

Women Leadership Power: A Catalyst for Transformation in the Insurance Industry



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Ms. Nicolene Bruwer



Ms. Veliswa Rozani



Ms. Jessica Lorathu



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Empowering Women, Strengthening the Institute

The Insurance Institute of South Africa (IISA) stands as a beacon of transformation, excellence, and inclusivity within the financial services sector. At the helm of its leadership sits a dynamic team of women whose collective vision continues to shape the institute's strategic direction and redefine leadership across the insurance profession.

Under the stewardship of **Ms Zimkhitha Saungweme**, Chairperson and President of the IISA Board, the institute champions governance excellence, diversity, and empowerment in an industry traditionally led by men. She is joined by an accomplished group of female leaders: **Ms Nicolene Bruwer**, Chairperson of the Social and Ethics Committee; **Ms Veliswa Rozani**, Chairperson of the Audit, Risk, Investment, and Governance Committee; **Ms Jessica Lorathu**, member of both the Audit, Risk, Investment, and Governance Committee and the Social and Ethics Committee; and **Dr. Musi Dowelani**, a distinguished member of the Professional Standards Committee.

Together, these women represent a formidable force, one that blends experience, innovation, and ethical leadership. Their collective impact strengthens IISA's governance framework, ensuring the institute remains an influential leader in advancing professional standards, education, and transformation across the insurance landscape.

The power of representation

Representation matters, especially in an industry built on trust, ethics, and long-term sustainability. The presence of strong female leadership within IISA's board and committees sends a powerful message: gender inclusion is not a gesture, it is a strategic advantage.

Each of these women brings depth and perspective shaped by years of professional experience and personal resilience. Their leadership styles, marked by empathy, collaboration, and accountability, help shape an inclusive and progressive culture at IISA. Notably, the diverse committee roles these women occupy underscore their influence across the institute's most critical governance areas. From financial oversight and ethics to professional standards and risk management, their contributions ensure balanced decision-making and robust governance. Dr. Musi Dowelani, in her capacity on the Professional Standards Committee, plays a pivotal role in upholding the integrity and ethical foundation of the insurance profession. Her expertise reinforces IISA's mission to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and continuous learning across the industry.

Investing in women leadership: a strategic imperative

IISA's continued investment in developing women leaders reflects its understanding that transformation is sustainable only when it is inclusive. Through mentorship, professional development, and empowerment initiatives, the institute ensures that women in the insurance sector are equipped to lead with competence and confidence. This investment extends beyond leadership representation. Initiatives such as the Youth Accelerator Programme have been instrumental in nurturing young female professionals, bridging the gender gap, and fostering future leaders. These programmes create a pipeline of talent capable of driving innovation, ethics, and growth in the sector. By creating an ecosystem that supports women at all career stages, IISA is not just advancing gender equity, it is future-proofing the industry.

Impact on the Industry

The growing influence of women at IISA has a ripple effect across the insurance sector. Their leadership sets a precedent for what effective, ethical, and inclusive governance looks like. It demonstrates how diversity of thought leads to better oversight, stronger ethical culture, and innovative strategic direction. Through the example set by these leaders, the insurance industry is witnessing the tangible benefits of empowered women leadership where there is more transparent decision-making, higher professional standards, and an elevated focus on social impact. These women are not only leading within IISA, they are redefining leadership across the industry. Their example challenges organisations to build environments that recognise and nurture the leadership potential of women at every level.

The IISA's investment in women leadership represents more than progress, it signifies purpose. Through the leadership of Zimkhitha Saungweme, Nicolene Bruwer, Veliswa Rozani, Jessica Lorathu, and Dr. Musi Dowelani, IISA continues to model the transformative power of inclusion and excellence. Their leadership reaffirms that the future of the insurance industry is transformative, diverse, ethical, and visionary. As IISA continues to grow under their guidance, the institute stands as a living example of what is possible when women are not just part of the conversation, but leading it.