

# Connections

Issue: September 2025



**In this issue, we spotlight the transformative power of embracing change..**

Change is the heartbeat of progress and the foundation for innovation. It challenges us to step beyond our comfort zones, question the status quo, and envision new possibilities. While it can be unsettling, change is also an invitation to grow, to evolve, and to strengthen our collective impact. In this edition, we explore stories of courage, adaptability, and forward thinking.

We celebrate those who embrace transformation with open minds and resilient hearts, inspiring others to do the same. Together, we discover that change is not something to fear, but a powerful catalyst for shaping the future we aspire to create.



# President's Message

Dear Members,

Grace Hopper, a pioneering computer scientist and U.S. Navy Rear Admiral, famously said: "The most dangerous phrase in the English language is, 'We have always done it this way.'" Her words are a powerful reminder that progress demands both courage and curiosity, the willingness to question tradition, explore alternatives, and embrace change as an opportunity for growth.

At IWFTT, we are taking this to heart. Our recent initiatives: streamlining our strategic pillars of Celebrating, Catalysing, and Connecting to align with our Global Forum, enhancing our administrative support, and strengthening our governance frameworks, are rooted in this commitment. These actions are not about discarding what has served us well, but about building upon it, ensuring our practices remain inclusive, transparent, and future-ready, just like the women we represent.

In the coming month, we will bring our Celebrating pillar to life by honouring three women who have been exemplary leaders and trailblazers. Their achievements and impact inspire us all, reminding us of the power of vision, courage, and persistence. These celebrations are not only about recognizing individual excellence, but all about amplifying the stories that light the way for others.

Change is rarely without questions or challenges, but it is in these moments that our shared values: collaboration, courage, commitment, integrity, and aspiration shine brightest. Together, we can navigate evolving landscapes while preserving the calibre, diversity, and sisterhood that define our Forum.

Let us draw inspiration from Grace Hopper's boldness. Let us lead with vision, engage with openness, respect and recreate pathways for the next generation of women leaders: because the future we want will not be built by doing things exactly as they have always been done.

Warm regards,

IWFTT President



## IWA Committee Chair's Message

As Chair of the Inspirational Women Awards Planning Committee, it is my honour and absolute joy to be part of the Committee planning our 2025 Inspirational Women awards gala.

This year's Gala is not just our fourth annual celebration—it is the capstone to a decade of connecting, uplifting, and championing women leaders throughout Trinidad and Tobago. As part of the global International Women's Forum, with more than 8,000 accomplished women in 35 countries, we know that when women lead, entire communities rise.

The Inspirational Women Awards Gala is a night to shine a spotlight on courage, resilience, and brilliance. It is a time when we honour those women who break boundaries, lift others, and lead with vision and integrity. Our 2025 honorees, Dr Catherine Minto Bain, Suzan Lakhan Baptiste and Maya Kirti Nanan are powerful examples of what happens when women are empowered to lead. They join a distinguished legacy of icons such as Zalayhar Hassanali, Dr. Rhoda Reddock, Lynette and Diana Mahabir-Wyatt.

As we look forward to another year of celebration and transformation, I am inspired by the words of Ruth Bader Ginsburg "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

At IWFTT, we believe in the limitless potential of every woman, and we invite our Members and partners to join us in building a future where leadership knows no gender, and every woman's dream is valued and realized.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Agard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Agard  
Chair, Inspirational Women Awards Planning Committee  
International Women's Forum Trinidad and Tobago



# The Power to Empower

"I raise up my voice—not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard... We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back." – Malala Yousafzai

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# February Forum Meeting The Gigabit Caribbean Society



VP, Lisa Agard gave an insightful discussion on the two-tier internet world brought to light pressing questions about global connectivity and equity. Participants reflected on whether regions such as the Caribbean, Africa, and the Pacific risk being left behind in the digital race, and what steps must be taken to bridge the divide.

The session highlighted both the challenges of infrastructure, affordability, and access, as well as the opportunities for these regions to leapfrog through innovation, collaboration, and forward-thinking policies. The conversation closed with a strong call to action: to ensure no region is left stranded in the digital divide, but instead empowered to thrive in the global digital economy.

The session concluded with thoughtful feedback from participants, who expressed deep appreciation for the relevance and urgency of the discussion. On behalf of the group, heartfelt thanks were extended to VP Lisa Agard for investing her time and sharing such critical insights on the two-tier internet world. Her contribution not only sparked important dialogue but also equipped attendees with a clearer understanding of the steps needed to bridge the digital divide and create a more inclusive global digital economy.

# When women move, the world moves.

At Liberty Caribbean, we believe in the non-stop flow of progress. Progress that never settles, never slows down.

Progress that's amplified by women who lead with boldness, innovate with purpose, and move entire communities forward.

That's why we proudly stand with the International Women's Forum Trinidad and Tobago (IWFTT) to uplift accomplished women and develop the next generation of bold, purpose-driven leaders.

Because when women move, the world moves. And we'll be right beside them, keeping their Riddim flowing.



# 10th Anniversary Celebration - Celebrating "The Power of Ten"



# 10th Anniversary Celebration - Celebrating “The Power of Ten”



The 10th Anniversary Dinner of the International Women’s Forum Trinidad and Tobago was a powerful and heartfelt celebration of our currency: connection. Held under the theme “The Power of Ten,” the evening reflected ten years of collective strength, and advancing women’s leadership today and tomorrow. We proudly celebrated the remarkable women who have carried that vision forward: Our sisters from the IWF Jamaica Forum, Pat Ramsey, IWF Jamaica President Minna Israel, Patsy Latchman Atterbury, Anya Schnoor, and Toni Randolf (IWF Florida), who supported our birth and our Presidents: Sharon Christopher, Gisele Marfleet, Rani Lakhan-Narace, Joanne Salazar and our current president, Dr Indira Couch.

Each one has played a vital role in shaping IWFTT into the powerful sisterhood it is today, marked by our purpose: to connect, to catalyze and to celebrate. A heartfelt thank you to Minna Israel and Patsy Latchman-Atterbury whose presence was a reminder to us that sisterhood has no borders. To our delightful host, Lucille Mair who opened her home and graciously welcomed us for another fabulous dine-in. Your hospitality and warmth added a special touch to an unforgettable evening. More than just a milestone, “The Power of Ten” reminded us that when women come together with intention, we don’t just lead—we transform. Here’s to the next decade of bold, brilliant women leading with heart!

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# International Women's Forum – Seattle World Leadership Conference 2025



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Indira Couch, Anya Schnoor, Sharon Christopher, Lisa Agard, and Joanne Salazar.



Pictured from left to right: Lisa Agard, Dr. Indira Couch, Joanne Salazar, Dr. Precious Moloi-Motsepe, and Sharon Christopher.

In May 2025, the International Women's Forum (IWF) gathered nearly 800 distinguished women leaders from 29 countries in Seattle, WA, for its World Leadership Conference themed "Start Here, Go Anywhere"

Held at the Hyatt Regency, the three-day event featured opening sessions at the iconic Chihuly Garden and Glass, and offered a compelling program exploring global issues—from philanthropy, AI, housing, and sustainability, to risk and resilience leadership—all through a women's leadership lens.

## Why It Mattered:

- Seattle's innovation-driven spirit—home to pioneers in aviation, technology, and culture—provided the perfect backdrop for envisioning impactful leadership that starts local and scales global
- The conference underscored how women leaders are shaping solutions across sectors with bold thinking, empathy, and foresight.
- It offered attendees a rich blend of thought leadership, meaningful dialogue, and strategic networking, reinforcing IWF's role in advancing women at the forefront of change.

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# Next Gen Tea

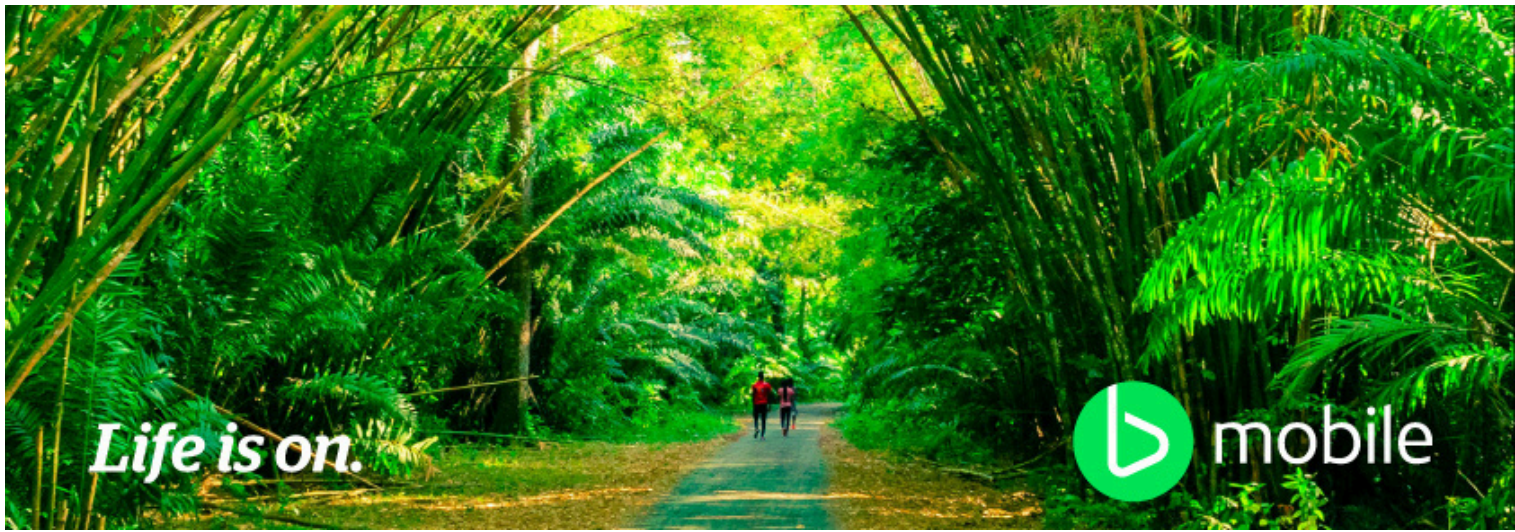


IWFTT recently hosted a vibrant gathering of past and current Next Gen Cohort members, the Next Gen and Fellows Committees, along with prospective invitees. Chaired by Georgina Terry Cowan, the session opened with welcoming remarks from our President Dr. Indra Couch, who highlighted the Forum's pillars of connection, catalyzing, and celebration.

Indu Sharma, a member of the Next Gen Committee, provided a recap of the previous cohort and outlined exciting future initiatives, including the launch of a Candid Conversations series and opportunities to engage with the IWF Global Fellows Programme. A panel discussion featuring Fellows Shelly Sylvester and Tricia Kissoon offered valuable insights into their experiences with the Global Fellows Programme, sparking a lively Q&A.

The afternoon concluded with thanks from the Chair and an informal networking session, fostering meaningful connections and renewed energy within the Next Gen community.





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**Join us for an unforgettable evening as we celebrate the outstanding achievements of these remarkable women on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2025 at Hyatt Regency**

Dr. Catherine Minto-Bain (**IWFTT Inspirational Champion of Women Award**) – A Fertility Specialist for over 25 years, Catherine is a Bristol University Medical School graduate. She moved to Trinidad and Tobago following her early career at Kings College Hospital and University College London, and has led the TT IVF & Fertility Centre since 2008, bringing over 3,500 healthy babies into the world through IVF, IUI, and other interventions. Under her leadership, the Centre is the only fertility clinic in the region to achieve rigorous European international accreditation. Catherine's research is published internationally in medical journals and textbooks.



Ms. Suzan Lakhan-Baptiste (**IWFTT Inspirational Advocate Award**) – As a founding member and Managing Director of Nature Seekers, Suzan has devoted over 30 years to protecting leatherback turtles, transforming Matura Beach from a poaching hotspot to one of the most productive rookeries in the world. She led community patrols, environmental education, turtle monitoring, and hatchling release programmes. Her advocacy resulted in stronger conservation laws, community involvement, and near elimination of turtle poaching in Matura.



Ms. Maya Kirti Nanan (**IWFTT Inspirational Emerging Leader Award**) – Founder and Director of the Autism Siblings and Friends Network, Maya began her advocacy at age 12 to fight for inclusivity for her autistic brother and others with special needs. She has mobilised over 5,000 youth volunteers to host inclusive events and established 'Rahul's Clubhouse', an autism-friendly centre offering developmental programmes, life skills, and sensory-friendly activities. Her work earned her international recognition, including a Queen's Commonwealth Trust Platinum Jubilee Fund grant, The Diana Award (2020), and being selected as The Commonwealth Young Person of the Year in 2023.





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The Bank's strategic focus remains pivotal in driving our success. Our award-winning Digital Infrastructure continues to reflect our clients' confidence in us, with new banking clients for 2024, accounting for over 6% of the total retail customers. Digital sales now account for 34% of total sales, with enrollment of 77% in our digital platforms and digital engagement at 37% all improving year over year (Y/Y). This is a good reflection of the enhancements made during the year for e.g. clients can now start the process for both deposits account opening and applications for credit via our online platforms. Scotiabank continues to deliver a differentiated experience, making it easier to do business with us for our clients while allowing our officers the time to build strong, primary client relationships.

We remain committed not only to our financial performance, but also to our Environmental and Social Governance responsibility and our employees. The Bank has formed an integral part of the social and economic fabric of Trinidad and Tobago for 70 years. Over these decades, Scotiabank has become not just a financial institution, but a cornerstone of the community, actively contributing to the country's development.

As we look forward the future, we are proud of the progress we have made and are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. We remain dedicated to building on our successes and driving sustainable growth.

**We extend our sincerest thanks to our employees for their commitment and tireless efforts. Your dedication and the passion you bring to the job not only elevate our service but also contribute to building an even better bank, every day. It is through your efforts that we continue to grow and thrive. With such a talented and passionate group of individuals, we are confident in the bright future of Scotiabank. Together, we will continue to create lasting value for our customers and communities.**

**December 13  
2024:** Christmas Dinner at Arazzi Restaurant

**February 11  
2025:** Forum Meeting: The Gigabit Caribbean Society by Lisa Agard

**May 2 2025:** 10th Anniversary Celebration, graciously hosted at Lucille Mair's home

**June 4 2025:** IWF Caribbean ( Bermuda, Barbados, Bahamas) Café Forum Event with Dr. Carika Weldon on Precision and Preventative Medicine using Genetics

**June 12 2025:** Virtual IWFTT Forum Meeting with Dr. Carika Weldon

**June 14 2025:** Next Gen tea with members of the Next Gen committee and a group of emerging women leaders.

**July 10 2025:** Swab and Sip, an intimate gathering for IWFTT members who purchased CariGenetics kits

**August 4 2025:** Virtual Forum with Dr. Martina Toby, Women's Health Specialist

**September 5  
2025:** Annual General Meeting, Hilton Hotel at 5:00pm

**September 30  
2025:** Inspiration Women Awards Gala

**December TBD:** Christmas Celebration to be announced



Few places in the world embody the spirit of collective humanity quite like eKapa (Cape Town), where the concept of Ubuntu perfectly expresses the importance of connection. And in a world with much uncertainty, it is vital to create and sustain our connections while learning about issues critical to effective leadership. In this context, we will explore the global economy, a shifting geopolitical landscape, and the importance of the arts. We will hear from our Ideas Remaking the World presenters—IWF's own innovators, instigators, and disruptors—and much more. We hope you will join us in South Africa this November 5-7!



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## Thank You to our Corporate Partners!

The International Women's Forum of Trinidad and Tobago (IWFTT) extends heartfelt thanks to our corporate partners for their generous support of the Inspirational Women Awards Gala 2025. We salute honourees, Dr. Catherine Minto-Bain, Suzan Lakhan-Baptiste and Maya Kirti Nanan.

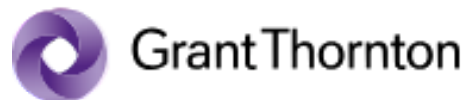
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