah Winfrey



# WHEN LOOKING FOR A MENTOR, THERE ARE SEVERAL KEY CHALLENGES THAT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER. THESE CHALLENGES INCLUDE



## LACK OF RESOURCES AND NETWORKS

It can be difficult to find the right mentor if you don't have access to the right networks or resources



## LACK OF GOAL SETTING

Without clear goals, it can be difficult to find a mentor who can help you get where you want to go



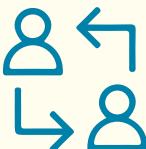
## COMMUNICATIONS BARRIER

Communication is key when it comes to building a successful mentoring relationship



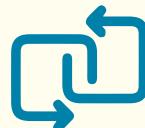
## TRACKING OUTCOMES

It's important to track your progress and measure the outcomes of your mentoring relationship



## FEEDBACK

A successful mentoring relationship requires open and honest feedback



## COMPATIBILITY

It's possible to end up with a mentor who isn't the right fit for you.

# KEY AREAS TO FOCUS ON WHEN MENTORING WOMEN



## LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Mentors can help women develop leadership skills, such as communication, decision-making, and assertiveness.



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Mentors can help women identify their strengths and areas for development



## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Mentors can help women navigate these challenges by providing support, advice, and resources



## NETWORKING

Mentors can help women build their networks by providing introductions, recommendations, and guidance on networking strategies.



## CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Mentors can help women build their confidence by providing support, encouragement, and positive feedback.



## NEGOTIATION SKILLS

Mentors can help women develop negotiation skills and provide guidance on how to navigate these challenges.

# QUALITIES OF A GOOD MENTOR



## HAS EMPATHY

A good mentor should be able to understand and relate to the mentee's experiences and challenges



## FIRM

A good mentor should be firm in their guidance and advice, but not overbearing or controlling



## GREAT COMMUNICATOR

Communication is key in any mentoring relationship



## MAINTAINS HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

A good mentor should be able to maintain healthy boundaries between themselves and the mentee



## GIVES HONEST FEEDBACK

A good mentor should be able to give honest and constructive feedback to the mentee

## 5 WAYS TO CONNECT WITH MENTORS



### THROUGH MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

These can be formal or informal, and can be implemented in a variety of settings, including schools, universities, workplaces, and communities.



### LINKEDIN

LinkedIn can also be used for more informal mentorship relationships. Users can connect with others in their field and build relationships based on shared interests or goals.



### ALUMNI NETWORKS

LinkedIn can also be used for more informal mentorship relationships. Users can connect with others in their field and build relationships based on shared interests or goals.

## REFERENCES

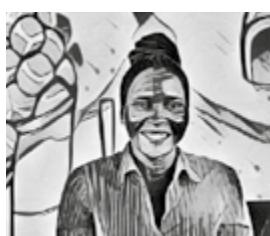
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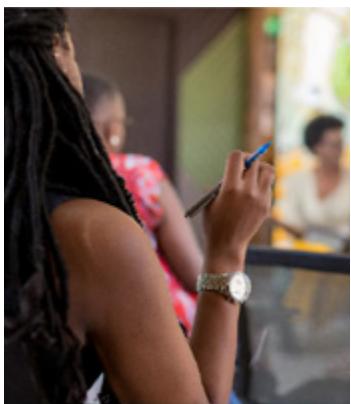
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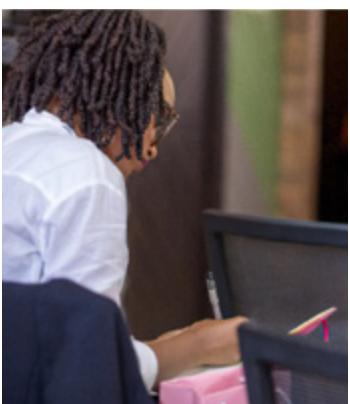
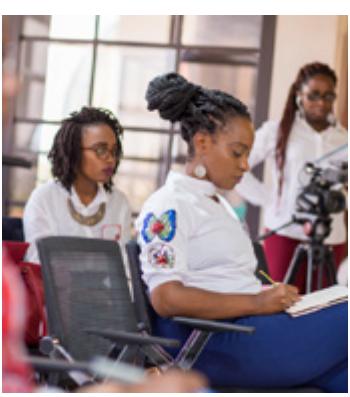
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# Empowering Women, Building Businesses

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## MARIANNE NYANGI

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Marianne Nyangi is a seasoned banker and business development expert.

She has years of experience building various businesses from scratch.

What stands out in her journey is her work with women. Setting up women banking from the ground up at a time when this was not popular in the market. She set up an innovative product, run the unit with prowess and ingenuity and in no time every woman wanted to sign up.

She has gone on to represent matters women and women empowerment in various platforms and circles in KE , US , Australia and other countries abroad.

She is also the founder of her own global women organization and is impacting lives and pushing the women agenda in a larger scale. She is fit for this award for the various lives she has touched, many professionals she has coached and mentored and the many entrepreneurs and women in general she has empowered.



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAVANA



# Helping people is my *Superpower*

**BERYL ACHIENG' OMONDI**

**Team Kayana**, had the opportunity to sit down and chat with Beryl Achieng, a filmmaker, entrepreneur and a Trainer Of Trainers at Micro Enterprise Development, where she trains women on business skills and home based technologies. Her focus is to train the underprivileged women in the community, specifically in Githogoro slum.

It is through this job, and interacting with women and girls who are affected by many different factors, such as being in abusive relationships, alcohol addiction, homelessness, early pregnancies and so forth that inspired her to become a mentor. She thrives in seeing people around her thrive in their personal development. She liked to advice people and to listen and try and help out or resolve a problem Beryl considers her super power to be "helping people".

She considers mentoring, or helping people, similar to shining a light to someone in the dark, for them to see the path out of it. As an MED trainer, she passes on different skills such as booking keeping, business planning among others, that help them grow in the entrepreneurial world. The same applies to her filmmaking side of things where

**Mentorship is about building people, and building people means giving.**



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA



the curiosity and zeal to learn more, ask questions and need to know more of the inquisitive ladies, inspires her and motivates her to do more.

To Beryl, the most rewarding aspect of mentorship, specific to her role as a mentor, to ladies who are facing different challenges just as poverty, alcoholism, victims of gender based violence and so forth is the joy of seeing them succeeding. Seeing them go through the motions of changing their mindset from the attitude of "I cannot do this" to now working hard to do it and succeed, gives her extreme joy. It's a fulfilment that cannot be described. In the community that she works in, with the church, they have found that while out there teaching about Christ is where she meets these ladies with a need and burning desire to want more for their own lives. It is here that she meets those that she mentors.

She has identified that in most cases, these ladies face the major challenge of not having the financial capacity to sustain themselves, and it is the different skill set that they teach them that starts to give them the financial freedom to be able to stand on their own.



Beryl draws her inspiration from the need and desire to see everyone around her living a better life. Her desire to help others is what drew her to working with those who are not as privileged in the society. She believes impacting knowledge of different types on people is what drives them to achieve more and do more for themselves and for their families.

This year's International Women's Day was themed around Embracing Equity, which basically means bringing women into spaces where they are disadvantaged and create opportunities for them to thrive as well as men do. In Beryl's career, and the work that she does, equity means removing the mindset that women need to stay home and take care of the family. Equity means not fully relying on their husbands or fathers for everything that they need. Equity means empowering them to also be able to provide for herself and her family.

Beryl mentions that the challenges she faced, while starting out in her filmmaking career, as a woman challenged her to do more. Back then, women were not considered hard core and the tasks that would be assigned to them were small and extremely easy to do, as opposed to men, who would be sent out to cover scenarios that would be considered

rough and tough. Women were considered "fragile". This to her, felt like it would hinder their growth. She is inspired to see women taking up "hard" tasks and roles.

"Change starts with you." This is the mantra that Beryl lives by every day. She believes that as an individual, you can change those around you, one person at a time. It doesn't matter where you are, either in church, at work or at home, one can help change one person's mindset, situation or scenario, with the resources that you possess.

Mentorship is about building people, and building people means giving. Sir Winston Churchill once said that "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." By giving, we build and when we build others, we help them grow and become better versions of themselves. Beryl's ultimate goal is to see women in the informal sector transformed. She would like to see happier homes, happy and productive women. Women making a positive impact in the society. She would like to see larger institutions and organizations looking to positively impact the lives of marginalized women, working hand in hand with those already in the community, for example already existing Community Based Organizations, or individuals supporting them in all aspects, to transform the lives of all.



# Empowering Women in Tech

## A CONVERSATION WITH LAURA CHITE, ADVOCATE AND MENTOR



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAVANA

**Meet Laura Chite, a dedicated advocate for women in technology. With a deep passion for empowering women, she is driven by the concept of impact. Laura's view of life revolves around a crucial question: What impact does every action we take in our daily lives have, and what impact does our career leave behind? Despite lacking a technical background, Laura has spent more than two decades in the technology industry. Interestingly, her expertise lies in economics, proving that diverse perspectives can thrive in the tech world.**

### How did you get into mentorship?

I didn't realize I was mentoring people until they started calling me their mentor. I don't have a structured way of mentoring people. My mentorship is through conversations around careers, personal lives, and social life. Perhaps my inclination towards mentoring stems from being the child of a teacher. Having been raised by a woman who was a professional educator, I find myself naturally attracting individuals who place their trust in me.

As we age, we come to understand the importance of making independent decisions. As a mentor, I don't tell my mentees what to do. Rather, I encourage them to think critically and devise their own solutions to the challenges they face.

### How important was mentorship to your career journey?

A decade ago, during my tenure at Microsoft, I had the



**As a mentor, I don't tell my mentees what to do. Rather, I encourage them to think critically and devise their own solutions to the challenges they face.**

privilege of being mentored by a guy called Kevin. One invaluable lesson he imparted was the importance of embracing career risks. According to him, I needed to identify what truly resonated with me within this industry. He would often challenge me with thought-provoking questions, such as, "You claim to have a deep passion for this career and grasp the significance of technology's impact, but how adaptable are you?" Kevin's guidance instilled in me the understanding that flexibility and willingness to take calculated risks are essential components of a thriving career in the ever-evolving world of technology.

As a mentee, having a clear understanding of what you hope to gain from your mentorship engagement puts you in a favorable position to absorb knowledge and glean insights from the relationship.

While there is a common misconception that mentors should provide all the answers, I have come to realize that establishing a strong connection and fostering a positive rapport with your mentee is equally important for personal growth as a mentor. Embracing the mentee-mentor dynamic involves a mutual learning experience, where both parties can discover new perspectives and challenge existing habits. It is through this process of learning, unlearning, and sharing that the true essence of mentorship unfolds.

**Mentorship is a nurturing responsibility that requires a lot of commitment from both the mentee and the mentor. How do you strike a balance between self-care, working on your personal goals, and supporting your mentees?**

Maintaining a schedule is important to me as I strive to actively engage in mentorship. However, the more I delve into this role, the more I recognize the significance of creating a comfortable environment where I can genuinely enjoy the process and be authentic. It is crucial to find a balance that allows me to be present and fully invested in the mentorship experience. If I find myself overwhelmed with the responsibilities of mentoring, or if external factors like career and family obligations weigh heavily on me, it becomes challenging to give my best effort to my mentees.

In addition to individual mentorship, I also facilitate connections among my mentees, drawing upon their unique strengths and areas of growth. By fostering a supportive network among them, they can learn from one another and mutually benefit from their collective knowledge and experiences. This collaborative approach not only enhances their personal development but also fosters a sense of community within the mentorship program.

**Tech is a male-dominated field. How can we empower the next generation of women in tech?**

Women in positions of influence and success must do more to support the younger generation. You've walked



this journey, why watch another woman make the same mistakes?

Driven by my own experiences, I started a 'women in IT' Leadership program known as Hernnovation a few years ago. I started this program based on my own experiences. As I was coming up in the technology field and eventually became the CEO of a tech marketing and media house, I realized that very few women in this space had visibility. Many remarkable women are quietly making significant contributions, but their achievements often went unnoticed or unrecognized. The Hernnovation program allowed these women to get the opportunity to network upward, build soft skills like public speaking, and mentorship.

Through the Hernnovation program, we are dedicated to fostering a supportive community that propels women forward in the tech field. By sharing knowledge, building connections, and nurturing talent, we can collectively inspire the next generation of women leaders in the technology industry.

### **What does the future hold for Laura?**

You know how at the beginning of the year people talk about their new year's resolutions, I operate with what I call the 'keywords'. These keywords serve as guiding principles in my life, shaping my actions and mindset. Impact, gratitude, and boundaries are the core elements that I strive to embody. Impact encompasses the profound effect I have on the people around me, including my mentees, colleagues, friends, and family. Leveraging the networks I have cultivated over the years, I actively seek opportunities to make a positive difference in the lives of others. My focus lies particularly on underserved minorities, such as individuals with disabilities, aiming to empower them through meaningful support and advocacy.

As the chairperson of iGov Africa, an organization dedicated to collaborating with youth in developing solutions for the public sector, I play a pivotal role in mentoring and guiding them. Our mission extends beyond mere mentorship; we assist these young individuals in bringing their innovative ideas to market, commercializing their products, accessing funding, and raising awareness about their impactful products and services. My goal is to help the youth take advantage of technology resources to better their lives.

# Strategic Partnerships

BY GEOFFREY MUSIEGA



PHOTOS: KAYANA

## Visit by Under Secretary Donald Cravins

In April we hosted the US Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development, Donald Cravins, and other dignitaries representing the US Department of Commerce including Camille Richardson, Cynthia Griffin, and Feleke Assefa, for a roundtable discussion on the challenges facing small businesses in Kenya. Also in attendance were select Kayana Members.

In the conversation, we explored the need for small businesses to have access to financing and resources to support their export efforts, and the potential benefits of government entities working to strengthen export

capabilities and access to new markets.

Following this meeting, Mr. Cravins attended the Amcham Business Summit where he commented on the need to position local entrepreneurs as the driving force behind Africa's economic future. He also highlighted some of the sentiments shared by Kayana members on the challenges facing women-owned businesses. Exciting opportunities lie ahead!

## Meeting with the C.E.O of On Running

We recently engaged in a strategic meeting with the esteemed Co-CEO of On Running Martin Hoffmann, and his team. On Running has emerged as a trailblazer in the



athletic footwear industry, redefining the way runners experience their sport. The company's unwavering dedication to innovation has resulted in ground-breaking designs that have earned them a devoted global following. The meeting between Kayana Create and On Running revealed a remarkable alignment of values and vision. Both organizations share a common goal of empowering individuals to unleash their potential, whether it be in the entrepreneurial or athletic realms. As a prominent hub for

women entrepreneurs, Kayana offers a dynamic ecosystem that fosters innovation and provides valuable resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities to aspiring and established entrepreneurs. During the meeting, we explored potential collaboration opportunities, including joint marketing campaigns as a means to leverage our networks and target the entrepreneurial community.

#### MOU with KRA



We are thrilled to announce an exciting collaborative agreement between Kayana and the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) aimed at promoting tax awareness and fostering an environment of compliance among entrepreneurs and small business owners. This strategic partnership will enable us to leverage the expertise and resources of both organizations to empower individuals with valuable knowledge about tax obligations, simplifying the complex landscape of taxation.

As part of this collaboration, we are introducing a series of consultative clinics and advocacy sessions that will serve as platforms for entrepreneurs to engage directly with tax experts from KRA. These sessions will provide entrepreneurs with the opportunity to seek guidance, ask questions, and gain a better understanding of their tax obligations, rights, and benefits. The consultative clinics will be designed to cater to the unique needs of entrepreneurs, addressing specific challenges and concerns that they may face concerning taxation.

Furthermore, this collaboration extends to participation in events that promote the growth of small businesses, such as the Cottage Industry Kenya. At such events, Kayana Create and KRA will jointly organize resource-sharing sessions, workshops, and interactive discussions to educate entrepreneurs about tax-related topics. These platforms will foster an environment of knowledge-sharing, enabling entrepreneurs to make informed decisions about tax planning, compliance, and optimization.

### GIZ Collaboration

We are excited to be finalizing a game-changing collaboration between Kayana and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) to offer a specialized course that caters to creatives through our e-learning platform, Passport to Business. This collaboration aims to provide a unique learning experience that combines entrepreneurship skills with creative expertise, empowering individuals in the creative industry to unlock their full potential and thrive in today's dynamic business landscape.

GIZ, an international development organization, brings a wealth of experience and expertise in fostering sustainable economic development and supporting entrepreneurship globally. Together with Kayana, this collaboration seeks to bridge the gap between creativity and business acumen, equipping creatives with the necessary tools and knowledge to turn their passion into a thriving enterprise. We will not only provide theoretical knowledge but also practical insights from industry experts and successful creative entrepreneurs. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with seasoned professionals who can provide guidance and inspiration based on their own experiences. This personalized approach ensures that the course remains relevant, up-to-date, and tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities that creatives encounter in their entrepreneurial journey.

Furthermore, we will leverage the extensive networks and resources of both Kayana and GIZ to offer participants



access to a wide range of support services. This includes access to funding and investment opportunities, mentorship programs, a co-working space, and networking events.

### AfricaBerlin Network

AfricaBerlin Network (ABN) is a collective platform that supports startups and SMEs in international expansion and overcoming the challenges of internationalization. The networking project builds bridges to connect entrepreneurship ecosystems in Berlin with four African

focus countries: Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, and South Africa. Through workshops, seminars, trade fair participation, and delegation trips, ABN fosters economic cooperation and partnerships that provide a platform for innovative businesses and entrepreneurs across the focus areas.

Back in March, we had the distinct pleasure of hosting the Berlin Partners for a Pitching & Networking Event that saw several start-ups share their innovation. Not only was this an eye-opener, but it opened the door to conversations around possible collaborations.



PHOTOS: AFRICA BERLIN NETWORK



# Meet Liz Lenjo

Liz Lenjo is the Founder and Managing Consultant of MYIP Legal Studio. She specializes in Intellectual Property, Entertainment, Media, and Fashion Law. Her interest in becoming an Intellectual Property and Entertainment attorney was deliberate and began during her university years. Through research and interaction with professionals in various fields in the entertainment industry, Liz was able to shape her unique approach to legal practice.

As an IP lawyer, she dedicates her practice to helping individuals and organizations protect their intellectual property rights. She has developed expertise in various industries, including fashion, music, film, and technology, and is well-equipped to advise and represent clients in these areas.

In addition to her legal practice, Liz is also a very active blogger, educating the masses on matters related to intellectual property in plain English. She believes that the law should be accessible to all parties and has taken it upon herself to provide valuable information on the importance of intellectual property and how it can be protected.

Since winning the Kayana Female MSME Award last year in the category of Most Adaptive Use of Technology, Liz Lenjo continues to make remarkable strides. She was appointed by Chief Justice Martha Koome to serve the Judiciary of Kenya as the chairperson of the specialized courts; The Copyright Tribunal, under the Copyright Industries. She was also appointed as a Board Member of the Nuclear Power and Energy Agency (NuPEA) Board. We are inspired by the work you do, and your commitment to excellence. Keep shattering those glass ceilings and paving the way for the next generation of women!



## FUN FACT

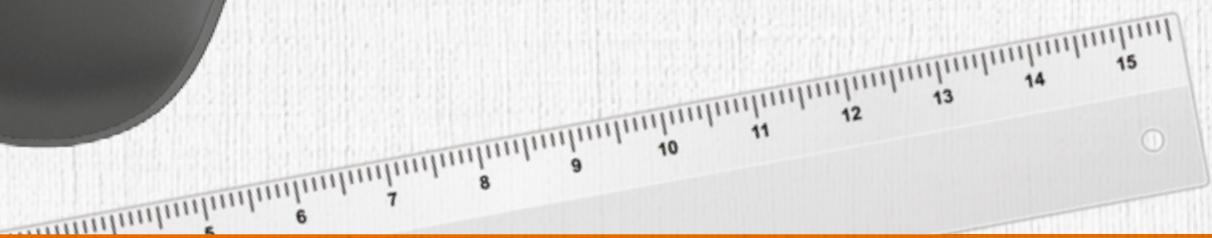
Liz Lenjo and Kayana News co-editor Brenda Ndirangu were classmates in primary school, their throwback photos are priceless! A time when hairstyles were questionable, fashion was questionable, but the memories were unforgettable!



PHOTOS: LIZ LENJO/KAYANA



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# Empowering Women in Business

**MAUREEN AMAKABANE**

## How would you describe yourself?

I consider myself a serial entrepreneur. Over the last decade, I have experimented with different business ideas, some were successful, some businesses I sold off, and as the journey dictates, others failed. I'm currently working on building a digital platform that is both a marketplace and an information and knowledge hub for women in business. This is behind the brand *Nyayo Moms Sokos Ltd.*

## Why is mentorship important to you?

My inspiration to mentor the next generation of female business owners is based on my experience. I'm a product of mentorship and I believe some of the mistakes that I made in my journey can be avoided by younger female entrepreneurs if they get the right guidance from the right people. I also think mentorship is an important aspect of becoming an entrepreneur because we are moving into an era where having hands-on skills is essential to understanding your business and industry more deeply.

## What advice do you have for women who are underrepresented in their fields and how do they ensure that they have access to opportunities?

The terrain can be a bit tough for women going into male-dominated fields, especially in STEM. As women, our socialization around the idea of entrepreneurship is negatively influenced by cultural and societal norms. From limited access to funding, to societal expectations of a woman's supportive role in a family, we already have so many barriers. Therefore, mentorship becomes an important tool that women can use to break down these barriers.

## How do you define successful mentorship?

For me success is not a linear path, it's really about the mentee unpacking the knowledge and resources by the mentor, and applying it in their business journey. The most important thing that I consider when looking at mentorship is the mentee's commitment to the process



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA



**I also think mentorship is an important aspect of becoming an entrepreneur...**

and the implementation. Not everyone who says they want mentorship are ready for the experience, it's hard and sometimes exasperating.

#### **What are the most rewarding aspects of being a mentor?**

There is so much joy in giving, knowing you have influenced someone's life positively. I consider it philanthropy; being able to dedicate a few hours of your day or week to helping other people achieve their dreams. And also, mentorship is a two-way traffic. I get to learn so much from my younger mentees who have different perspectives on how the world works. For instance, navigating the digital world in business. At Nyayo Moms Sokos we have a very large community of women and there is so much potential and talent within. My cofounders and I are always ready to reach out to the women and offer mentorship if we have the time. I also try to maintain a positive relationship with my mentees so they can always feel comfortable staying in touch and asking questions. From my experience, people tend to have very specific needs and therefore, treating each mentee on a case-by-case basis allows me to have a personal connection with them.

#### **The theme for this year's International Women's Day was #EmbraceEquity. What does this mean to you in the context of gender and inclusivity in the business world?**

The idea of continuing to widen the spaces for women in all sectors and industries is crucial. Creating more opportunities, walking the journey with them, and even just listening. Women must have a voice because we all have different stories to tell. I loved this theme because it challenged us to take up the opportunity to embrace the diversity that every woman comes with. I also believe we're making significant progress in closing the gender gap in areas like employment, politics, education, and access to resources. However, there's more that can be done to address the disparities that still exist and encourage women to step up, especially in business.

#### **What do you hope to achieve in the next 5 years?**

There are so many things I'm passionate about but one of the most important things I'd like to see is women-owned businesses being formalized. As women in business, part of the reason why we're left out of conversations on policy is that we are out there hiding somewhere with our 'small' businesses, afraid to step into the ring and take our space. That is why I appreciate organizations like Kayana which guide these entrepreneurs through the whole process of government registration, acquisition of permits and licensing, tax obligations, accounting, product quality standards, and so much more. I see a possibility and a future where we can be able to walk with over five thousand women and get them through this first hurdle which is shadowing their business confidence.

I encourage all women entrepreneurs to keep doing what they are doing, during difficult times remember why you started your business and keep going. Also, don't be afraid to ask for help.



## What does Kayana Verified mean?

As part of our commitment to promoting small and micro businesses through our Home Biz Catalogue, My Hustle Duka and Kenya Cottage industry, we shall be adding a symbol to indicate businesses that meet our minimum criteria. This includes :

- Legally Registered business(es)
- Prompt response to orders and enquiries
- Established payment system
- Efficient Delivery system

Kayana will also give businesses a star rating:

Ok

Good

Excellent

Additional Areas that can give businesses a **three star rating**

Include :

- Follow-up on Customer satisfaction upon delivery
- Swift resolution to possible problems with delivery
- Ability to fulfill bulk orders
- Quality stamp (KEBS or other international organization)
- Patented products.  
(Copyright/Trademarked products)

**Vendor**

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vendor handle



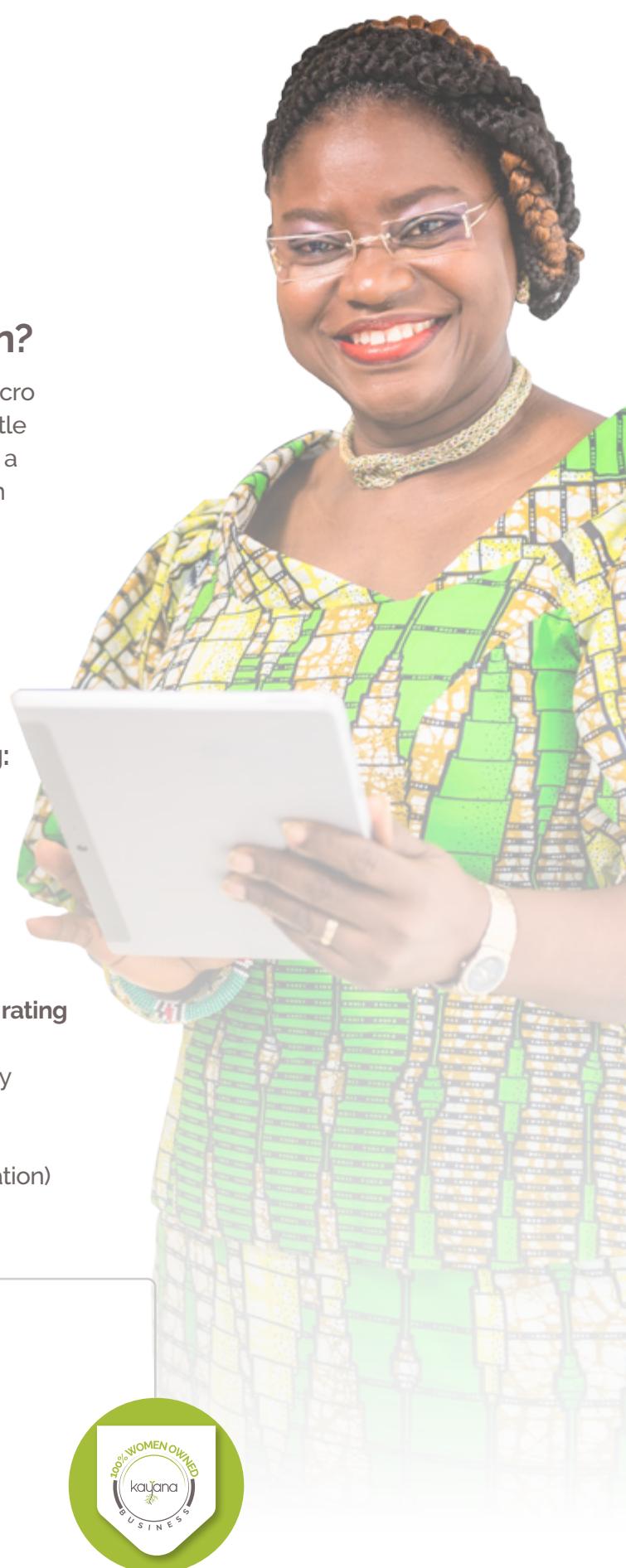
A kayana verified product will have a badge as illustrated above.



100% Women Owned Kayana Stamp applies to businesses that are 51% Women owned.

### Disclaimer

Kayana or the Home Biz Catalogue will not be held responsible for any matters arising from the sale of the products listed on our Home Biz Catalogue. Nor will we be liable for any loss of money when transacting with the listed businesses. The 'Verification' mark is used only to confirm that we have transacted with the said business(es).



# Women to Watch

The Women to Watch edition of Kayana News is a special feature that recognizes and celebrates women who serve as role models, inspiring and empowering other women within their professions and organizations. This edition shines a spotlight on the exceptional achievements and contributions of these women, showcasing their dedication, leadership, and determination.

The purpose of the Women to Watch edition is to create awareness of the significant impact women can have in various fields and industries. By highlighting their stories, accomplishments, and journeys, the edition aims to inspire other women to pursue their goals, break barriers, and reach their full potential. In this article, we highlight four women who continue to break the glass ceiling.

## Amandla Ooko-Ombaka



In November last year, Amandla Ooko-Ombaka made history by becoming the youngest-ever female Partner at McKinsey's Nairobi office, where she has been making significant contributions for over seven years. She is a leader in McKinsey's Africa Agriculture and Consumer Packaged Goods Practices and is a vital member of the McKinsey Center for Agricultural Transformation. Ooko-Ombaka's journey with McKinsey began as a summer analyst in the Minneapolis office. She quickly impressed with her skills and dedication and was soon transferred to the firm's Nigeria office. Since then, she has become

a seasoned expert, serving agriculture and food clients across more than 15 countries in Africa, Europe, and the United States.

An economist by training with a "public sector heart and a private sector mind," Amandla has developed a reputation for delivering exceptional results to clients. She specializes in strategy and implementation, focusing on topics such as growth, market-entry, route-to-market, and digital design. Her innovative approach to problem-solving has made her a valuable asset to McKinsey and its clients.

## Dorothy Ooko



For over a decade, Dorothy Ooko continues to make strides in her career as she takes on the role of Head of Communications and Public Affairs for Africa at Google. She was recently recognized as one of the top 50 women in Management in Africa. Today, Dorothy is channeling her passion for teaching toward training professionals. As a certified facilitator of the Search Inside Yourself (SIY) program, Dorothy is dedicated to empowering individuals by imparting the principles of mindfulness. The SIY program focuses on enabling participants to grow in areas such as emotional intelligence, enhanced performance, and leadership. By teaching mindfulness techniques, Dorothy helps her students to cultivate greater self-awareness, improve their ability to focus and manage their emotions more constructively.

## Constance Swaniker

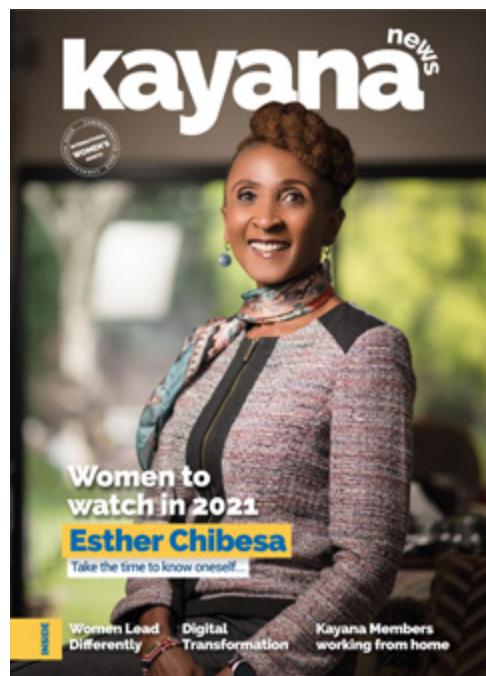


Just one year after graduating from art school, Constance Elizabeth Swaniker founded Accents & Art Limited, a company that has now been thriving for over two decades. Her business is a leading provider of wrought iron and wood furnishings in Ghana, offering unique designs that merge art with practicality. Swaniker's success is due in part to her ability to provide full-time employment to a team of 50 artisans. Her commitment to her team has not only helped her business thrive but has also provided meaningful employment opportunities for local workers.

One of Constance Swaniker's remarkable steel sculptures has recently been installed in Chestertown as part of a

collection of 24 sculptures donated to the Chestertown Public Art Committee by the Hanna and Peter Woicke collection. The installation of the sculptures began in April of this year, and her sculpture was included among the pieces chosen to be displayed. The collection, generously donated by the Woickes, features a diverse range of contemporary sculptures from some of the world's most talented artists, including her work. Her steel sculpture is a testament to her unique creative vision and artistic skill, and it stands as a beautiful addition to the public art in Chestertown.

## Esther Chibesa



Esther has worked with Citi Bank for over 23 years and was recently appointed as the co-head of treasury and trade solutions for the Middle East and Africa emerging market cluster. Throughout her professional journey, she has acquired an extensive comprehension of the intricate nature of Sub-Saharan Africa and a profound respect for its cultural variety. Her global outlook and recognition of the disparities and similarities in the marketplace enable her to engage and communicate effectively with relevant audiences and stakeholders. As a woman in a position of leadership, Esther Chibesa is breaking down barriers and paving the way for future generations of women to follow in her footsteps. Her accomplishments serve as an inspiration to other women who aspire to lead and make a difference in their fields.





# Creative Mentorship

## INSIGHTS FROM MIJIDE KEMOLI

Mijide Kemoli is a multi-disciplinary designer, working in various areas of the design field, including illustration, animation, graphic recording, comics, and educational board game development. Kemoli's journey in her career began at a young age when she developed a passion for creative expression and design. She recalls spending time drawing sketches, tracing over cartoons, and developing a liking for animation and storytelling.

Kemoli's teachers at school recognized her knack for creativity and encouraged her parents to nurture it. Over the years, her family has been incredibly supportive of her artistic pursuits. She pursued art and design from primary school to the university level, where she obtained an undergraduate degree in design, specializing in illustration. Kemoli then went on to complete a Master's degree in design in the UK.

Today, Kemoli is an accomplished designer with a wealth of experience in the field. She continues to explore different areas of design, bringing her unique perspective and creative vision to each project she undertakes. Whether it's developing educational board games or creating engaging illustrations, Kemoli's work is a testament to her passion for design and her dedication to the craft.

### How were you able to grow in your career so fast?

I feel incredibly lucky to have had the support of female mentors who have helped guide me through my career in design. They have been instrumental in teaching me how to be resilient in a field that is not dominated by women. One of the most important lessons they have imparted to me is the importance of pricing my work correctly. As a woman in



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAVANA



the creative space, money can be a taboo topic. However, knowing how to value my work and recognize the skills and knowledge I bring to the table has been a crucial step in advancing my career. Thanks to my mentors, I feel much more confident in my abilities and am better equipped to navigate the challenges that come with being a woman in this industry.

#### How did your mentorship journey start?

As a mentor, I am grateful for the opportunity to give back and support others in their journeys. However, before I

took on this role, I was fortunate enough to participate in a program that had a significant impact on my own path. This program was the Young Leaders Access Program, offered by an organization called MCW Global. The program brings in cohorts of young people aged 18-26 every year, who are tackling various social issues and working to make positive changes in their communities. I applied for this program in 2019, while working with another organization called Mtree. Our focus was on bringing art education to kids in marginalized communities, using art as a tool for self-expression, storytelling, and community building.

**“ As a young woman, whether in business or a certain profession, if you have the opportunity to connect with another woman who could guide you through that journey, don’t hesitate to take the help.**





Out of a global pool of 4,000 applicants, I was thrilled to be one of the 30 participants shortlisted for the program. The experience was truly transformative, providing me with valuable skills, knowledge, and a network of like-minded individuals who are passionate about making a difference in the world. In the program, we had a 10-day workshop in the US where we got to meet our mentors. I was fortunate to be paired with a mentor from Iraq, who had a wealth of experience in community planning and understanding the needs of the people and the gaps that exist in their social structure. I was able to refine my ideas and find ways to implement them, making a tangible difference in the lives of the people in the communities I serve.

#### **How do you define successful mentorship?**

The impact. Look at who this person was before the mentorship and where they are at the end of the process. Were you able to learn something different? Were you able to gain a bit more clarity about something? Were you able to grow from the experience? It's truly up to the person that is going through the mentorship to understand if the process had an impact or not. I'm currently mentoring three young people from different parts of the world under the MCW Program and they're doing amazing things for their communities.

#### **As a mentor, what do you struggle with the most?**

I think it's the imposter syndrome, it's common among creatives. Sometimes a mentee comes to you with a question and you'll there thinking, why did this person come to me? Am I the right person for this? I'm also still trying to figure things out, I don't have all the answers. But I think it is important to trust yourself and trust in your ability to impact other people's lives. You're only as good as you think you are.

#### **What advice do you have for young women looking for mentorship?**

If you have the opportunity to connect with a mentor, I highly encourage you to seize it. And it's not just about professional growth, but also about personal development. Learning how to take care of yourself emotionally and mentally is a crucial step in becoming your best self.

As women, we have historically been at a disadvantage in the professional world, and the world can be overwhelming as it is. But now, we are in an era where we are pushing for equity and fighting to break down barriers. Connecting with another woman who can guide you through that journey can be incredibly valuable. As a young woman, whether in business or a certain profession, if you have the opportunity to connect with another woman who could guide you through that journey, don't hesitate to take the help.



**2023**



**We are excited to announce that the D.E.A.R Awards has been renamed to the KAYANA FEMALE MSME AWARDS! As we continuously celebrate the achievements and contributions of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), we want to acknowledge the important role that women play in these industries.**

The Kayana Female MSME Awards will recognize the outstanding accomplishments of women-led businesses, and entrepreneurs in various sectors. We believe that it is essential to support and empower women who are creating positive change and driving economic growth.

The awards will continue to provide a platform for showcasing innovative ideas, best practices, and success stories, which will inspire and motivate others to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams. The award categories will remain the same, including the Most Innovative Business, Environmental Impact, Strong Leadership, and Commitment to Staff Development.

We are confident that the new name will better reflect the focus and values of our organization. We are committed to promoting gender diversity, inclusion, and equity in the MSME sector, and we look forward to continuing our efforts in this regard.

We invite all women-led MSMEs to participate in the Kayana Female MSME Awards. Together, we can create a more vibrant and thriving business ecosystem.

## Categories

### 1. Commitment to Staff Development



Small business owners working with a team must tap into the strengths and talents of employees to bring out the best in them. In this category, we consider mentorship opportunities within the organization, skill level-based training, flexible learning options, development of soft skills and people skills, and the working environment.

### 2. Community Impact



The beauty of small businesses is the value they have to the communities around them. What impact have your businesses had in your community in terms of economic sustainability (e.g., employment opportunities), social consciousness, community cohesion, cultivating relationships, and providing intellectual resources?

### 3. Environmental Impact



This category recognizes outstanding MSMEs with deep commitments to social justice and environmental sustainability. Our goal is to showcase such achievements to spread best practices, instigate dialogue, and inspire others – so that more such efforts are expended by larger businesses.

#### 4. Kayana's Choice Award



This award recognizes business excellence based on brand reputation, professionalism, customer satisfaction, and the quality of service or product in the market. In this unique category, the winner is chosen from, and by, the Kayana community after the nominations.

#### 5. Most Innovative Business



Many businesses constantly rethink their business processes to improve on existing products and services. This category recognizes businesses that have introduced new ideas, workflows, methodologies, services, and products to meet the evolving demands of the market.

#### 6. Most Adaptive Use of Technology



efficient customer service.

Businesses have been tested in a variety of ways in the past decade and challenged to embrace technology solutions. This category honors the continuous effort by SMEs to digitize their businesses to offer fast and

#### 7. Most Resilient Business



Can your business survive a broad, and unexpected disruption on the scale witnessed during the COVID pandemic? We want to recognize businesses that possess the cross-functional, strategic resilience and state of readiness that could overcome a worldwide challenge to consumer and B2B activity.

#### 8. Strong Leadership



It takes a great deal of effort to make a small business successful. We are looking for business owners who inspire their team, make responsible and calculated decisions, value the input of others, manage business finances well, embrace diversity, ensure clarity of business goals, and create a culture of teamwork.

#### 9. The Diaspora Excellence Award



This is a special category that recognizes exceptional women entrepreneurs who are making a positive impact in Kenya, despite being based abroad. This award honors women who have successfully launched and scaled businesses in Kenya, contributing to economic growth and social development. We are looking for entrepreneurs who demonstrate a strong commitment to their community back home, as well as a passion for entrepreneurship and innovation.



## Join us in celebrating women entrepreneurs

**Reserve your table now for Kshs. 25,000 for 6-8 members of your team.  
Contact us at [info@kayana.org](mailto:info@kayana.org) to secure your spot today.**



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# Emotional Intelligence and Mentorship

## A CONVERSATION WITH MUCHA MLINGO

Mucha Mlingo, an emotional intelligence practitioner and coach, is dedicated to transforming the lives of Africans by advocating for the importance of emotional intelligence. Mlingo strongly believes that emotional intelligence is a critical skill that every person should develop, and her mantra is to touch one heart and mind at a time.

Mlingo's career journey is quite interesting. Fifteen years ago, she would have never imagined that she would be doing what she is doing today. She started her career in the financial district in the UK with a dream of occupying a corner office and working at sea level. However, when her husband was transferred to work, they had to move to Kenya, and Mlingo struggled to find her place in the local financial sector as they were not originally from Kenya.

Fortunately, Mlingo's friend invited her to facilitate a training program at their organization, and this is where her journey as a consultant began. She quickly realized that she could do this and set up her own consultancy firm, PTS Africa, which has been in operation since 2010.

### How did you first learn about emotional intelligence?

When I started PTS, we ran sales training programs and we worked with financial service companies, training their sales teams. Over time, we evolved to an offering that is embedded in emotional intelligence. That journey came about because I read a book by Daniel Goleman. It really opened my mind to the idea of emotional intelligence and I came to an understanding that the difference between those who change the world and those who just get carried along is emotional intelligence.

### Why is mentorship important to you?

Mentorship is a critical element in personal and professional development. As someone who has experienced the power of mentorship first-hand, I have also embraced the role of being a mentor myself. I do it in many ways, I have mentored young women in the church, and in my work, and I'm also in the community. One of my core values is impact. I believe that people should be different



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA

as a result of interacting with me. Whether it's a 5-minute conversation with me, interacting with my brand, or participating in the programs we offer, my goal is to leave a positive impact on the lives of those I encounter.

### Tell us about the importance of celebrating success in Mentor-Mentee Relationships

In my experience as a mentor, I have learned that a successful mentorship relationship evolves with time. As people grow and change, so do their needs and aspirations. Therefore, being able to adapt to these



changes is critical to establishing a lasting and meaningful mentor-mentee relationship. I have had the privilege of mentoring individuals who started as my employees but are now pursuing different paths. That doesn't mean our relationship was over, it just took a different form.

I take pride in celebrating the successes of my mentees, and I encourage them to do the same for others. There's a perception out there that as women, we are our worst enemies. That is completely untrue. We can celebrate each other and look at the milestones we achieve. Part of growth is looking back and acknowledging the journey you've taken. I've had mentees where the relationship just bleeds into different facets of life. So it's not just business or work, but we also talk about other things like family, relationships, and mental health.

#### **How does mentorship impact your life?**

I have mentees who have pushed me out of my comfort zone and challenged me to step in certain directions. Having people who speak positivity into my life is something I deeply appreciate. Also, there's a satisfaction that comes with just seeing someone you've interacted with blossom and grow. As I get older, I feel like mentorship allows me to live a life of purpose. Whatever lessons I've learned in my journey could help a young woman somewhere have it easier. Seeing my mentees thrive, get better jobs, set up their homes, and parent in positive ways, gives me a great feeling of accomplishment because, in some way, shape, or form, I have contributed to their success.



**“ Being a mentor doesn’t mean that you have it all figured out. It means that you are open to sharing your experiences and knowledge, and willing to be vulnerable in the process.**

### Tell us about the importance of self-care and emotional intelligence in mentorship

It’s important to look after yourself because you can only give what you have. I try to cultivate relationships with my mentees where I’m open and we can have frank conversations. Surprisingly, I have come to learn that my mentees can support me as I focus on my well-being and mental health. As an emotional intelligence coach, I understand the importance of paying attention to my own emotions and well-being. Cultivating relationships with my mentees where I can be open and have frank conversations has allowed me to learn that they can also support me as I focus on my own well-being and mental health.

Being a mentor doesn’t mean that you have it all figured out. It means that you are open to sharing your experiences and knowledge, and willing to be vulnerable in the process. By checking my own emotions and taking timeouts when needed, I can better serve my mentees and provide effective guidance and support.

### From your experience, what are the benefits of embracing diversity in the workplace and leadership?

Diversity isn’t just a ‘nice-to-have’, it makes business sense. We don’t need women in high levels of leadership because they are smarter than men, but because they bring a different perspective to the table. Embracing diversity means we look at things differently and therefore get better solutions. Organizations that want to thrive need to have everyone on board. You will not really go as far forward as you can if you only have half the room contributing to the conversation. When we have men and women, young and older, different ethnicities and cultures around the table together, we make better decisions.

### How can we advance gender equity in organizations?

One of the other hats I wear is I’m the chair of the gender sector board at KEPSA (Kenya Private Sector Alliance). Last year we launched a gender mainstreaming policy that has seven elements to it. The first one is the idea that it must be owned from the top. Leaders need to be actively engaged in promoting gender equality in their organizations. I would also say that we must be intentional about empowering women and that means putting money behind the initiatives we want to implement. The third thing is the need to demystify this idea that it is a men vs. women campaign. Men need to come on board and understand why it’s important to have empowered women. Lastly, I think we need to look at the organizational cultures that we have. Do we have a culture that allows women to fully express themselves or do we make them feel like they have to fit in a particular box? A lot of work needs to be done to help leaders understand their biases and reflect on how they can create a level playing field.

# An evening of Courageous *Conversations*

BY BRENDA NDIRANGU



It was an absolute delight to have **Candid Conversations: Circles for Women in Business** hosted at the Visa Innovation Hub, Nairobi. The theme for the evening was Courageous Leadership.

The event started with a panel conversation moderated by Ayuma Michelle, an award winning story teller, and CEO of Daughters of Africa. Ayuma, took us through an exercise in telling our own stories when introducing ourselves that we will be sure to use at future networking events.

We then listened to an the selected panel of women Leading Couragously, with Faith Nkatha a Digital Transformation and Fintech Expert, Eva Ngige – Sarwari – Country Director Visa, and our host, Ivy Mugo – who uses her platform on Social Media 'Just Ivy' to educate her followers and fans on Money Matters, and later Neomi Ng'ang'a – A Fashion Designer that specializes in Plus Size Women.





The room was filled with established entrepreneurs and *intrapreneurs*. Including Wendy Wachira, who runs a chain of lingerie stores in Nairobi, KanyiOhawa, Tracey Shiundu, of Funkie Science, Laura Walubengo, journalist and the hosts of OVAreact Podcast, Lush Angela, Monica Muhoya and Angela Wambui.

Courage takes different forms with when it comes to women, both in the corporate world as well as the business world. This can sometimes mean excusing yourself from important meetings to attend to young children's needs.

Courage takes the form of following your dreams even when you do not feel qualified.

Courageous Leadership may sometimes require us to go against conventional wisdom, maybe even irrational faith, believing that it is the right thing to do.

We later broke into smaller groups and explored these conversations further. It is in the small groups that the attendees are able to be completely candid. Building on the trust that is developed when one is able to be vulnerable.

All in all an amazing evening that even the Nairobi Rain could not dampen

Our next event will be on May 2023 in collaboration with the Royal Golf Club Nairobi.

Follow us on Instagram for details.



# Mentorship, Equity, and Inclusivity

A CONVERSATION WITH NASRIN KARIM, GENERAL MANAGER AT CAPITAL CLUB EAST AFRICA.



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA

**Nasrin has had a very varied career over the years, ranging from Credit referencing, HMO's, non-profit organizations and eventually, hospitality.**

She graciously agreed to host us, the Kayana Team, at the Capital Club East Africa, where she is currently the General Manager. Nasrin's bubbly and fun character was evident from the very beginning of the conversation, as well as her wealth in information and wisdom.

To Nasrin, mentorship is all about helping someone be a better version of themselves, for them to live vicariously through your own experiences. To be a mentor, you not only need to guide and support but to also share. You share not only your successes but also your failures so that someone can learn through your mistakes. It is from your mistakes that you become the person that you shape up to be

professional worker that you are. She believes that one of the biggest rewards and gifts that one can give to someone else, is to share onwards.

Having experienced different mentors during her vast and varied career, she does mention that none of those were ever formal mentors. These were individuals that she got to learn from during the course of her work life. It is along this way that she got to learn one of the best pieces of advice, which she admits, she doesn't always apply, which is "if you ask and you don't get, you might gain something. But, if you don't ask and you don't get, then you will never gain something"

Success is relative, according to Nasrin. Successful mentorship is when someone appreciates a different perspective and then wants to apply it. Success also means that they have understood a situation in a way that they would not have understood it otherwise. Success also means relying on someone else's wisdom, it helps a



“

**... in mentorship, one has to be ready and willing to put in the work.**

”

person to have more options and to apply those choices in a considered way.

When it comes to selecting, or choosing her mentees, Nasrin considers a few key areas surrounding the potential mentee. First is the person's desire to be mentored. Mentorship on her end is something that happens naturally. A rapport allows for it to happen naturally, making it very organic process.

Nasrin considers herself a very private person and tries to keep away from the limelight, but after joining ABSA club, which was a completely different environment from what she had become accustomed to, she realized that she was meeting some of the most established, accomplished, high profile women in the country and she felt that they needed a space and an opportunity to form bonds and friendships to share and to learn from one another and be mentors to one another. It is to this end that she founded Capital Women, which is an opportunity for the women to come together and bond and help each other out. She realizes, and research does show that, the higher up one is on the corporate ladder, the lonelier it gets. And so she uses this platform to encourage the ladies and remind them that they are not alone.

As a mentor, one is destined to experience burn-out. She sees this in herself and also in the mentees that has.





Since her ideal mentorship scenario is a rapport, a sort of relationship, then each of them should be able to identify when the other is not doing okay and remind them to take a breather and relax. Mentorship is a give and take relationship, and this kind of communication is ideally supposed to help each one grow, one way or another.

Nasrin's perspective on equity and inclusivity is that, if we focus on this kind of information on just the women, then we shall end up losing valuable opportunity to have it more gender inclusive. Talking about equity is not just about women from backgrounds, industries and walks of life, but importantly being able to also share it with the men, for them to totally and fully understand our journey and constraints for them to see how they can make this, the workforce, a more inclusive space.

She acknowledges that women understand and know the important responsibility each one in a leadership role of sorts has in sharing onward. While sitting in a room full of powerful women, she would remind them to be more accessible to those not higher up. That as much as one is working towards climbing up ranks in their careers, shattering glass ceilings and progressing in their careers, it is also important to make themselves available to share their experiences and lessons learnt.

For the younger ladies, those stuck in one aspect of life or another, she advises that they need to look for these opportunities to engage and interact with those they get inspiration from. For the mentors, her advice is that they make time to be in those spaces that the younger ones are in, to teach, learn and experience.

She wishes to make an impact in the spaces that she works in, by ensuring that it is a safe space for all those she works with and for.

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# From Trauma to Triumph

PATRICIA MATIVO



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAVANA

**A decade ago, Patricia was in a life-altering road accident that kept her out of school for two years. At the age of 16, the trauma and depression were overwhelming, but she refused to let her disability define her. After moving back to Kenya, she worked tirelessly to excel in her studies, refusing to be seen as anything other than a capable and accomplished woman.**

Patricia went on to pursue a career in STEM, joined campus politics, and served as an executive for two years. Her hard work paid off as she graduated top of her class with First Class Honors in Analytical Chemistry. She became a shining example of what women and persons with disabilities can achieve when they set their minds to it. Today, Patricia serves as the vice chairperson of the UN

Youth Advisory Panel Board and is the coordinator of the Global Network of Young Persons with Disabilities. She is dedicated to ensuring that young people with disabilities have access to sexual and reproductive health rights. Her achievements were recognized when she was named one of the Top 40 Under 40 women in Kenya by Business Daily Africa.

**A lot of the work that you do involves influencing the lives of young women and girls, tell us about why this is important to you**

I derive immense joy in helping young women find their path. When I come across someone with potential but without anyone to guide them, it breaks my heart. Having developed the right networks and relationships, I believe it's my responsibility to uplift other women and girls who would benefit from similar connections.

To me, mentorship is both intentional and unintentional. I often meet these amazing young women, and besides just being their mentor, I establish a life-long bond that is also impactful to me. I'm extremely grateful for the



opportunities that have come my way. My career journey has allowed me to meet so many people, and it's a blessing when someone comes to me and says that I have changed their lives.

**You have a massive following on social media and so many people are interested in your story. How do you leverage this platform to be a change catalyst?**

Wow, first of all, I'm humbled to be in a position of public interest. When I was selected as one of the Top 40 Under 40 women in Kenya, I took it as a reward for all the things that I have been doing in my capacity as a mentor and young leader. I consider myself a very selfless person and many times I prioritize other people's needs. This is not necessarily a bad thing because as I mentioned earlier, seeing other people excel and achieve their dreams is fulfilling.

I use my social media platform to raise awareness about

**Take advantage of the resources that are closest to you. Your mentor doesn't have to be a celebrity or a popular figure.**



issues that I am passionate about and that I believe require more attention. I share information about the need to have an inclusivity approach to social-political and economic issues concerning people with disabilities and women, and I encourage my followers to get involved in various ways. I also use my platform to inspire and empower others to make a difference in their communities. I think sharing my story can help make a positive impact in the world, and I provide resources and tools that my followers can use to get involved in causes that they care about.

#### **This year's International Women Day's Theme was #EmbraceEquity, what does this mean to you?**

When we talk about equity, it's not just about gender. It's about acknowledging and addressing the systemic barriers and biases that have historically disadvantaged certain groups of people. It means creating a level playing field where everyone has equal access to opportunities, resources, and support to succeed. Those who are left behind farthest deserve the greatest push.

For instance, women who are persons with disabilities are not at par with other women, so equity for us is being able to access resources and opportunities that other women can access. Equity for women, in general, is being able to access the resources and opportunities that men can access. There's a lot of work that needs to be done to achieve equity, and many times what comes up in these conversations is 'policy'. But we have so many policies in place, the problem is implementation. Organizations and people who hold positions of power and influence need to be intentional about this.

#### **With the many things you do, it takes a great deal of sacrifice to spend some of your mentoring young women. How do you handle burnout?**

Mentorship comes with a lot of pressure, and I've experienced moments where I struggle with my mental health because of the many responsibilities I have and the constant reminder that there is a young woman somewhere who needs my guidance in a certain way. It can be overwhelming, but I prioritize rest time and practicing self-care.

There have been times when I've referred mentees to other people because I knew I wasn't in the right frame of mind to provide them with the help they needed. I believe it's important, to be honest with yourself and accept when you're not at your best, and to communicate this to your mentees.

By doing this, you not only take care of yourself, but you also set an example for your mentees that it's okay to prioritize your well-being and seek help when needed. In the end, this helps to foster a healthier and more productive mentor-mentee relationship.

#### **What advice do you have for young women who are just starting their career journey or a new business and they're seeking guidance?**

Take advantage of the resources that are closest to you. Your mentor doesn't have to be a celebrity or a popular figure. Every woman who has taken the journey before you have a story to tell, learn how to socialize and network, you never know who you could meet. Personally, I've encountered immense growth by simply engaging with people and stepping out of my comfort zone. By putting yourself out there, you increase your chances of meeting people who can offer valuable insights and opportunities. Remember, mentorship and networking can happen in various forms and places. So don't be afraid to take the first step!



# From Mentorship to Entrepreneurship

PAULINE KIRAITHE

**"A true believer that you can become what you imagine and dream of yourself."**

We at Kayana had the privilege to host Pauline, founder and CEO of Talent Guru254, an organization that helps people discover and nurture their true talent to be the best version of themselves, to talk about her journey through mentorship.

Pauline is a HR Professional with over 20 years multi-sectorial HR and management experience. A budding entrepreneur using her vast HR experience to individuals achieve their true potential through use of best people management practices.

Pauline believes that everyone has an inherent genius in them and a true talent that, until one discovers it, cannot operate as their true self. It is this belief that has led Pauline towards helping young people get into the right careers from the get go. She also helps professionals find their true passion and joy in the jobs that they do.

Pauline is a product of mentorship. In her sixth year of her career, she sought out a career mentor whom she did not personally know but looked up to, and wanted to be like. She admired his style of leadership, his work ethic and how he handled tasks. She mentions that when she approached him, the first thing he asked was whether she was ready "to do the work". She points out that in mentorship, one has to be ready and willing to put in the work. There is a lot of output from the mentor and a lot more input to the mentee and a step further of implementation. Mentorship requires a lot of discipline and proactivity from the mentee. It is the mentees task to do all the follow up and show up, ask questions and seek clarification. She affirms that mentorship enables you to accelerate your career.

As me mentor herself, having benefited from mentorship, she believes that one has the power to replicate all that they have learnt and that they have the opportunity to



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA

**... in mentorship, one has to be ready and willing to put in the work.**



pass it on to someone else. It is through the bedrock of her mentorship journey that she was able to set up Talent Gurus, which is in her pursuit of influencing and developing today's and tomorrow's leaders.

Pauline points out that it is important to have balance in life. It is very easy to get overwhelmed by life's activities, be it family life, work, social etc. The same way that one schedules meetings and trainings, it is also as important to schedule rest too. It is also important, as a mentor, to have some non-negotiable, in order to not experience burn-out. It is good to do some self-work, in order to understand yourself, to be self-aware. This ensures that you are a better version of yourself, for those you are coaching and mentoring.

Embrace Equity is this year's International Women's Day theme and to Pauline, this means that organizations can now look at women as people who bring in value. She is not blind to the fact that ladies, over the years, have put in more effort to take classes, put in the work, and go over and beyond, in order to get those leadership roles that were traditionally reserved for men. It is no longer about giving out these positions because they are women, but because they are qualified. She believes that women are required on the decision making table. The challenges faced by women, cannot be understood by men and it is by having women included in decision making table to help resolve some of the challenges within organizations holistically.

To the young women who are looking to achieve much more in their life, Pauline advises that one needs to be courageous. It is important to point out that one person



who inspires them, approach them, reach out and most of all, be willing to put in the work. One should not shy away. Once they have agreed, walk the journey with them. Secondly, read books about the people you admire and would love to emulate. Impart more knowledge to self. Thirdly, look for learning opportunities available around you. Attend talks, seminars and open forums. It is important to invest in your learning and personal development.

Pauline is looking at going global and digital in the work that she does.

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# A lady who wears many Hats

TATIANA ISABEL WHITUP

**"She has been a pillar for many of us young women. I have been mentored by her for over 4 years. She is such an aspiring soul, a mother of 3, a business woman, a published author, Print Model and she strongly believes in creating equality for all.",** this is how Tatiana Isabel Whitup is best described by one of her mentees. We at Kayana got the opportunity to have a sit down with her to know more about her and her journey as a mentor.

Tatiana describes herself as a lady who wears many hats. She has tried her hand in journalism, modelling, sales and event management. It is through the event coordination and marketing job that she got to interact with and plan for both local and international organizations.

It is through this journey that she saw a need to create a community for ladies and women who were interested in the fashion and modelling career. Unfortunately, at the time, there were not many fashion events around, meaning they would get little to no exposure. It is then that she decided to start her own company and with her knowledge in event management, she would plan and hold fashion events, where she would invite the ladies to attend and introduce them to different designers and sponsors and get them

**Tatiana measures the success of her mentorship to a mentee by how close they become...**



PHOTOS: W. KIMATIA/KAYANA



modelling gigs to help jump start their career. She took it a step further and took them through training on different aspects of modeling like how to walk, talk etc.

Tatiana says she loves to meddle, and it is through her meddling that got her to where she is now. When she was starting out in her modeling career, the one person she says was of tremendous help and guidance was Ajuma Nasenyana, who was gracious enough to share with her the knowledge on how to get through, and even took a step further and offered her a few gigs to do.

Tatiana realized that within her own circle of friends, there were others who were interested in modelling too but were not getting gigs and so she challenged herself to start her own, approach companies with talent in hand and try. She considers Ajuma as her mentor, because she was and still continues to be readily available to help, to give advice and to guide.

Through the benefit of having Ajuma as her mentor, she too has embarked on holding the hand of other models, both upcoming and already established. She says that, for her, it is fulfilling to see someone else advancing in their career,

no matter how little or much input from her may have had. Mentorship for Tatiana has been a learning process. From being a mentee to now having the role of being a mentor.

She does admit that it has not been an easy journey. Managing one's workload and the responsibility of helping those looking up to you can be tiring. One needs to have proper balance. Also, she adds, it is important to have healthy boundaries. Communication has to be two way. It is important to explain where you stand at that particular moment in life.

Tatiana measures the success of her mentorship to a mentee by how close they become, how much information the mentees relay about their personal journey and the connection they have together.

In line with the International Women's Day theme for 2023, which is all about embracing equality, Tatiana does believe that women need to come out and embrace each other. She believes that women carry so much weight on their shoulders and it is time that we spoke up and showed up for each other. She also believes that women need a fair chance in their careers to prove that we can also do more.



# Innovation & Passion

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## TRACY SHIUNDU

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Tracey is an entrepreneur with a passion for innovation and problem-solving. As the Co-founder of FunKe Science, an edtech platform that promotes kinesthetic learning through creative experiments, she is helping to encourage the learning of science in a fun and engaging way.

Tracey's love for science began at a young age and led her to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Chemistry from the University of Nairobi. She also holds a Postgraduate diploma in Project Management from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology and is currently completing her Masters of Science Degree in Environmental Chemistry at the University of Nairobi.

Through FunKe Science, Tracey is making a difference in the way children learn by providing them with an interactive and exciting way to engage with science. FunKe Science adopts kinesthetic learning, an approach

that has been shown to be highly effective, to help children learn by doing.

Her dedication and hard work have not gone unnoticed, and she has received several awards for her efforts, including being recognized as one of the Top 40 under 40 Women 2023 in Kenya. She was also the 2nd Runners up for the 2022 Kayana Female MSME Awards (formerly DEAR Awards) in the category of Most Innovative Business.

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### FUN FACT

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Tracey enjoys swimming during her spare time. She is a trained lifeguard and Level 1 swimming coach, which helps her to unwind after a long day.



# WHAT YOU MISSED

## KAYANA MEMBERS MEETUP 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023



The members' meetup was a highly anticipated event within the Kayana Community. It offered attendees the opportunity to learn about the exciting membership opportunities available for 2023, connect with current members, and enjoy a fun and interactive experience. It was a not-to-be-missed occasion for anyone interested in being part of the Kayana Community and exploring the possibilities it offered.

Attendees had the opportunity to interact and connect with current members of the Kayana Community. This presented a chance to forge new relationships, exchange ideas, and collaborate on future projects or initiatives. Networking at the event could lead to valuable connections, both personally and professionally, and expand one's social and professional circles within the community.

## NO CODE TRAINING February 4<sup>th</sup> 2023



Nocode has gained immense popularity in recent years for its ability to revolutionize website development by eliminating the need for coding. Businesses and entrepreneurs have eagerly embraced this game-changing technology, which allows them to create functional and visually appealing websites effortlessly. A comprehensive training event was held, led by expert facilitator Delano Geoffrey, to equip participants with the skills to build business websites without coding. The training catered to entrepreneurs, small business owners, and marketers, recognizing the wide applicability of nocode technology. Attendees learned about the benefits of nocode, engaged in practical exercises, and left the event empowered to create professional websites. This event signifies the growing demand for accessible website-building options and the potential of nocode technology to shape the future of web development.

## DEBT ACCESS TRAINING February 6<sup>th</sup> 2023



Kayana and Edge Three Sixty partnered to host a linkage event under the "Mrembo Imara" Project, powered by the UK-Kenya Tech Hub. The event focused on addressing the funding challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. Participants engaged in conversations, gained insights from successful entrepreneurs, and explored available resources and support networks. The event aimed to empower women entrepreneurs by providing knowledge, tools, and

connections to overcome funding barriers. Kayana and Edge Three Sixty are committed to supporting women entrepreneurs and creating a supportive community for their success.

## BIG SISTER CONVERSATIONS 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023



"Let's be the change we wish to see in the world."

Reflecting on the state of affairs in the world, including climate change, social inequality, and economic crises, it was important for us to see ourselves as possible agents of change. In a past event, we had the privilege of engaging in a conversation with Rosemary Wahome Evara, a Sustainability Practitioner & SDG Champion from Beyond Profit, to explore the power of our choices and habits in shaping the future of our planet.

During the event, we delved into practical ways to contribute to a sustainable future and learned from Rosemary's expertise and experiences. Her insights and guidance inspired us to make conscious decisions and take actions that can create a positive impact on our environment and society.

Together, we can make a significant difference and leave a positive legacy for future generations. Let's keep striving to be the change we wish to see in the world.

# WHAT'S COMING UP

## GOOGLE HUSTLE ACADEMY BOOTCAMP PROGRAM

**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2023**



**Google Hustle Academy**  
Bootcamp program

Learn from experts, attend guest speaker sessions and network with other businesses.

Find out more and sign up today!

Apply via <https://bit.ly/GHA-Kayana>

In collaboration with **kayana**

## KRA TRAINING - ETIMS FOR SEAMLESS TAX COMPLIANCE

**30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**



**KRA Training eTIMS for Seamless Tax Compliance**

Learn about the Electronic Tax Invoice Monitoring System (eTIMS) and gain invaluable insights into its seamless integration into your business operations.

**FREE SESSION**

Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 | 10:00 am - 12:00 pm | Virtual Session on Zoom

KENYA REVENUE AUTHORITY

## THE ULTIMATE COTTAGE MASTERCLASS

**23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023**



**THE ULTIMATE COTTAGE INDUSTRY Master Class**

**How to scale up like a pro**

This ultimate class is going to give you all the necessary frameworks you need to run your business successfully and what strategies you need to scale to 7 figures and adopt the much-coveted Millionaire Mindset.

Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023 | 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm | Kayana, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, CMS Africa, Chania Avenue, OTH Ring Road Kilimani | KES. 2,500/-

<https://bit.ly/cottagemasterclass>

In collaboration with **kayana**, **sofie**, **cafe**, **solo**, **kenya cottage**

## PITCHING MASTERCLASS

**25<sup>th</sup> May 2023**



**Pitching Masterclass**

Our expert instructor will guide you through the art of crafting a compelling pitch deck, how to effectively communicate your unique value proposition, and how to confidently present to potential investors.

**Date:** Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2023  
**Time:** 10:00 am - 12:00 pm | **Cost:** ...1000/=  
 Payable via M-Pesa, Account Number: 314579

**REGISTRATION LINK:** <https://bit.ly/kayanapitching>

## KAYANA FEMALE MSME AWARDS

**June 2023**



**KAYANA FEMALE MSME AWARDS** 2023

**Nominations Open!**

Nominate a female-owned business to receive a prestigious Kayana award under one of nine categories.

## KENYA COTTAGE EXPO MOMBASA EDITION

**Q4 2023**



**MOMBASA EDITION**

**TWENDE MOMBASA**

This year the Cottage Industry Expo is coming to the Coast County

**REGISTRATION LINK:** <https://bit.ly/KCEMSEA2023>

As life always reminds us sometimes we are the magic and the final ingredient needed.



## The Growth Academy PODCAST

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