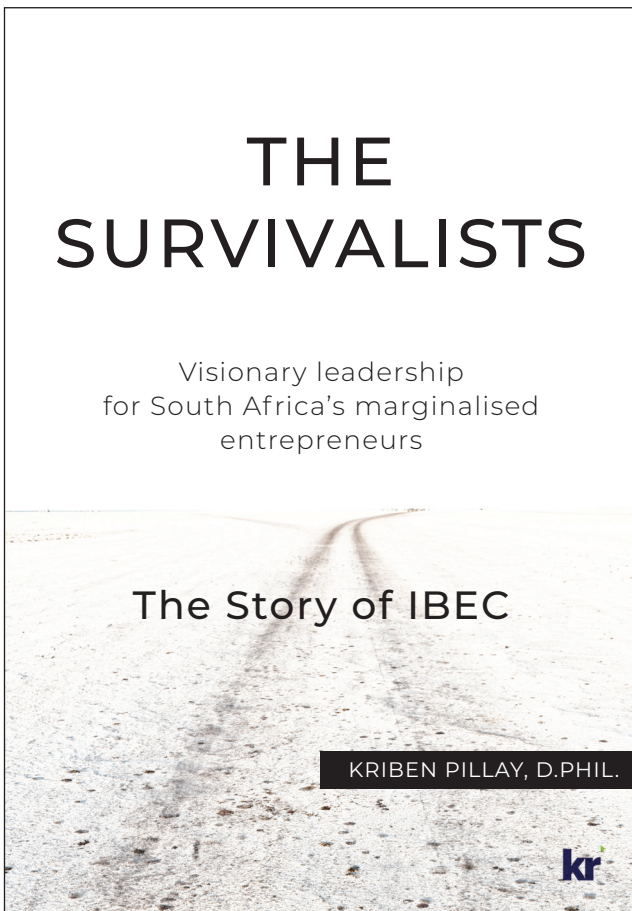


The Survivalists

Visionary leadership for South Africa's marginalised entrepreneurs

by Kriben Pillay



In many ways, IBEC heralded the dawn of the new South Africa four years before the advent of our democracy in 1994. IBEC was Reggie Naidoo's response to the plight of disadvantaged small and medium enterprises, where the overriding ambition was to go beyond the traditional lending models current at the time, becoming one of the first to go beyond micro-lending.

But IBEC was much more. It was a platform for the nurturing of many Black professionals in this sector of the economy, with some of our current high-ranking people in such institutions as Khula and Ntsika having learnt the ropes at IBEC. The story of IBEC is a vibrant part of our recent history and records the meaningful actions of our country's unsung sons and daughters in the face of daunting challenges. *Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, Former Chairperson of the NEPAD Steering Committee & Economic Advisor to President Thabo Mbeki*

It is only through recording the history of organisations such as IBEC, that we can preserve our history and acknowledge the contributions of progressive individuals such as Reggie Naidoo. IBEC was in many ways a pioneer for black economic empowerment, entrepreneurial development and for micro-credit for the emerging black entrepreneur and will be remembered for these roles. IBEC will also be remembered for its empowerment of women, who demonstrated reliance and dedication in their small business endeavours. *Trevor A. Manuel, Former Minister of Finance*

The Survivalists is a story about real leaders and real people with the vision and drive to make a difference to both individuals and the systems that they encounter. Better than any case study, it is a living account and testament, both ethnographic and auto-ethnographic, of those tumultuous and now legendary times in South Africa's history where leaders like Reggie Naidoo, a gifted entrepreneur and humanitarian, worked to make a difference on the ground for the poor. *Dr Eugene Fernandez, Leadership Consultant and Associate Program Director, Melbourne Business School*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kriben Pillay is an associate professor in the Graduate School of Business and Leadership, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and is a writer across many genres. His poems appear in four South African anthologies, and his short stories appear in two. He was a finalist for the Bertrams African Literature Award in 1992 and was nominated for the 1995 CNA Literary Prize for his play *Looking for Muruga*, which now appears in a historic collection of plays from the South Asian diaspora – *Beyond Bollywood and Broadway* – published by the University of Indiana Press (2009).

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