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Wings of Change



Women in Logistics
and Transport

Editor's Message

Celebrating 20 Editions of Wings of Change

It is with immense happiness and gratitude that I welcome you to the 20th edition of Wings of Change. Reaching this milestone is more than a celebration of a publication - it is a celebration of a growing global community united by purpose, leadership, and a shared commitment to advancing women in logistics, transport, and supply chain management.

Over the past twenty editions, Wings of Change has evolved into a platform that celebrates achievements, shares knowledge, amplifies diverse voices, and strengthens connections across our Global WiLAT family. Every edition reflects the dedication of our members, the passion of our volunteers, and the remarkable stories that continue to inspire our profession.

The theme for this edition, Humanitarian Logistics, was chosen to highlight one of the most impactful dimensions of our industry. Behind every emergency response, disaster relief operation, and humanitarian mission is a carefully coordinated logistics

network that ensures essential aid reaches those who need it most. Humanitarian logistics demonstrates the true power of our profession - where expertise, compassion, resilience, and collaboration come together to save lives and rebuild communities. As our world continues to face humanitarian challenges, it is a timely reminder of the critical role our industry plays in creating meaningful and lasting impact.

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to WiLAT Malawi as the newest member of our growing Global WiLAT family. We look forward to supporting your journey, celebrating your achievements, and working together to empower even more women across the logistics and transport sector.

This edition features Juliana Sophia Damu, FCILT, our Global Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia. With more than three decades of experience in logistics and transport management, Juliana has demonstrated exceptional leadership, professional excellence, and an unwavering commitment to developing people and advancing the profession. We are honoured to share her inspiring journey with our readers.

My sincere appreciation goes to all our Global Vice Chairpersons and Country Chairs for the outstanding work you continue to do across your respective regions. Your leadership, dedication, and commitment continue to strengthen WiLAT's global presence and create meaningful opportunities for our members.

I would also like to recognize our Champions for the remarkable initiatives they continue to lead. Their passion, innovation, and collaborative spirit are creating valuable learning experiences and expanding the reach of Global WiLAT across the world.

The WiLAT Capacity Building Committee (WCBC) continues to work actively in developing impactful programmes that support the growth of both our membership and the wider industry. I encourage all members to engage with these initiatives, participate actively, and reach out to the committee to explore the many

opportunities available.

We are also excited about the upcoming CILT International Convention in September, which will be held in Hong Kong under the theme "Global Corridors: Collaboration. Excellence." This convention will bring together global industry leaders, practitioners, and professionals to exchange ideas, strengthen partnerships, and shape the future of logistics and transport. More details can be found within this publication and through the CILT International website.

To every member who contributed articles, insights, and thought leadership to this edition, thank you for enriching Wings of Change with your expertise and perspectives. Your willingness to share knowledge strengthens our global community and inspires others to continue learning and growing.

A special congratulations to all those featured in our Sisterhood Corner. Your achievements are a testament to your dedication, perseverance, and leadership, and we are proud to celebrate your successes with our global membership.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to our Secretariat Team for their unwavering support and to our Editorial Board for their creativity, professionalism, and dedication in bringing every edition of Wings of Change to life. Your collective efforts have made this milestone edition possible.

As we celebrate our twentieth publication, we also look ahead with renewed purpose. Together, let us continue to inspire, empower, connect, and create lasting impact across the global logistics, transport, and supply chain community.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

Happy Reading!



Amra Zareer, CMILT
Editor - Wings of Change
GVC - External Relations & Publications



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Message from the Global WiLAT Chairperson



In an era defined by climate emergencies, armed conflicts, pandemics, displacement crises, and economic uncertainty, the heartbeat of humanitarian response lies in logistics. It is the unseen rhythm that sustains life, the quiet force that transforms chaos into order, and the bridge that carries hope across borders. Humanitarian logistics is no longer simply about moving relief items; it has become the very lifeline of human security.

Behind every successful humanitarian intervention is a network of dedicated professionals who ensure food reaches the hungry, medicine reaches the sick, and shelter reaches the displaced. In moments of despair, logistics becomes the invisible thread stitching together survival and dignity. It is the difference between vulnerability and protection, between devastation and recovery, and often, between life and death. The speed, reliability, and compassion embedded in these systems determine how quickly communities can rise again after being broken.

Yet today's humanitarian landscape is more complex than ever. Disasters strike with greater frequency, global supply chains falter, and fragile regions face heightened insecurity. These challenges demand a new generation of logistics leadership - one that is innovative, adaptive, and deeply human-centered. The future of humanitarian response will not only depend on technology and infrastructure, but on the vision, courage, and empathy of those who lead.

Within this evolving space, women are stepping forward as transformative leaders. Across continents, women in logistics and transport are shaping resilient

supply chains, strengthening emergency response systems, and championing inclusivity in humanitarian operations. Their leadership proves that logistics is not just about technical expertise; it is about empathy, foresight, and an unwavering commitment to community impact. Women bring a unique blend of resilience and compassion, which are qualities that turn supply chains into lifelines of hope.

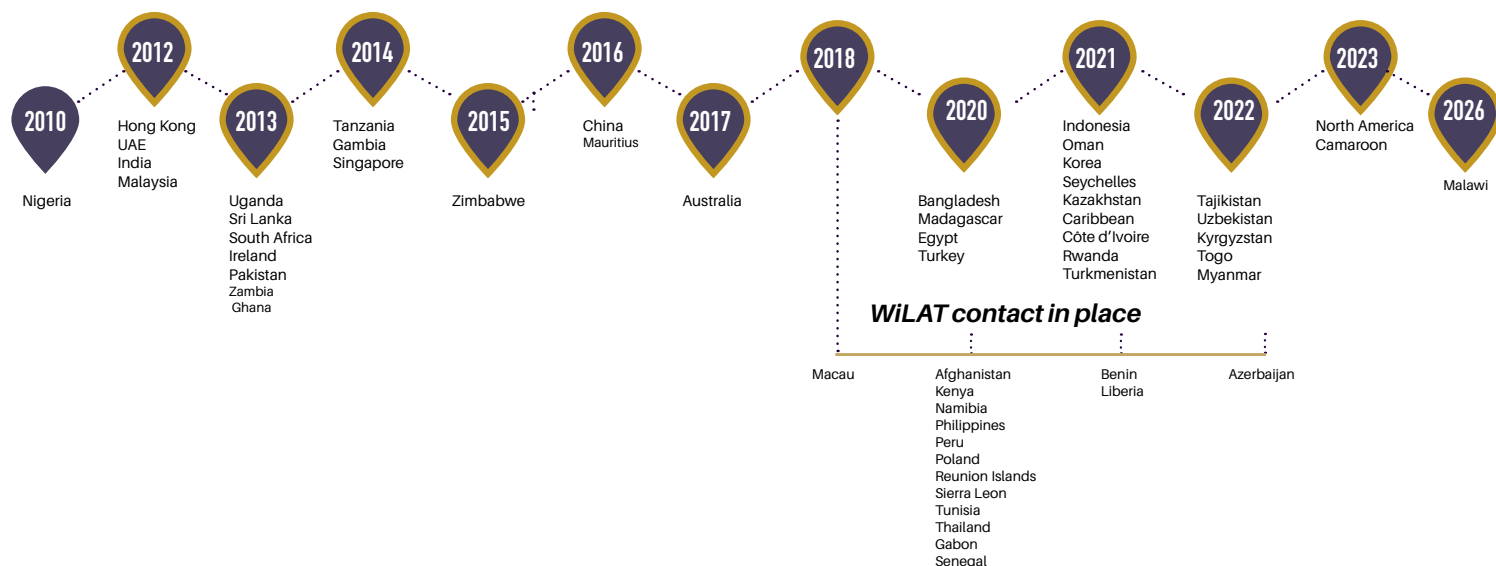
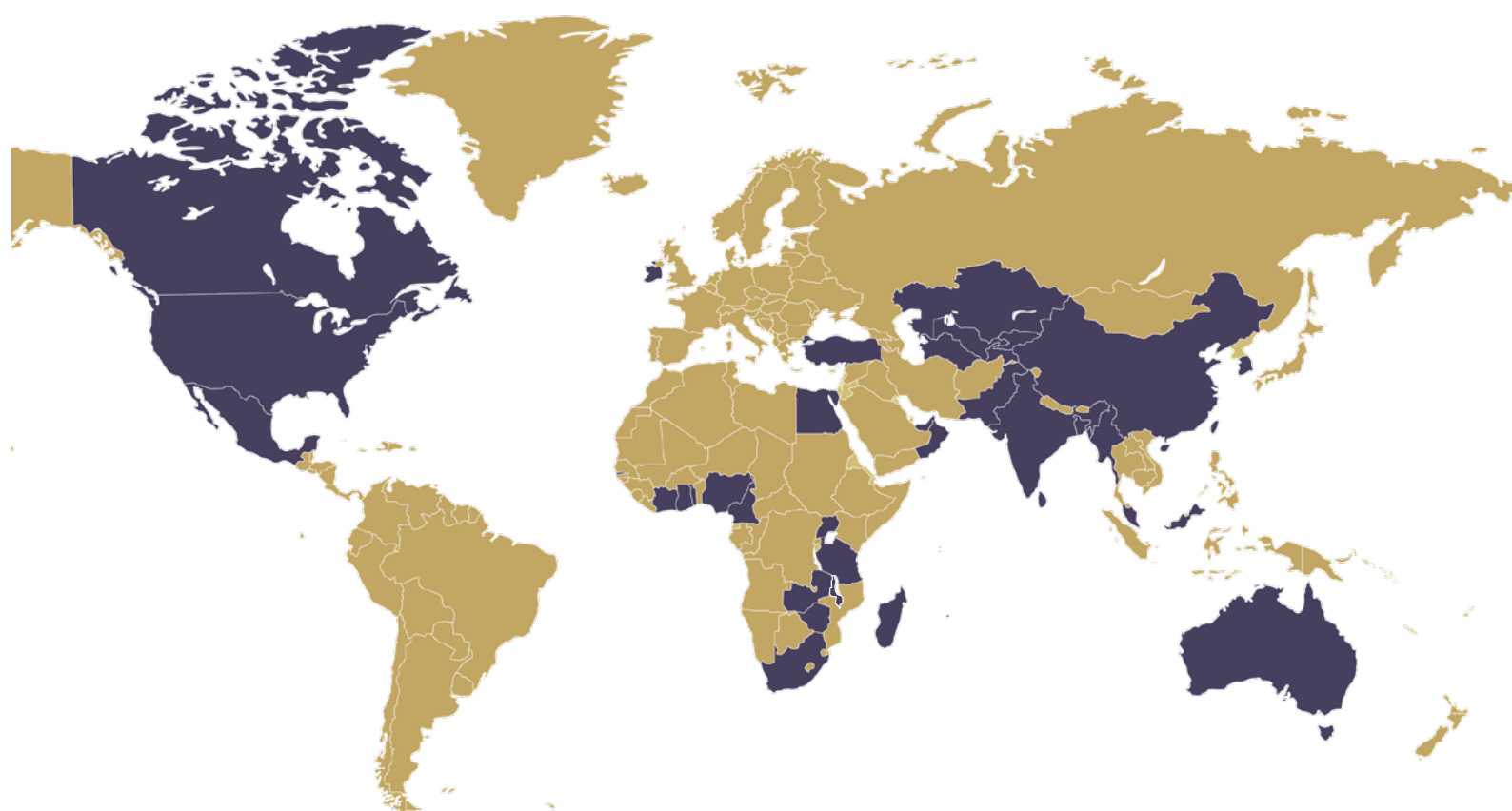
As WiLAT Global continues to amplify the voices and visibility of women in the industry, we must recognize the profound responsibility of our profession. Humanitarian logistics is not a secondary support function; it is a strategic pillar of sustainable development, disaster preparedness, and global resilience. It is the quiet heroism that safeguards humanity in its most fragile moments.

The world is entering an age where resilience will define progress. In this age, logistics professionals; and I mean both women and men alike, will remain at the forefront of connecting people to safety, opportunity, and hope. Our collective responsibility is clear: to invest in stronger systems, smarter technologies, ethical leadership, and inclusive partnerships that can meet the uncertainties of our time with courage and compassion.

As we publish this edition of *Wings of Change*, may we continue to inspire bold conversations, transformative leadership, and innovative solutions. Let us remind the world that logistics is not merely an industry - it is a force for humanity, a lifeline of security, and a testament to the power of women leading with strength and heart.

STRONGER TOGETHER!

**Doreen Owusu-Fianko, FCILT
Global WiLAT Chairperson**



Global Foot Print



Global News

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Myanmar's Logistics and Transport Sector

Current Status of Gender Diversity in Myanmar Logistics



Globally, women account for only approximately 12% of employment in the transportation and storage sector. In Myanmar, female participation is generally believed to be at or below this level due to long-standing cultural, social, and operational barriers.

Myanmar's logistics and transport industry remain heavily male-dominated, particularly in trucking, freight transportation, warehousing operations, fleet management, and

professional driving roles. However, female participation is gradually increasing in administrative functions, supply chain coordination, customer service, customs documentation, finance, procurement, and middle-management positions.

Like global trends, women remain significantly underrepresented in operational and senior leadership roles. Men continue to occupy the majority of executive, managerial, truck driving, fleet supervision, freight

handling, warehouse operations, and transport management positions. Leadership positions within transport companies, logistics firms, and trucking associations are also predominantly held by men.

Consequently, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Myanmar's logistics and transport sector requires addressing and dismantling historical barriers that limit women's access to leadership and decision-making positions.

Key Challenges Facing Women in Logistics

Despite gradual progress, women continue to face several significant challenges within the logistics and transport industry

Cultural Perceptions and Gender Stereotypes

Traditional perceptions continue to associate logistics, trucking, and transport operations with male occupations, discouraging women from pursuing careers in these fields.

Safety and Infrastructure Concerns

Long-distance travel, overnight routes, and remote work locations create security concerns for female employees. The limited availability of gender-sensitive facilities at truck stops, warehouses, logistics hubs, and transport terminals further discourages participation.

Work-Life Balance and Family Responsibilities

Women often bear a disproportionate share of caregiving and household responsibilities, making it more difficult to pursue demanding operational and leadership positions within the sector.

Limited Access to Leadership and Mentorship

Women remain underrepresented in decision-making roles. The lack of mentorship, professional networking opportunities, and visible female role models restricts career advancement and leadership development.

Progress Toward Gender Equality

Several organizations in Myanmar have initiated efforts to promote gender equality and workplace inclusion. These include:

- Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association (MWEA)
- Myanmar Women Affairs Network (MYANWAN)
- Women in Logistics and Transport (WILAT)
- SME Development Organizations
- Business Coalition for Gender Equality

International organizations, particularly the International Labour Organization (ILO), continue to support women's skills development, economic participation, and workplace inclusion initiatives in Myanmar.

In response, some logistics companies have begun implementing equal-pay policies, recruiting more female

employees, offering leadership development programs, and strengthening workplace safety and inclusiveness measures.

Expanding Opportunities for Women

Women are increasingly demonstrating their capabilities across a broad range of logistics functions, including:

- Professional truck driving
- Fleet operations management
- Dispatch and control center operations
- Warehouse supervision
- Transport planning and scheduling
- Supply chain management
- Logistics technology and digital systems

These contributions support the modernization and sustainability of Myanmar's trucking and logistics industry.

Although administrative and office-based positions have seen greater female participation, operational roles such as truck driving, warehouse operations, and senior leadership positions remain predominantly male. Encouragingly, new initiatives focused on female driver recruitment and technical skills development are beginning to emerge.

The Importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

■ Diversity

Diversity ensures that women have equal opportunities to participate across all levels and functions of the logistics and transport sector, including technical, operational, and leadership positions.

■ Equity

Equity promotes fair recruitment, equal pay for equal work, equal access to training, and unbiased promotion opportunities.

■ Inclusion

Inclusion creates a workplace culture where women feel respected, valued, and safe. This includes providing female-friendly facilities, flexible working arrangements, and zero tolerance for harassment and discrimination.

Research consistently shows that greater gender diversity contributes to improved productivity, innovation, safety performance, employee engagement, and long-term business sustainability.

Building a More Inclusive Future

Closing the gender gap in Myanmar's logistics and transport sector requires deliberate and sustained action.

Key priorities include:

- Expanding recruitment and vocational training opportunities for women.
- Ensuring equal access to leadership development programs.
- Providing flexible working arrangements that accommodate caregiving responsibilities
- Increasing women's access to networking platforms and professional mentorship
- Promoting equal access to digital technologies, AI-based logistics systems, and specialized transport training.
- Improving workplace infrastructure and safety measures for female employees.

The Role of Male Allies

Gender equality cannot be achieved without the active participation of men.

Organizations should encourage male employees and leaders to participate in DEI workshops, discussions, and awareness programs. Male leaders can play a crucial role by:

- Sponsoring and mentoring female talent.
- Advocating for equal opportunities.
- Assigning high-impact projects to qualified women.
- Challenging workplace biases and stereotypes.
- Supporting inclusive recruitment and promotion practices.

Building strong allyship between male and female professionals will strengthen organizational resilience and create a more equitable and productive industry.

Celebrating Women Leaders

Women are increasingly taking visible leadership roles within Myanmar's logistics and business sectors. Highlighting successful female professionals and trailblazers helps challenge outdated perceptions that transport and logistics are exclusively male professions.

Regular forums, professional networks, and peer-support platforms can further strengthen women's participation, encourage knowledge sharing, and accelerate career development.



Conclusion

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Myanmar's logistics and transport sector can best be described as "a bird attempting to fly with a broken wing." While meaningful progress has been made, significant barriers remain.

Recent economic challenges have widened employment and wage disparities between women and men. Women-led businesses, particularly small enterprises and informal-sector operators, have experienced greater difficulties in recovering from economic downturns.

Nevertheless, investing in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is not only a social responsibility but also a business necessity. A more gender-balanced logistics sector will enhance workforce resilience, strengthen supply chains, improve innovation, and contribute to the sustainable development of Myanmar's transport and logistics industry.

The future of Myanmar logistics depends on fully utilizing the talents and capabilities of both women and men, working together to build a more inclusive, competitive, and sustainable sector.

Reported by

Hla Hla Yee (Honey)

Managing Director of Aim Forward Co., Ltd

Chairperson of WiLAT (Myanmar)

Central Executive Committee (CEC) of "UMFCCI"

Executive Committee (EC) of MIFFA



The Chartered
Institute of Logistics
and Transport

New Members & Appointments



AMB. DR. KEMA CHIKWE, FCILT
GLOBAL WILAT AMBASSADOR



JULIET AGYAPOMAA OKAE, FCILT
CHAMPION GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES



NURMARIA SAROSA, CMILT
CHAMPION GREEN PRACTICES



RIMAL FERNANDO, CMILT
CHAIRPERSON SRI LANKA



GRACE MALLUNGO, CMILT
CHAIRPERSON MALAWI



CATHERINE ASIIMWE OLUM, CMILT
CHAIRPERSON UGANDA



Women in Logistics
and Transport



Champions Update

“The Hidden Careers Moving the World”

On April 21, AGLOW (Youth and Next Generation Engagement) opened its first global webinar with 110+ attendees from across the world—and 57% were first-time participants in a WiLAT event.

“The Hidden Careers Moving the World” offered a fresh perspective on the unusual roles that keep global logistics and transport running smoothly.

In this session, two extraordinary guests—**Gene Soo (MTR Corporation)** and **Mert Akyildiz (Arteazy)**—pulled back the curtain on non-traditional career paths within transport and logistics. Together, they explored how unexpected professions help power global trade and everyday commutes. The discussion was designed to inspire university students, career-changers, and anyone curious about what lies beyond the usual career routes—and it successfully strengthened DEI, youth engagement, and next-generation participation.

Participants praised the webinar’s clarity, depth, and insight, highlighting two compelling careers where innovation, precision, and passion deliver real value to the world of logistics and transport.



AGLOW | WiLAT GLOBAL WEBINAR

The Hidden Careers Moving Our World
Discover the unexpected roles powering our global trade & daily commutes on track



Speakers

Gene Soo - MTR Corporation
Mert Akyildiz - Arteazy



Tuesday, 21 April 2026
5pm HK (9am GMT)

**SCAN QR TO REGISTER
BEFORE 17 APRIL**

ASCEND • GROWTH • LEARNING • OPPORTUNITIES • WISDOM



AGLOW

Women in Logistics
and Transport



Stay tuned for AGLOW’s next initiative, **#IamTheFuture**, in July, featuring young professionals in non-conventional roles. Watch their stories unfold on Global WiLAT’s social media platforms—to spark inspiration, build aspiration, and widen the future of work.



Conducted through Capacity Building Center by the Leadership Development And Mentoring Champions Team

Dr. Lubna Ayub, FCILT member from Pakistan and an integral part of the Leadership Development and Mentoring team conducted the Training session on 19th June 2026, under the theme "Current International Perspective of Women and Leadership" which was attended by over 30 WILAT members across the world.

Dr Ayub holds a Phd in Sociology from the US on a Fulbright Doctoral Scholarship; a MSC in Development Studies from the London School

of Economics UK on Chevening Scholarship, and a specialization in Public Finance from the American University on a Hubert Humphrey Fellowship. She has worked for the civil services of Pakistan (1988-2025) in the Federal Board of Revenue, FBR, in varied positions. Dr. Ayub's recent most assignment was the Director General of Strategic Research and Analysis Wing, FBR and she has also worked as the Director General of the National Institute of Management, Karachi, where she supervised the professional and capacity building training of senior civil servants. Her expertise also spans across private airline as its Chief Human Resource Officer and currently, she is on the Board of Alpha Insurance Limited and a Member of the Board of Governors of Salim Habib University. She also serves as a Selection Committee member of the Millennium Institute of Entrepreneurship and Technology, Karachi.

Dr. Lubna's session attended by over 30+ members commenced on a virtual

platform on 19th June. Webinar was also graced by the Global WILAT Chair person, Ms. Doreen Owusu-Fianko, FCILT.

Dr. Lubna, diligently took the team through topics of what leadership means in the current context, how it's defined, notable traits of leadership, how do you distinctly separate leader from a manager, never before experienced leadership challenges for leaders and how do you craft an exciting leadership journey for one's self.

This session was an eye opener for all and was opened later for question-and-answer session that helped clarify many myths and doubts. We extend our heartfelt gratitude for Dr. Lubna for her dedication and commitment towards building leaders among WILAT community, through Leadership Development & Mentoring Champions Team and gratitude to WILAT Capacity building center for facilitating the same.



What is up next on the calendar for you in the Leadership Development & Mentoring learning Space ?

Join an exciting session on the 21st June 2026 via Zoom at GMT 8:30 when the Global Program Director - A P Moller Maersk, Ms. Randima Krishnaratne, takes us through how **AI trends transforming Global Logistics** under the theme "From Data To Decisions"

Looking forward to seeing you all there - Till then Happy Learning, every one!!





Territorial
News



BANGLADESH

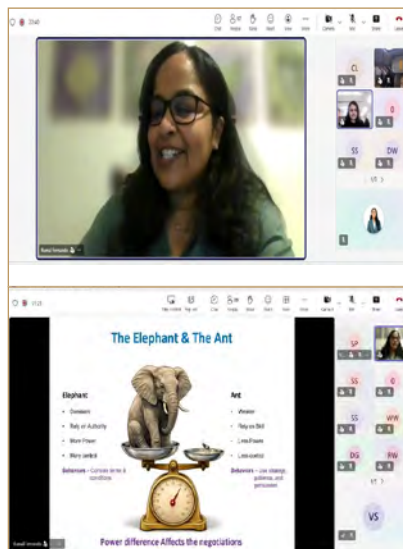
- WiLAT Bangladesh, organized a professional training session on “Port Logistics”. A significant number of participants attended both in person and online, representing ports, shipping companies, C&F agents, freight forwarders, ICDs, and other related organizations. The training was conducted by Mrs. Halima Begum, Chairperson, WiLAT Bangladesh. She highlighted the key logistics processes at Chattogram Port and emphasized the importance of operational efficiency, digitalization, and collaboration among stakeholders to enhance the overall performance and competitiveness of the logistics sector.



SRI LANKA

- WiLAT Sri Lanka conducted an online knowledge-sharing session on 07 April, facilitated by its Chairperson, Rimal, who also serves as an Independent Non-Executive Director of Hayleys PLC and DIMO PLC. The session focused on the topic, “A Systematic Approach for Negotiation” on 7th April 2026.

The session was well received by participants and contributed to enhancing their knowledge and skills in structured negotiation practices. WiLAT Sri Lanka extends its appreciation to Rimal for sharing his expertise and facilitating this valuable learning opportunity.



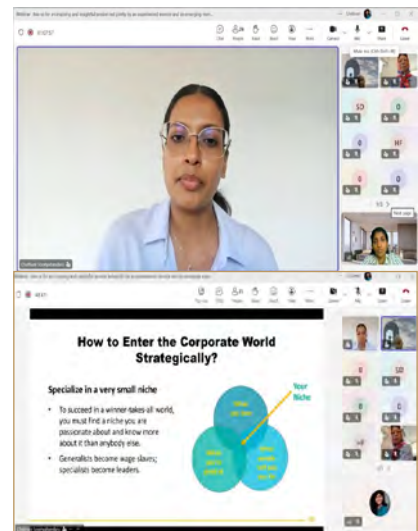
- On 10th April 2026, as part of the IGNITE Batch 11 mentoring programme, mentees participated in an educational industry visit to EFL 3PL, Orugodawatte. The visit provided participants with valuable exposure to modern logistics operations and the systems that support efficiency, accuracy, and scalability across supply chain activities.

WiLAT extends its appreciation to Mr. Nishan Hewagamage, CEO of EFL 3PL, and the EFL team for facilitating the visit and supporting the professional development of future logistics and supply chain practitioners through industry engagement initiatives.



- WiLAT Sri Lanka successfully conducted the first webinar under the IGNITE 11 programme to be jointly facilitated by a Mentor-Mentee duo, marking a significant milestone in the practical application of mentorship and professional development on 24th April 2026.

The webinar, titled “The Secret to Achieving More with Less - The 80/20 Principle,” was facilitated by Mr. Damith Liyanage, Senior Manager - Procurement at Litro Gas Lanka and IGNITE 11 Mentor, together with Ms. Chathuni Sooriyabandara, Undergraduate at Ocean University of Sri Lanka and IGNITE 11 Mentee.



- The 13th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of WiLAT Sri Lanka was successfully held on 15 May at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), Colombo 07.

The AGM provided an opportunity to review the achievements, activities, and progress of the organization during the preceding year, while also reflecting on key milestones and contributions made towards advancing women in logistics and transport.



PAKISTAN

- On 13th April 2026, WILAT Pakistan organized a professional training session centered on Procurement Practices in the Logistics Industry. The training was conducted on 13th April 2026 by Ms. Samina Yasmeen, Member of WILAT Pakistan. The session provided in-depth insights into the critical role procurement plays in driving efficiency and competitiveness within logistics operations. The interactive discussions and exchange of industry experiences among participants further deepened the learning outcomes.



GHANA

- On 6 May 2026, WILAT Ghana inaugurated its newly elected executives, led by Chairperson Mrs. Mabel K. Kabutey. The new administration reaffirmed its commitment to membership growth, professional development, women's empowerment, and the expansion of WILAT activities across Ghana.



- WILAT Ghana also participated in the International Day for Women in Maritime celebrations on 18 May 2026, hosted by WISTA Ghana under the theme "From Policy to Practice: Advancing Gender Equality for Maritime Excellence." The event reinforced the importance of gender inclusion, leadership development, mentorship, and creating opportunities for women within the maritime and logistics sectors.



TOGO

- On April 17-18, WILAT Togo hosted Accra in Lomé, an initiative led by WILAT Togo in partnership with Her Tribe Connect.

Over two days, the event brought together committed women around leadership, experience sharing, and networking. It provided an opportunity to build meaningful connections, foster enriching exchanges, and strengthen a shared momentum: that of women determined to create a positive impact in their communities and beyond.



- On 22nd and 23rd April 2026, WILAT Togo participated in the seminar on Strategic Trade Risk Management organized by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) in collaboration with SECURUS Strategic Trade Solutions, with the support of the U.S. Department of State. The seminar contributed to strengthening the logistics and trade compliance capacities of stakeholders while promoting a safer, more transparent business environment aligned with international trade regulations and standards.



- Focusing on the cases of Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Senegal, this webinar highlighted the strategic role of multimodal transport in transforming African logistics. This webinar was held on 30th May 2026. Through this theme, participants explored how an integrated approach combining road, rail, and maritime transport can help reduce logistics costs, enhance trade competitiveness, and support more sustainable and environmentally friendly growth.



NIGERIA

- On 18 May 2026, WiLAT Nigeria paid a courtesy visit to the Honorable Minister of Transport, reinforcing its commitment to strategic collaboration and the advancement of women in transport and logistics. The engagement strengthened partnerships, promoted inclusive leadership, and highlighted WiLAT's role in supporting sustainable growth and national transport development.



WiLAT South East Asia

Global Vice Chairperson
Juliana Sofhia Damu, CMILT



Malaysia



Singapore



Indonesia



Myanmar

INDONESIA

- WiLAT Indonesia conducted a field visit to Patimban Port, Subang, as part of WiLAT Indonesia's 5th anniversary celebrations on 8th April 2026. With the support from PT. Blue Bird Tbk, WiLAT gets a fully equipped Elf van with a capacity of 14 people.



- On 13th April 2026, WiLAT Indonesia signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Maha Karya University (Unmaha) during the Open Senate Session of the Maha Karya University Undergraduate Program Graduation Ceremony. The MoU was signed by Unmaha Rector Ir. Tri Atmodjowati and WiLAT Indonesia Chairperson Nurmaria Sarosa. This MoU aims to foster collaboration in the areas of knowledge sharing, CSR (foster parenting), student education, and job opportunities at WiLAT Indonesia's companies.



MALAYSIA

- On 3 April 2026, a CILTM Hari Raya Gathering & Management Council Meeting 2/2026 was held at De Palma Hotel, Shah Alam. The meeting fostered collaboration, strategic decision-making, and a shared commitment to building a more resilient and future-ready maritime logistics sector.



- On 13 May 2026, WiLAT Malaysia hosted Afternoon Talk 2.0 Webinar, bringing together industry experts to discuss digital transformation, automated data platforms, and cross-border supply chain integration. The webinar inspired participants to embrace innovation, strengthen digital capabilities, and enhance collaboration in building a smarter, more resilient, and globally connected logistics ecosystem.

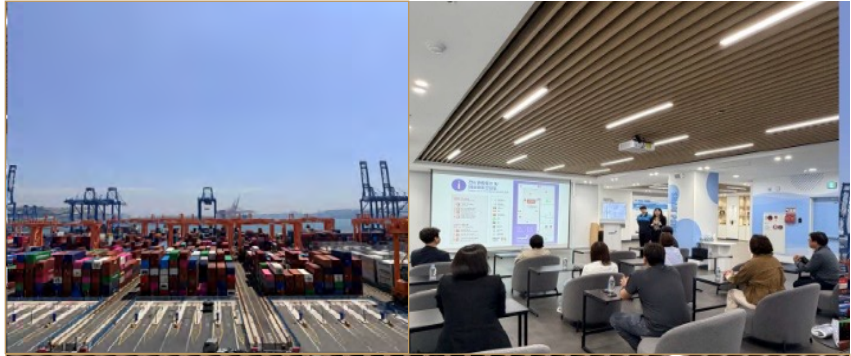


EAST ASIA

Global Vice Chairperson
Carmen Li, FCILT



China, Hongkong, Korea



SOUTH KOREA

- On 13th May 2026, CILT & WiLAT South Korea, conducted a technical field visit to major container terminals at Busan Port to enhance members' understanding of advanced logistics operations and future-oriented port systems.

The programme provided members with an opportunity to directly observe modern terminal operations while strengthening professional exchange within the logistics and transport sectors.



HONG KONG

- From 16-18 June 2026, WiLAT Hong Kong actively participated in the CILT China Conference 2026 in Langfang, joining industry leaders, policymakers, and logistics professionals to address the future of global supply chains. Discussions focused on rising logistics costs, evolving trade routes, sustainability, and digital innovation. The conference fostered strategic partnerships, knowledge exchange, and collaborative solutions, reinforcing



WiLAT's commitment to advancing resilient, sustainable, and future-ready transport and logistics across the region.





Juliana Sophia Damu,
FCILT - GVC for Southeast Asia



Interviewed by:
Amra Zareer, CMILT
GVC - External Relations & Publication /
Editor -Wings of Change

In this edition of Wings of Change, we are pleased to feature Juliana Sophia Damu, FCILT - GVC for Southeast Asia and a pioneering leader whose remarkable journey in logistics and transport spans more than three decades. From starting her career as a secretary in a customs brokerage firm to becoming the Founder & Director of ASCO Shipping & Logistics and the Global Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia of WiLAT, Juliana's story is one of resilience, vision, and purpose. Through her leadership, advocacy for women in the industry, and commitment to professional development, she continues to inspire the next generation of logistics professionals across the region. Join us as she shares the experiences, lessons, and values that have shaped her extraordinary journey.

Feature Article

1. You have spent over 30 years in the logistics and transport industry. What first inspired you to enter this field, and what continues to motivate you today?

I never knew much about logistics, nor did I plan to build a career in this field. My journey began unexpectedly when one of my college lecturers encouraged me to submit a job application to a customs brokerage company in North Jakarta. At the time, I was only in my second semester of college. In 1993, I joined the company as the CEO's secretary, and that marked the beginning of my professional career in the logistics industry.

What started as a simple career opportunity quickly evolved into a lifelong passion. Back then, most logistics processes were handled manually, often without clear guidelines or established procedures. Every day brought new challenges, uncertainty, and the need to learn by doing. It was demanding, but it was also incredibly dynamic and rewarding.

I soon discovered that logistics is fundamentally about problem-solving. Every shipment, document, regulation, and stakeholder must work together seamlessly. I often

compare logistics to conducting an orchestra—each instrument plays a different role, but success depends on creating harmony among them. That complexity and coordination fascinated me from the very beginning.

Over the years, I became increasingly inspired by how logistics connects people, businesses, trade, regulations, finance, and economies. Behind every shipment lies a story of growth, opportunity, and development. I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand how logistics serves as a critical backbone of national economic progress and global connectivity.

What continues to motivate me today is the endless opportunity for growth that this industry provides. Through logistics, I have been able to build businesses, create value, develop meaningful relationships, and continuously expand my knowledge and capabilities. More importantly, I can clearly see how much I have grown—professionally, personally, and as a leader. Even after more than 30 years, the industry continues to challenge, inspire, and teach me something new every day.

2 Looking back at your journey from starting in logistics in 1993 to becoming a regional leader, what have been some of the defining moments in your career?

Several milestones have defined and shaped my professional journey over the past three decades. One of the most significant was establishing ASCO Shipping & Logistics in 2004. Building a company from the ground up was both challenging and rewarding, requiring resilience, strategic vision, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to service excellence. It taught me valuable lessons about leadership, entrepreneurship, and the importance of creating sustainable value for customers and stakeholders.

Another defining chapter was the establishment of WILAT Indonesia. Beyond business success, I wanted to contribute to the advancement of the logistics and transport profession by creating opportunities for women to grow, lead, and thrive in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated. Seeing WILAT

evolve into a respected platform for empowerment, mentorship, and professional development has been one of the most meaningful achievements of my career.

My involvement in professional organizations has also played a pivotal role in shaping my perspective. Serving in leadership positions within CILT Indonesia and, more recently, as WILAT Global Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia, has allowed me to engage with industry leaders across countries, exchange ideas, and contribute to the development of logistics and transport at both regional and global levels. These experiences have broadened my outlook and reinforced my commitment to building a more inclusive, innovative, and future-ready industry.

Looking back, the defining moments in my career have not only been about business growth or professional recognition. They have been about creating impact—whether by building organizations, developing people, advocating for diversity, or contributing to the advancement of the logistics and transport profession. Those opportunities to make a difference continue to be among the most rewarding aspects of my journey.

3. As the Founder & Director of ASCO Shipping & Logistics, what leadership values have guided you in building and sustaining your business?

The leadership values that have guided me throughout my journey as Founder and Director of ASCO Shipping & Logistics are integrity, perseverance, discipline, focus, open-mindedness, and a strong commitment to people-centered leadership. These principles have been the cornerstone of every decision I have made and every challenge I have faced in building and sustaining the business.

In the logistics industry, trust is everything. Our clients entrust us with their business, their cargo, and often their reputation. At the same time, our employees place their confidence in our leadership, vision, and ability to create opportunities for growth. That trust can only be earned and maintained through consistency, transparency, accountability, and



delivering on our commitments. I have always believed that sustainable success is achieved not only through operational excellence but also through investing in people. Empowering individuals, encouraging continuous learning, fostering collaboration, and maintaining high professional standards are essential to building a resilient and future-ready organization. When people feel valued, respected, and inspired, they are more willing to contribute their best and grow alongside the company.

For me, leadership is not about authority or position. It is about service, responsibility, and creating an environment where people can develop their talents, overcome challenges, and realize their full potential. A leader's success is ultimately reflected in the success of the people and organizations they help build.

Over the years, these values have enabled ASCO to navigate industry changes, economic uncertainties, and evolving customer expectations while continuing to grow with purpose, resilience, and integrity.

4. *You played a pioneering role in establishing WiLAT Indonesia. What impact did you hope to create for women in logistics and transport through this initiative?*

When I became fully engaged with WiLAT Indonesia as the country chair in 2021, one of our biggest challenges was building awareness and credibility for the organization. At that time, WiLAT was still relatively unknown to many stakeholders within the logistics and transport industry. However, I was fortunate to be supported by a dedicated, passionate, and committed committee team. Their belief in our mission gave me the confidence to keep moving forward, knocking on doors, initiating conversations, and building relationships. Gradually, those doors began to open, leading to valuable partnerships and collaborations with industry players, institutions, and professional organizations.

My vision was to create greater opportunities for women to thrive within the logistics and transport sector. For many years, talented women have faced barriers to

visibility, leadership opportunities, professional development, and access to influential networks. I believed that these challenges could be overcome by creating a platform that empowers women, amplifies their voices, and supports their growth.

Through WiLAT Indonesia, I wanted to build a community where women could learn from one another, share experiences, develop professionally, expand their networks, and gain the confidence to pursue leadership roles. Equally important, I hoped to inspire the next generation of women to see logistics and transport as industries full of opportunity, where success is determined by capability, commitment, and perseverance—not by gender.

At the same time, I have always believed that the success of WiLAT Indonesia is not the achievement of any one individual. It is the result of the collective efforts, dedication, and passion of the entire committee and all those who believed in our purpose. Every milestone we have achieved has been built through teamwork, collaboration, and a shared commitment to empowering women in our industry.

Today, seeing WiLAT Indonesia grow from being relatively unknown to becoming a recognized and respected platform for professional development and leadership gives me immense pride. More importantly, it reinforces my belief that when women are given opportunities, support, and encouragement, they can make extraordinary contributions to the logistics and transport industry and beyond.

5. *In your opinion, how has the role of women in the logistics and supply chain industry evolved across Southeast Asia over the years?*

The progress has been both significant and encouraging. Over the years, I have witnessed more women stepping into leadership positions, managing complex supply chains, driving innovation, and contributing to strategic decision-making across the logistics and transport industry. What was once considered a predominantly male profession is becoming increasingly diverse, inclusive, and representative of the

talent available across our region. One experience that particularly reinforced this observation was my visit to Brunei Darussalam in February 2026, where I attended the BIACC Trade & Logistics Expo 2026. The event was hosted by Brunei International Air Cargo Centre, whose Acting General Manager is a woman. During the event, I had the opportunity to speak about future career opportunities in the logistics sector. What impressed me most was that the majority of attendees were young women from universities and colleges. Their enthusiasm, confidence, and curiosity about building careers in logistics and supply chain management reflected a positive shift in mindset and aspirations among the younger generation.

This would have been far less common when I first entered the industry more than three decades ago. Today, women are not only participating in the sector but are increasingly shaping its future. They are leading organizations, managing operations, driving digital transformation initiatives, and influencing policy and business strategy.

While there is still progress to be made in achieving greater gender balance at all levels, I am encouraged by the growing recognition that diversity and inclusion are not simply social goals—they are business strengths. Organizations are increasingly realizing that diverse perspectives contribute to better decision-making, stronger innovation, and more sustainable growth.

Across Southeast Asia, women are becoming more visible, more influential, and more confident in pursuing leadership roles. The conversation has evolved from simply increasing participation to actively cultivating leadership. For me, that is one of the most promising indicators of the industry's future, and I am optimistic that the next generation of women leaders will continue to transform and elevate our profession.

6. *As WiLAT Global Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia, what are some key priorities or initiatives you hope to champion in the region?*

As WiLAT Global Vice Chairperson for Southeast Asia, my vision is to strengthen regional collaboration

and create a stronger ecosystem that supports the growth of women and professionals in the logistics, transport, and supply chain sectors. I believe that by working together across borders, we can accelerate knowledge sharing, leadership development, and industry advancement throughout the region. My first priority is to strengthen collaboration among Southeast Asian countries by creating more opportunities for professional development, mentorship, networking, and leadership growth. There is tremendous value in connecting professionals across different markets, cultures, and experiences, allowing us to learn from one another and address common industry challenges collectively.

My second priority is to promote stronger partnerships between industry, academia, and professional institutions. The logistics sector is evolving rapidly due to digitalization, sustainability requirements, changing trade patterns, and emerging technologies. To prepare the next generation of professionals, we must bridge the gap between education and industry by ensuring that students and young professionals gain the knowledge, skills, and practical exposure needed to thrive in an increasingly dynamic global environment.

My third priority is to support the establishment and expansion of CILT WiLAT chapters in countries where they do not yet exist, particularly in Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, and Vietnam. Expanding WiLAT's presence across the region will create greater opportunities for women to connect, learn, lead, and contribute to the profession while strengthening the collective voice of women in logistics and transport.

Ultimately, my goal is to help build a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable logistics sector across Southeast Asia—one that empowers current and future generations of professionals, fosters diverse leadership, and contributes positively to the economic development of our region.

7. The logistics industry is constantly evolving with technology, global disruptions, and changing customer demands. What skills do young professionals need most to thrive in this industry today?

The logistics and supply chain industry is evolving at an unprecedented pace, driven by technological advancements, global disruptions, shifting trade patterns, sustainability requirements, and changing customer expectations. As a result, technical expertise remains important, but success today requires much more than technical knowledge alone.

Young professionals need to develop a strong mindset characterized by adaptability, resilience, curiosity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. In an industry where unexpected challenges can arise at any moment, the ability to analyze situations, make informed decisions, and adapt quickly to change is invaluable. Digital literacy is also becoming increasingly essential, as technology continues to transform the way supply chains are planned, managed, and optimized.

Equally important are strong interpersonal skills. Effective communication, negotiation, emotional intelligence, and the ability to collaborate across cultures, functions, and disciplines are critical in a profession that connects people, organizations, and countries. Logistics is ultimately a people-driven business, and the ability to build relationships and work collaboratively often determines success as much as technical capability.

I also believe that lifelong learning is no longer optional—it is a necessity. The professionals who continuously seek new knowledge, embrace innovation, and remain open to change will be best positioned to succeed in the future of logistics and supply chain management.

However, if I were to highlight one quality above all others, it would be passion. Skills can be learned, knowledge can be acquired, and experience can be gained over time. But genuine passion is what drives individuals to persevere through challenges, continue learning, and consistently strive for excellence. For young professionals entering

this industry, passion is often the foundation upon which long-term success is built.

8. You are known as a speaker, mentor, and advocate for professional development. What advice would you give to young women aspiring to take on leadership roles in traditionally male-dominated industries?

Whenever I speak to groups of young women, I often say, "Women are logisticians by nature." Every time I say it, I see their eyes light up with excitement and pride. Women manage multiple responsibilities every day, coordinate people and resources, solve problems, adapt to changing circumstances, and make countless decisions—all qualities that are fundamental to success in logistics, supply chain, and leadership roles.

My advice to young women aspiring to lead in traditionally male-dominated industries is simple: believe in your abilities and never underestimate the value of your voice. Do not allow stereotypes, biases, or self-doubt to define your ambitions or limit your potential. Instead, focus on developing your knowledge, skills, and confidence, and let your performance speak for itself.

Invest in your education, seek mentors who inspire and challenge you, build strong professional networks, and commit yourself to continuous learning. Every experience—whether successful or difficult—offers valuable lessons that contribute to your personal and professional growth.

I firmly believe that leadership is not determined by gender. It is determined by competence, character, integrity, and courage. Great leaders are those who are willing to take responsibility, make difficult decisions, empower others, and continue learning throughout their careers.

There will inevitably be challenges along the way, and there may be moments when you are the only woman in the room. Do not see that as a disadvantage. See it as an opportunity to contribute a unique perspective, demonstrate your capabilities, and pave the way for those who will follow after you. Every challenge is an opportunity to learn,

grow, and strengthen your resilience. Most importantly, have confidence in your potential and do not be afraid to step forward when opportunities arise. Leadership often begins with a single decision to raise your hand, share your ideas, or accept a challenge. Believe in yourself, embrace the journey, and remember that there is no limit to what you can achieve when preparation, passion, and perseverance come together.

9. Throughout your journey, what has been the biggest challenge you faced personally or professionally, and how did you overcome it?

One of the greatest challenges throughout my career was building credibility and establishing myself in an industry that has traditionally been male-dominated. In many situations, I found that I had to work harder to earn

trust, demonstrate my capabilities, and prove that I could perform at the same level—or even beyond the expectations placed upon me.

As a woman navigating a largely patriarchal business environment, there were moments when I felt the need to continuously validate my expertise, decisions, and leadership. Perhaps the most difficult challenge was realizing that I could not wait for opportunities or recognition to be given to me; I had to create my own opportunities and build my own credibility. In many ways, I had to create my own privilege through consistent performance, perseverance, and results.

Looking back, that journey was both demanding and rewarding. It required not only professional resilience but also personal and spiritual strength. Every challenge taught me valuable lessons about patience, self-belief, humility, and perseverance. What initially appeared to be obstacles ultimately became opportunities for growth and transformation.

I overcame these challenges through persistence, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. I focused on delivering results, continuously expanding my knowledge, maintaining my integrity, and building trust through actions rather than words. Over time, credibility followed naturally.

Most importantly, I learned that challenges should not be viewed as limitations but as opportunities to become stronger, wiser, and more resilient. My experience has reinforced my belief that determination, competence, and integrity can break down barriers and open doors that may once have seemed impossible to enter.

Today, I am grateful for those experiences because they not only shaped my career but also shaped the person and leader I have become. They taught me that true success is not measured by the absence of challenges, but by the courage and resilience we demonstrate in overcoming them.

10. Finally, what does “leadership” mean to you, and what legacy would you like to leave behind for the next generation of logistics professionals?

To me, leadership is not about position, authority, or recognition. Leadership is about serving others responsibly, creating opportunities for growth, and empowering people to achieve more than they thought possible. A true leader inspires confidence, leads by example, and remains guided by integrity, humility, and purpose. Leadership is not measured by how many people follow you, but by how many people grow because of your influence.

Throughout my career, whether as a business leader, industry advocate, mentor, or volunteer, I have always believed that success becomes more meaningful when it is shared with others. One of the greatest responsibilities of leadership is to help people discover their strengths, build their confidence, and unlock their potential. When individuals succeed, organizations thrive, and industries progress.

As I reflect on more than three decades in the logistics and transport industry, I am grateful for the opportunities, challenges, and relationships that have shaped my journey. If there is one legacy I hope to leave behind, it is a legacy of empowerment, professionalism, and positive impact. I would like to be remembered not only for my contributions to the industry, but also for the people whose lives, careers, and aspirations I was able to support along the way.

I hope future generations of logistics professionals will continue to lead with integrity, embrace lifelong learning, adapt to change, and create opportunities for others. The industry will continue to evolve, but the values that define great leadership—character, courage, compassion, and commitment—will always remain relevant.

Ultimately, if I have inspired even a few people to believe in themselves, pursue excellence, and use their success to uplift others, then I will consider my journey both meaningful and successful. That, to me, is the true measure of leadership and the legacy worth leaving behind.



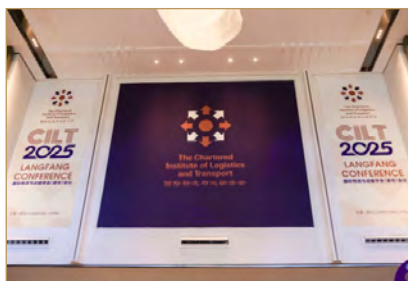


CLT
News

CILT Langfang Conference 2026: Linking the World, Trading for the Future

This past June, from the 16th to the 18th, the city of Langfang played host to the 2026 CILT Conference—a gathering that brought together some of the most thoughtful and forward-looking voices in logistics, transport, and supply chain management. The theme, **“Link the World, Trade for the Future,”** felt especially fitting at a time when global trade is navigating so much change and uncertainty.

Held alongside the China Langfang International Economic and Trade Fair, the conference has long been a key meeting point for logistics and supply chain professionals from around the world. And this year was no exception. Against a backdrop of shifting trade routes, rising costs, and growing calls for sustainability, the conversations were timely, honest, and genuinely productive. Attendees dug into the real challenges—how to cut logistics costs, improve circulation efficiency, and strengthen collaboration across industries—while also looking ahead with a sense of optimism and purpose.



Elise Kwok, Global GVC East Asia and Carmen Li, Immediate Past GVC East Asia co-hosted the WiLAT meeting and brought on stage the esteemed speakers from CILT International, JD Group, Shanghai Yuanfu Logistics Group and DHGate Group.



WiLAT China Celebrating a Decade of Impact

The opening day brought something particularly meaningful: a Multi-stakeholder Collaborative Meeting hosted by WiLAT. It was a space where the CILT President Jan Steenberg and Zhang Chunzhi, Vice President of China Communications and Transportation Association gave their opening address. WiLAT members, women leaders from across the sector, and industry experts came together not just to network, but to really listen and learn from one another.

But this year's gathering carried an extra layer of warmth and significance. It marked a beautiful milestone—WiLAT China's 10th anniversary. Global WiLAT Chairperson Doreen Owusu-Fianko' and Deputy Global WiLAT Chairperson Reshma Yousuf along with representatives from WiLAT chapters across the globe sent heartfelt video messages and warm wishes, applauding WiLAT China's remarkable journey over the past decade.



In the keynote speech, **Dr. Dorothy Chan, FCILT, Emeritus Global WiLAT Chairperson** took us down the memory lane through witnessing the growth of WiLAT in more than a decade ago.



The highlight of the event is where **Vicky Koo, FCILT, Honorary Secretary of CILT International** moderated the WiLAT Dialogue on **“The Power of Diversity”**. Our panellists included **Michael Lam, FCILT, Founding President of CILT Macao, Grace Sun, Founder & President of GLA Global Logistics Alliance** and **Kara Cheung, Chairperson of WiLAT Australia**.



Equally compelling was the second panel dialogue, moderated by **Zou Yu**, General Manager of West China Region, ESR Group, under the theme **"The Value of Collaboration"**. The discussion brought together a distinguished group of panellists: **Zhang Yu**, FCILT, Secretary-General of the Scientific and Technological Achievement Transformation Committee, Department of Industrial Engineering, Tsinghua University; **Vivien Yang**, FCILT, Chief Representative in China of Union Pacific Railroad; **Huang Guochun**, Regional Sales General Manager of Li Auto; and **Liu Yang**, Honorary Vice President of China Women Entrepreneurs Association, President of Hebei Women Entrepreneurs Association, Chairwoman of Hebei Yinghuang Group, Hebei Abuuka Group, and Yangyang Group.

The conversation was a powerful testament to the idea that when diverse forces unite, the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts.



For over ten years now, WILAT has been guided by four core values—leadership, mentoring, entrepreneurship, empowerment and corporate social responsibilities—and this session carried that spirit forward with warmth and energy. It was a reminder that diversity and inclusion continue to gain momentum in logistics and transport and WILAT is playing a key role to facilitate and cultivate the awareness of the power of diversity. From a bold vision to a thriving professional body, Global WILAT has been at the forefront of empowering women, fostering diversity, and championing inclusion in logistics, transport and Supply Chain Sector. Across continents, we have spread our wings, creating opportunities, breaking barriers, and paving the way for a more inclusive and equitable industry.

Looking Back, Moving Forward

The conference continued through June 18, with international delegates also taking part in trade events, exhibitions, and even industry chain matchmaking woven into the broader Langfang Economic and Trade Fair activities. There was a sense, throughout, that this wasn't just another industry event—it was a moment to pause, reflect, and reconnect with what makes global trade truly work: trust, relationships, and shared purpose.

As the dust settles on CILT Langfang 2026, one thing feels clear: the conversations started here will echo far beyond the conference halls. And the future of trade, however uncertain it may be, feels a little more within reach when we face it - Stronger Together!



Robert Warn FCILT named Volunteer of the Month for decades of leadership in governance, events and safety

Robert Warn FCILT (CILT Australia) has been recognised as Volunteer of the Month in recognition of his outstanding and sustained contribution to the Institute and the wider transport and logistics profession. Over several decades, his leadership has played a significant role in shaping governance, industry collaboration and professional engagement across Australia.

One of Robert's most notable achievements is the co-founding of

the Safeskies Conference, which he helped grow from a concept into a nationally recognised aviation safety forum. For more than 20 years, he provided leadership, governance and financial oversight, ultimately guiding its transition into an incorporated body to secure its long-term future.

As Chair of the ACT Section, Robert also led the incorporation of the Institute in the region and played a key role in establishing a new section in the Riverina Murray area. This

initiative expanded CILT's reach into a vital transport hub and strengthened connections with local industry.

Throughout his career, Robert has brought together leaders from government, military and the private sector, fostering collaboration and strengthening professional networks. His leadership stands as a model of long-term commitment, practical impact and service to the profession.

CILT Sri Lanka appoints Prof. H. R. Pasindu as President for 2026-2027



CILT Sri Lanka has appointed Prof. H. R. Pasindu as President for the 2026-2027 term, marking the beginning of

a new chapter for the Institute.

He was elected at the Institute's 42nd Annual General Meeting, held on 31 March 2026 in Colombo, where members and industry stakeholders gathered to reflect on achievements and set future priorities. Prof. Pasindu succeeds outgoing President Chandima Hulangamuwa FCILT.

The Institute reaffirmed its commitment to advancing professional standards, strengthening

knowledge sharing, and supporting the development of the logistics, transport and supply chain sectors in Sri Lanka. These priorities align with CILT's broader global mission to support the movement of goods and people and enhance professionalism across the industry.

CILT International extends its congratulations to Prof. Pasindu and looks forward to supporting his leadership in the year ahead.

CILT Singapore partners with Singapore Maritime Week 2026

CILT Singapore partnered with Singapore Maritime Week 2026, which took place from 20-24 April at the Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre. Organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), the event marked its 20th edition — two decades of convening global maritime leaders. It drew over 20,000 participants from close to 80 countries and regions, including Ministers, senior government officials and industry professionals.

Officially launched by Mr Jeffrey Siow, Acting Minister for Transport, the week's agenda tackled the forces reshaping the industry. The conference programme explored

maritime decarbonisation, digital transformation and innovation, cybersecurity, financing, and workforce transformation. High-level dialogues included a Ministerial Roundtable on sustainability and regulatory cooperation, the Singapore Maritime Lecture delivered by Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong, and a fireside chat on navigating geopolitical and trade shifts.

At the opening, MPA also unveiled OCEANS-X, a new data and API exchange platform designed to enable secure connectivity across the maritime ecosystem and enhance port efficiency.



Through this partnership, CILT members enjoyed exclusive discounted access to SMW 2026, making it easier to take part in these important conversations. Attendees gained fresh perspectives, built connections and contributed to shaping a more sustainable and resilient industry.

Safer roads, stronger communities: How CILT's support transformed lives in South Africa and Ghana

When a minibus taxi pulled up in Mitchell's Plain, South Africa, a small sticker on the window signalled something bigger than a journey. It told passengers, especially women, that this was a vehicle where safety, respect and accountability came first.

That sticker, and the transformation behind it, was set in motion by a £7,500 donation from CILT International in 2025.

Thousands of miles away in Ghana, a lorry driver adjusted his high-visibility

vest and glanced at a fact sheet he'd just been given the first formal safety guidance he'd ever received in years behind the wheel. His story, like countless others, was changing because of the same partnership.

These are the human faces behind the numbers, and they tell the story of how CILT's support for Transaid sparked lasting change in two communities where transport safety had long been an everyday risk.

For millions of South Africans, minibus taxis are not a choice, they are the only way to work, to school, to healthcare. Yet for women, each journey came with a shadow of fear. Harassment and violence were common, and silence often felt like the only option. Transaid and the South African National Taxi Council's Women's Desk (SANTACO) decided to rewrite that narrative. Backed by CILT International's funding alongside the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, nine minibus taxi associations embraced a landmark Safe Minibus Taxi Charter, a public commitment to safety, dignity and zero tolerance for abuse.

But charters on paper only work if hearts and minds shift. 124 drivers went through training to understand and prevent sexual and gender-based violence. The impact was immediate and profound: 86 per cent walked away believing they could actively help tackle these issues.

Today, those visible stickers on vehicles continue to signal something powerful: safety is non-negotiable. And more women are stepping

into leadership roles, no longer just passengers but decision-makers shaping the industry.

While South Africa tackled safety from within the vehicle, Ghana faced a different but equally deadly road crisis. In 2025 alone, an estimated 2,949 lives were lost on Ghanaian roads, part of a global tragedy that claims 1.19 million people annually, mostly in low- and middle-income countries.

The root cause? A staggering number of HGV drivers had never received any formal training.

Transaid, working hand in hand with CILT Ghana and the government, set out to close that gap. A new HGV driver training curriculum and instructor manual developed with technical expertise from CILT Ghana was adopted in 2024. By 2025, the focus had shifted to nationwide roll-out.

Field officers spread across 13 of Ghana's 16 regions, putting life-saving knowledge directly into drivers' hands. They didn't just talk, they distributed warning triangles, high-visibility vests and fact sheets, while

building a sustainable system through refresher modules and in-house trainer support. Transport companies could now embed safety standards permanently into their operations.

Core funding for Ghana came from the Puma Energy Foundation, but CILT International's £7,500 contribution amplified the reach of both programmes. It enabled deeper training, wider distribution, and stronger local partnerships proving that when a global professional community rallies together, practical, life-changing results follow.

From stickers on taxi windows in Mitchell's Plain to reflective vests on drivers in Accra, the threads of expertise, advocacy and funding wove together into something bigger: safer, more inclusive transport systems that empower communities from the ground up.



CILT Africa Forum 2026 highlights shared priorities for Africa's transport and logistics future

The 19th CILT Africa Forum took place from 22-24 April 2026 in Salima, Malawi. Under the banner Advancing Sustainable and Inclusive Transport and Logistics for Africa's Future, it brought together policymakers, industry leaders, academics and professionals from across the

continent and beyond. But as the opening session made clear, the theme was more than a banner. It was a challenge, laid down by Malawi's Minister of Transport and Public Works, Jappie Mhango, in his opening address. Transport, he reminded the room, is the backbone of economic

transformation, and for landlocked nations like Malawi, connectivity is not a luxury, it is survival.

The Minister painted a vision of transport systems that are digitally enabled, climate resilient, and genuinely inclusive of women, youth,



persons with disabilities, and the small-scale traders who keep borders bustling. He reaffirmed Malawi's commitment to modernising roads, revitalising railways, upgrading airports, and breathing new life into inland waterways, while ensuring no one is left behind in the journey toward regional integration under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

A standout technical session from Dr T.C. Mujakachi explored the need for adaptive transport law in an era of climate change, geopolitical instability and rapid technological change. The session underlined the importance of harmonised regulations within regional blocs such as SADC, and called for flexible legal frameworks, digitalisation of processes, stronger risk management, and closer cross-border cooperation.

Other sessions tackled circular supply chains, road safety, professional certification, and the logistics challenges facing landlocked nations like Malawi and Rwanda. Together, they reinforced that Africa's transport future depends as much on skills, regulation, technology and collaboration as on physical infrastructure.

A recurring message was the need to invest in people. The Forum underscored the value of education, professional certification and

continuous development — aligning closely with CILT's global focus on professional standards and equal opportunities.

A major milestone was the formal launch of WiLAT Malawi and CILT Next Generation Malawi. These were not ceremonial launches, they were declarations of intent.

Grace Malungo, the newly appointed President of WiLAT Malawi, stood before the gathering and called for a sector where women are not just participants but leaders. Her words were amplified by Dr Doreen Owusu-Fianko, Global Chairperson of WiLAT, who urged the chapter to inspire more women to enter the industry and reach their full potential.

Then came the youth. Dianah Nassimbwa MILT, Global Chairperson of CILT Next Generation, led the launch of the Next Generation chapter, marking a milestone for young professionals whose voices are often too quiet in sectoral conversations. The room buzzed. Here was the future, not as an afterthought, but seated at the table.

These launches gave flesh and bone to the Forum's wider commitment: inclusion is not a checkbox. It's a strategy.

By the time the final plenary wrapped,

the Forum had distilled its collective wisdom into a set of resolutions that were anything but vague. The official communiqué called for harmonised transport laws, stronger human capital through education and certification, a shift toward circular supply chains, and transport systems that are safe, affordable and green.

Delegates pledged to champion continuous professional development back home, push for digital transformation, empower women and youth, and build deeper public-private partnerships. Landlocked countries, they insisted, need tailored logistics solutions, not generic prescriptions.

Most importantly, every person in that room committed to carrying the resolutions beyond the lakeside, into ministries, boardrooms and border posts across the continent. This was not a talk-shop. It was a work order.

For CILT International, the Africa Forum was a powerful demonstration of the value of a connected professional community. It showed how regional dialogue, grounded in shared experience and practical thinking, can shape policy, build capability, and drive lasting progress, not just in individual nations, but across the entire profession.

When the classroom keeps pace with the world outside

The supply chain industry doesn't wait. Automation rewires warehouses, algorithms reroute fleets, and sustainability mandates rewrite procurement playbooks all while the talent pipeline scrambles to keep up. Into that gap, CILT International has introduced a fresh set of future-focused modules, designed not to chase trends but to anticipate them.

These new materials emerged from a simple but powerful conviction: that professional education should breathe the same air as the industry it serves.

CILT International occupies a rare vantage point. Its members are not distant observers they are the ones managing cross-border logistics during geopolitical crises, piloting electric fleets, and wrestling with the carbon footprint of global supply

chains. That frontline perspective flowed directly into the new modules, shaping content around the forces genuinely reshaping the profession: digital transformation, technology-led change, automation, sustainability, and the human skills that no machine can replicate.

For all the talk of AI and automation, the modules never lose sight of a central truth: technology is only as powerful as the people who wield it. The curriculum is built to help learners do more than understand emerging tools, it equips them to apply new ideas in practical, commercially aware, and human-centred ways. It's not about learning to code. It's about learning to lead when the ground rules keep changing.

The modules slot into CILT International's established

qualification framework, recognised across borders and delivered through accredited training providers worldwide. That means a logistics professional in Nairobi, a procurement manager in Manchester, and a supply chain analyst in Singapore can access the same standard of forward-looking education, tailored to their local context.

For learners, employers, and members ready to explore the offer, the full portfolio and a directory of accredited providers are available through CILT International. Because when the classroom keeps pace with the world outside, the professional walking out of it is already a step ahead.

CILT International Convention 2026!

This September, supply chain, logistics and transportation professionals from across the globe will come together in Hong Kong for five days of insight, collaboration and international networking.

Under the theme Global Corridors, Collaboration Excellence, this year's Convention will feature world class speakers, panel discussions, technical visits across Hong Kong, Macau and the Chinese Mainland, alongside dedicated Global WiLAT and CILT Next Generation sessions.

We are also honoured to welcome The Honorable John KC Lee, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, as Guest of Honour, with Ms Mable Chan, JP, Secretary for Transport and Logistics, delivering the keynote address.

Registration is now open, with technical visit selection launching in July. Secure your place today and join the global CILT community in Hong Kong this September.



The Chartered
Institute of Logistics
and Transport

GLOBAL CORRIDORS COLLABORATION EXCELLENCE

CILT International Convention

20-24 September 2026
Wan Chai | Hong Kong

Registration now open



ciltinternational.org



Industry Recap

Uncertainty Exposes Weak Links in Humanitarian Supply Chains

As humanitarian crises have deepened worldwide, a collapse in funding, a lack of investments in logistics, and increased political pressure have all made it harder than ever to get aid to the people who need it most, both in the U.S. and abroad. According to data from the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), humanitarian funding in 2025 fell to its lowest levels in a decade, driven in large part by the Trump administration's shuttering of the USAID, which for years served as one of the world's largest humanitarian donors. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Paris-based international forum of 38 member countries working to promote policies that improve global economic and social well-being, further found that aid assistance fell globally by more than 23% year-over-year in 2025, marking the largest annual dip on record.



<https://www.supplychainbrain.com/articles/43923-uncertainty-exposes-weak-links-in-humanitarian-supply-chains>

Iran crisis hampering aid to refugees as supply chain costs soar, UN warns

The cost of sending some aid to Sudan - the world's largest displacement crisis - has more than doubled since the Iran war disrupted shipping, pushing up transport costs and delaying deliveries, the U.N. refugee agency said on Friday.

Heightened insecurity around key Gulf shipping routes, including the Strait of Hormuz, along with port congestion, rising fuel prices and higher insurance premiums have hampered aid deliveries, particularly to Africa, the agency said.



<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/iran-crisis-hampering-aid-refugees-supply-chain-costs-soar-un-warns-2026-05-01>



Sisterhood Corner



In April 2026, two major milestones were reached by female leaders from Malawi including the CILT Next Generation Malawi launching by Dianah Nassimbwa, MILT, and the WiLAT Malawi Chapter launching by Chapter President Grace Malungo.

The establishment of these organizations would facilitate towards female empowerment and improvement in Malawi with exchange of wisdom and knowledge on a global level through the WiLAT network.

On 21 April 2026, WiLAT Hong Kong hosted a global webinar to explore and share the unexpected roles powering global trade and daily transportation systems. Featuring speakers Gene Soo and Mert Akyildiz, CMILT, over 100 participants were able to dive into the global trade and railway business from various hubs and angles.



AGLOW | WiLAT GLOBAL WEBINAR

The Hidden Careers Moving Our World
Discover the unexpected roles powering our global trade & daily commutes on track

Speakers
Gene Soo - MTR Corporation
Mert Akyildiz - Arteazy

Tuesday, 21 April 2026
 5pm HK (9am GMT)

SCAN QR TO REGISTER BEFORE 17 APRIL

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Women in Logistics and Transport

On 20 May 2026, Pamela Henderson, Head of Technical Services of Sydney Metro, was invited to share her experiences in delivering the Sydney Metro line from the supply chain and engineering planning angle during the CILT Australia networking event.

Networking Event

Delivering Metro at Scale: Supply Chains and City-Shaping Infrastructure



Wednesday, May 20, 2026



Ultimo Community Centre



6:00 pm - 8:00 pm AEST
Event begins at 6:30 pm sharp
7:30 pm - Networking Session



Members: \$15 | Non-members \$20

SPEAKER

Pamela Henderson
*Head of Technical Services
Sydney Metro*





The Chartered
Institute of Logistics
and Transport

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On 11 June 2026, WiLAT Australia hosted a webinar, 'Future Ready Logistics — The Hong Kong Advantage' featuring Kara Cheung, FCILT as one of the panelist. The session was cohosted by Hong Kong Trade Development Council and participants were able to explore the long term opportunities through the Hong Kong and Australia partnership.

Webinar

FUTURE-READY LOGISTICS: THE HONG KONG ADVANTAGE

Panelists and Guest Speaker



Steve Campbell
Founder
Crosswork



Kara Cheung
Managing Partner
KWC Associates



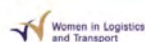
Nigel D'Souza
Director
Ocean Xpress
Shipping & Logistics



Bonnie Shek
Director, Australia/New Zealand
Hong Kong Trade Development
Council

 **THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2026**
6.00 pm – 7.00 pm AEST

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Member Articles

Sri Lanka - A Nations Humanitarian Logistics Response



Author
Rumal Fernando, CMILT

Rumal is a Supply Chain specialist with over 25 years of experience at Unilever Sri Lanka LTD where she joined as the first female Field Sales Manager and held several leadership roles within the company.

Rumal holds a MBA in International Trade and Logistics from the Post Graduate Institute of Management (PIM), University of Sri Jayewardenepura. She is an Affiliated member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (UK) and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Sri Lanka.

She currently serves Hayleys PLC and DIMO PLC as an Independent Non-Executive Director. She is a member of Women's Chamber of Industries and Commerce, and also serves as the Chairperson of Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT) Sri Lanka, and with her team she leads initiatives that empower women and leads the mentoring program of WiLAT Sri Lanka for young professionals and university students of Supply Chain management to strengthen the female talent pipeline for the industry.

Introduction

Humanitarian logistics is the process of planning, implementing, and controlling the efficient flow of relief supplies, services, and information during emergencies and disasters. Unlike commercial logistics, which focuses on profit and customer satisfaction, humanitarian logistics prioritizes saving lives, alleviating suffering, and supporting recovery.

Sri Lanka's humanitarian logistics system has been tested repeatedly over the past four decades. From the beginning of the Sri Lankan Civil War in 1983 to natural disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, recurring floods and landslides, the Easter Sunday attacks in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic crisis of 2022, and more recently Cyclone Ditwa, which cause a huge destruction which lead to many lives been lost and infrastructure related to rail & roads been damaged bringing entire nation to an abrupt halt operationally.

The country has faced numerous emergencies requiring coordinated humanitarian responses throughout these disasters and the resilience of Sri Lankans has been tested time and again while demonstrating both the strengths of Sri Lanka's humanitarian logistics capabilities and the areas where further improvements are necessary.

The Civil War Era (1983–2009)

The Sri Lankan Civil War was one of the country's longest humanitarian emergencies. Most of us grew up during this period and it lasted nearly three decades, the conflict displaced hundreds of thousands of people, particularly in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Humanitarian logistics during this period focused on delivering food, medicine, shelter materials, and essential services to internally displaced persons (IDPs). Government agencies, the Sri Lankan military, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations agencies, and numerous non-governmental organizations coordinated relief operations under difficult conditions.

The government was successful in establishing large-scale relief distribution systems for displaced populations, developing coordinated mechanisms between government authorities and humanitarian agencies, maintenance of critical supply chains to conflict-affected areas despite security challenges and such led to gaining experience in camp management and emergency relief distribution.

However there were significant improvement areas which were noted during this time, mainly in the areas of reaching access restricted areas for humanitarian assistance, delaying the process, poor transportation infrastructure in conflict zones limiting aid delivery to the affected, and this also lead to poor coordination among stakeholders which was at times fragmented arising from poor levels of information sharing and needs assessments which was often inconsistent.

The civil war highlighted the importance of maintaining humanitarian corridors and developing logistics systems capable of operating in insecure environments.



The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

The Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 2004 remains the largest natural disaster in Sri Lanka's modern history. More than 35,000 people lost their lives, and hundreds of thousands were displaced. The scale of destruction overwhelmed existing logistics systems. Entire coastal communities lost homes, roads, communication networks, and public infrastructure.

As an Island nation, Sri Lankans did come forward in supporting relief work and that supported the rapid mobilization of international humanitarian assistance. Significant

contributions from the Sri Lankan military in search, rescue, and distribution activities, massive public support through donations and volunteer efforts, establishment of temporary shelters and emergency medical services within a short period helped overcome the repercussions faced by the living of this disaster.

Tsunami has other implications which Sri Lanka struggled to overcome during this period - mostly initial congestion at ports, airports, and warehouses, duplication of aid in some locations while other communities remained underserved, lack of centralized inventory management process in place and

weak information systems for tracking relief supplies topped the list.

The silver lining however was that the tsunami became a turning point that accelerated disaster management reforms and increased investment in emergency preparedness.

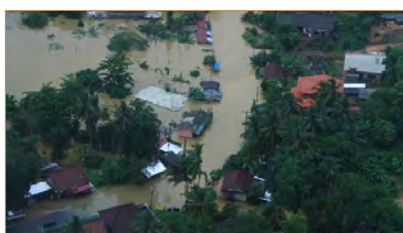


Floods and Landslides (2010 - Present)

Sri Lanka regularly experiences monsoon-related flooding and landslides, particularly in districts such as Ratnapura, Kalutara, Kegalle, Galle, and Matara. These events have required repeated humanitarian interventions involving evacuations, temporary shelters, and emergency supply distribution.

Improved early warning systems through the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), better coordination among district administrations,

military units, and humanitarian organizations, Faster evacuation procedures compared to previous decades, and increased community awareness and preparedness has helped over the years in minimizing lives lost and properties and infrastructure damages.



Challenges in reaching isolated communities due to damaged roads and bridges, limited warehouse capacity in vulnerable regions, delays in damage assessments following severe weather events, need for greater use of technology such as drones and real-time tracking systems however still remains as challenges in ensuring speedy response for the affected.

These recurring disasters, has time and again highlighted the importance of strengthening last-mile delivery capabilities.

Easter Sunday Attacks (2019)

Post the 30 year of Civil war faced by the Sri Lankans, one of the worst man-made disasters which shocked the nation was the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks which created an unusual humanitarian emergency that required immediate medical response and victim support.

Rapid deployment of emergency medical services, effective hospital

logistics and blood donation campaigns and strong public solidarity and volunteer support held



the support system while challenges in crisis communication, need for better coordination of emergency information, and improved psychological support logistics for affected families emerged as the must have mechanisms in place when support is extended to the affected. This event demonstrated that humanitarian logistics extends beyond natural disasters and includes complex emergencies involving public health and security.

COVID-19 Pandemic (2020 - 2022)

The COVID-19 pandemic presented one of the most complex logistics challenges not only in Sri Lanka's history but around the world. The country needed to manage medical supplies, personal protective equipment (PPE), quarantine facilities, testing systems, and eventually nationwide vaccination campaigns.

Successful establishment of quarantine centers, efficient vaccine distribution across all provinces,

strong involvement of the military in logistics coordination, maintenance of essential medical supply chains during lockdowns where the wins that was observed during these trying times by the nation. However, challenges faced in, initial shortages of medical equipment and protective supplies, dependence on international suppliers, challenges in data integration between institutions, distribution inequalities in some remote areas continued to challenge the operations and getting back to business as usual status of the

country.

The pandemic demonstrated the importance of resilient and flexible supply chains capable of responding to prolonged emergencies.



Economic Crisis (2022)

Sri Lanka's economic crisis created a humanitarian situation characterized by shortages of fuel, medicine, food, and essential goods. Humanitarian logistics shifted from disaster response to supporting vulnerable populations through social assistance programs and international aid.

Notable quick wins were in the areas of how international humanitarian assistance was mobilized relatively quickly, supported by health services continuing to function despite shortages, community organizations playing an important role in relief efforts.

Sri Lankan Supply chains heavily depend on imported finished goods Raw and Packaging Materials therefore, local manufacturing experienced constraints due to the constraints faced in being able to fund for these imports- also along with same facing the unanticipated sudden tariff barriers and taxes imposed by the government to curtail outflow of foreign exchange from the country- this made local manufacturing more expensive and the vulnerability of supply chains to economic shocks and limited strategic reserves of essential commodities added further stress during this time on local manufacturers and importers alike.

The crisis revealed that humanitarian logistics must also address economic emergencies, not only natural disasters.



Cyclone Dita

Cyclone Dita represents one of Sri Lanka's most recent large-scale weather-related emergencies. Strong winds, heavy rainfall, flooding, and infrastructure damage affected multiple regions and disrupted transportation networks. Humanitarian agencies, government institutions, and local communities worked together to provide



emergency assistance and support recovery efforts.

Early warning systems provided advance notice to vulnerable communities however lack of same was also questioned by many highlighting that damaged could have been curtailed to manageable levels had early warning systems been in operation prior much damage was done. Faster coordination compared to previous decades during the times of disaster, effective deployment of emergency responders, enhanced public awareness and preparedness supported in bouncing back from the effects of cyclone Dita.

Many months have lapsed since the Cyclone and we continue to see challenges in reaching

remote communities, Infrastructure vulnerability to extreme weather events and it's not been at a state where travel, especially rail transportation which is still struggling to be initiated connecting many provinces of the country. The need for more decentralized emergency stockpiles also remains a challenge to be addressed. At the same time greater use of digital logistics technologies and predictive analytics to support early warning systems could be of greater help in avoiding such natural disasters in days to come.

Cyclone Dita demonstrated the progress Sri Lanka has made in disaster preparedness while highlighting the growing challenges associated with climate change.

Conclusion

From the Civil War in 1983 to Cyclone Dita, Sri Lanka's humanitarian logistics system has evolved through experience, adaptation, and learning. Each emergency has provided valuable lessons that have strengthened the country's ability to respond to future crises.

While Sri Lanka has demonstrated remarkable resilience and significant progress in disaster response and humanitarian logistics, emerging challenges such as climate change, economic instability, and increasingly complex emergencies require continued investment in preparedness, coordination, technology, and infrastructure. By building on past successes and addressing existing gaps, Sri Lanka can further enhance its capacity to protect lives and support communities during future humanitarian crises.





Well Being and Wellness: The Cornerstone of Women's Empowerment in the Logistics and Transport Sector



Author
Narad Dawoodarry
Global WiLAT Advisor

In the dynamic and demanding world of logistics and transport, women professionals continue to play an increasingly vital role across supply chain operations, port management, aviation, freight forwarding, and humanitarian logistics. Yet, the very nature of these sectors—characterised by long hours, high pressure environments, and operational unpredictability—places significant strain on the physical, emotional, and mental well being of women in the workforce. As WiLAT continues to champion gender inclusion and leadership development globally, the conversation on **well being and wellness at the workplace** has become not only relevant but essential.

Well Being as a Humanitarian Imperative.

Well being in the workplace is often viewed through a corporate lens, but for WiLAT, it is fundamentally a **humanitarian responsibility**. When women are supported holistically—physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially—they are better equipped to lead, innovate, and contribute meaningfully to the resilience of supply chains.

During the COVID 19 pandemic, for example, women in logistics were at the frontline of essential services. Many faced burnout, anxiety, and emotional fatigue. This global experience underscored a simple truth: **well being is not a luxury; it is a prerequisite for sustainable leadership**.

Concrete Examples of Wellness Initiatives Across WiLAT Chapters

Across the WiLAT global network, several chapters have already taken commendable steps to integrate wellness into their professional development agenda.

WiLAT Sri Lanka introduced the “Wings of Wellness” programme, offering guided mindfulness sessions,

stress management workshops, and peer support circles. Women working in port operations and maritime logistics reported improved emotional resilience and greater confidence in managing high pressure tasks.

WiLAT Nigeria launched structured mentorship circles that go beyond career guidance. These circles include emotional well being modules, safe space dialogues, and coping strategies for women balancing demanding logistics roles with family responsibilities. The initiative has strengthened solidarity and reduced professional isolation.

WiLAT Hong Kong implemented “Wellness Wednesdays”, a simple yet powerful intervention where women professionals participate in short meditation breaks, breathing exercises, and reflective pauses during the workday. This practice has been particularly impactful for women in freight forwarding and customs operations, where stress levels are traditionally high.

These examples demonstrate that wellness programmes do not need to be complex or costly. What matters

is **intentionality, consistency, and leadership support**.

Corporate Case Studies: The Impact of Wellness on Performance

Beyond WiLAT, several organisations in the logistics sector have demonstrated measurable benefits from investing in women's well being. A regional logistics company in East Africa introduced a wellness framework that included ergonomic workspaces, mental health counselling, and flexible scheduling for women in warehouse operations. Within one year, the company recorded a **30% reduction in absenteeism** and a marked improvement in employee retention.

In Southeast Asia, a freight company led by women managers implemented a “compassionate leadership” model, integrating empathy, active listening, and emotional intelligence into supervisory training. The result was a more cohesive workforce, fewer conflicts, and higher productivity during peak operational periods.

These examples reinforce a critical insight: well being is not separate from performance—it drives it.

The Spiritual and Emotional Dimension of Wellness

While physical and mental wellness are widely discussed, the **spiritual and emotional dimensions** are often overlooked. Yet, they are deeply relevant to women in high stress sectors like logistics.

Practices such as mindfulness, meditation, reflective journaling, and compassion based leadership help women reconnect with purpose, clarity, and inner balance. These practices are not religious; they are human. They cultivate resilience, emotional intelligence, and a sense of groundedness—qualities essential for leadership in complex supply chain environments.

As someone deeply engaged in spiritual well being initiatives through the Atma Gyan Meditation Society (AGMS), I have witnessed how simple practices of stillness and self awareness can transform the way professionals navigate stress, conflict, and decision making.

A Call to Action for WiLAT Chapters Worldwide

As WiLAT continues to expand its global footprint, there is a timely opportunity to embed **well being and wellness** as a core pillar of our leadership agenda. I encourage all chapters to consider:

- Establishing structured wellness programmes tailored to their local context
- Integrating emotional resilience and mindfulness into leadership training
- Creating safe spaces for women to share experiences and seek support
- Partnering with wellness practitioners, counsellors, and HR specialists
- Promoting flexible work arrangements where operationally feasible

By prioritising well being, we are not only supporting women professionals—we are strengthening the entire logistics ecosystem.

Conclusion

Wellbeing and wellness are not peripheral concerns; they are central to the empowerment, retention, and advancement of women in logistics and transport. As Global WiLAT Advisor, I firmly believe that a compassionate, balanced, and wellness oriented workplace is the foundation upon which women can rise, lead, and transform our industry.

When women thrive, organisations thrive. And when organisations thrive, supply chains—and societies—become stronger, more humane, and more resilient.





When we speak about humanitarian logistics, images of disaster relief, emergency supplies, medical aid and the rapid movement of essential goods to communities in crisis often come to mind. These remain at the heart of the discipline. Yet there is another dimension that deserves equal attention: the people who keep supply chains moving.

Before any product moves, people make decisions, solve problems, manage pressure and keep operations running. Behind every warehouse, fleet, port, distribution centre and procurement office are professionals whose well-being, resilience and ability to balance work and family responsibilities directly influence continuity of service. Building resilient supply chains therefore also means building resilient workforces.

This perspective has become particularly relevant in Mauritius following the introduction of new parental leave provisions, extending maternity leave from four months to twelve months and paternity leave from four weeks to six weeks. The changes have sparked important discussions across industries, especially in logistics and transport, where workforce planning, on-site presence and service continuity are critical. In response, WiLAT Mauritius launched its first **WiLAT Mauritius Think Tank Series**, inviting professionals to reflect on how these developments may shape the future of the sector.

The Think Tank was not designed to evaluate the policy itself or adopt a political position. Its purpose was to understand how logistics professionals perceive the opportunities and practical challenges linked to the new provisions, while encouraging constructive dialogue on family well-being, business sustainability and gender equality.

The inaugural session brought together voices from across the logistics ecosystem, representing more than **10 industry segments**, including supply chain management, transport operations, shipping, freight forwarding, warehousing, procurement, academia, consulting, IT and emerging professionals. Respondents spanned all age groups and reflected a diverse mix of operational and leadership experience, with **60% women and 37% men** contributing their perspectives, while 3% preferred not to say.

The findings revealed broad support for the humanitarian intent of the new parental leave provisions. **84% of respondents viewed the policy either as “very positive” or “positive with some concerns,”** recognising its potential benefits for families, children and employee well-being. At the same time, participants emphasised that meaningful implementation would require practical support for both inclusion and operational sustainability.

One concern emerged particularly strongly: **approximately 6 in every 10 respondents** identified the potential reluctance to recruit or promote women of childbearing age as the most significant challenge arising from the new provisions. This concern was expressed by both women and men, pointing to a wider question for operational industries: how can organisations support families while ensuring that women continue to enjoy equal employment and career opportunities?

This question is especially relevant in logistics and transport. Unlike sectors where remote work can more easily replace physical presence, logistics operations often depend on teams being on-site to manage warehouses, transport fleets, shipping, customer service and time-sensitive flows of goods. Extended absences therefore call for thoughtful workforce planning, succession strategies and operational flexibility.

Participants did not frame these realities as opposing priorities. Instead, the discussion turned firmly towards solutions. The most frequently recommended measures included stronger protection against workplace discrimination, flexible return-to-work arrangements, greater sharing of parental responsibilities and complementary government support mechanisms for employers. The aim was clear: to ensure that the social benefits of the policy are achieved without creating unintended barriers

to women's recruitment, promotion or career progression.

Flexible return-to-work arrangements featured prominently in the recommendations. Suggestions included phased returns, flexible scheduling where operationally feasible, structured re-onboarding programmes and continued access to professional development during and after parental leave. These measures were seen not only as support mechanisms for employees, but also as practical talent-retention strategies in a sector facing growing workforce pressures.

Government support for employers, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, was another important recommendation. Several participants noted that complementary financial or policy measures could help organisations manage extended leave more effectively, while reducing the risk of unintended discrimination during recruitment and career advancement. Perhaps the most encouraging

outcome was the tone of the conversation itself. Participants remained focused on solutions rather than divisions, showing that it is possible to acknowledge operational realities while remaining firmly committed to more inclusive workplaces.

The Think Tank also invites us to broaden our understanding of humanitarian logistics. It is often measured by how efficiently supplies reach vulnerable communities during emergencies. Yet resilience begins much earlier: in policies, leadership practices and workplace cultures that recognise the needs of the people responsible for keeping supply chains functioning every day.

The discussions generated through the WiLAT Mauritius Think Tank Series remind us that humanitarian logistics is ultimately about people. It is about creating systems that protect families without compromising careers, encourage shared responsibility while supporting operational excellence, and ensure that progress

in social policy translates into genuine progress in workplace equality.

As Mauritius continues to strengthen its labour and family policies, the logistics sector has an opportunity to demonstrate that humanitarian values and business performance are not opposing objectives. With thoughtful workforce planning, inclusive leadership and collaboration between government, employers and industry, workplaces can be built where both families and organisations thrive.

The inaugural WiLAT Mauritius Think Tank Series has shown that meaningful conversations can generate meaningful insights. By bringing together diverse professional voices, the initiative has laid the foundation for future discussions on the evolving challenges and opportunities facing logistics and transport. Above all, it reinforces an important principle: **the strongest supply chains are built not only on efficient systems, but on empowered people.**



JULY
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Elevate Class - Transport Planning for
Smart Mobility: Active Mobility

JULY
17

Elevate Class - Technology
Project Management: AI Governance

JULY
24

Elevate Class - Crisis Communications

JULY
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WiLAT Nigeria Day

Elevate Class - Communication and
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