



# WOMEN LEADING CHANGE SHAPING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE IN FASHION

SIDE EVENT AT THE 2025 REGIONAL FORUM  
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

TUESDAY, 2 APRIL 2025, 13:15 - 14:45 CET

ROOM H207-8-9, PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA  
AND ONLINE VIA [TEAMS](#)



REGISTER

## BACKGROUND

Actors in the fashion sector play a crucial role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fashion industry, a \$2.4 trillion global market, not only produces goods essential to human well-being but also employs approximately 300 million people worldwide, the majority of whom are women.

The United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, a collaboration between UN agencies and organizations, aims to contribute to the SDGs through coordinated action in the fashion sector.

This event, moderated by Prof. Saman Sarbazvatan, will emphasize how women are driving positive change by leading businesses that prioritize sustainability, challenging and reshaping an industry often associated with unsustainable practices. Women entrepreneurs will give insights into how their work drives positive change in the fashion industry through improving labour conditions and remuneration, the empowerment of women in particular in marginalized and rural communities as well as through addressing environmental issues and driving a circular economy.

The event will showcase the solutions and innovations developed by women entrepreneurs from different regions and countries. Each speaker will be introduced by one of the UN organizations part of the Alliance and contribute to this event, showcasing how, though from different perspectives and entry points, the UN system is tackling the challenge of empowering women in support of a more sustainable fashion sector.

A pop-up store from the Ethical Fashion Initiative will present a curated selection of unique items from partner businesses in Afghanistan, proceeds will be used to fund a training on embroidery for women.



## PROGRAMME : 13H15 - 14H45

13:15 - 13:20 ***Opening and welcome***

**Paola Deda**, Chair of the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

13:20 - 13:25 ***From Industry 5.0 to Fashion 5.0:***



***Gender, Labor, and the Future of Equitable Fashion***

**Moderator: Prof. Saman Sarbazvatan**, Vice Dean of École des Ponts Business School and Founding Director of ReTech Center

13:25 - 14:30 ***Stitch by stitch: Advancing Equality and Women's Rights in the Garment Industry***

**Maria Beatriz Mello da Cunha**, International Labour Organization

**Francesca Biasiato**, ILO/IFC Better Work Programme

***Women, Land and Fashion***

**Xenia Scanlon**, Chief of Communications, External Relations and Partnerships, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

**Inna Modja**, Malian artist and singer, UNCCD Goodwill Ambassador

***Connecting Women for Change***

**Chloe Mukai**, Head of the Ethical Fashion Initiative, International Trade Centre (ITC)

**Lilian Kahiro**, President, Tujikuze (Kenyan Social Enterprise)

***Women in sustainable fashion driving SDGs through community engagement***

**Kerry Bannigan**, Co-Founder, United Nations Fashion and Lifestyle Network & Managing Director, PVBLIC Foundation

**Shannen Henry**, Council on Sustainable Fashion and Design of Grenada

***Mainstreaming gender in textile manufacturing facilities***

**Ozunimi Iti**, Industrial Development Officer, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)

**Peter Deysel**, Factory Manager, Romatex South Africa

14:30 - 14:40 ***Q&A***

14:40 - 14:45 ***Concluding remarks***