

### Newly appointed Goodwill Ambassador to focus on women's entrepreneurship

Janne Vangen Solheim, Chief Executive Officer of the Norwegian garment manufacturing company, Janusfabrikken AS, has been [appointed as the UNIDO Goodwill Ambassador](#) for manufacturing. Based on her extensive and successful experience as an entrepreneur in the manufacturing sector, Solheim will champion UNIDO's mandate of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, and in particular will support the Organization's work to promote women's entrepreneurship.

Speaking during [her mission to Casablanca](#) in February as part of the project, Promoting Women Empowerment for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in the MENA region, Solheim said, "The entrepreneurial path is harder for women but through networking, partnership and mutual support, women entrepreneurs can become catalyzers of successful and innovative ventures."



### Gender, unconscious bias and organizational culture

To help ensure equality for all employees, regardless of their sex, ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation, in late February and early March UNIDO organized three training sessions to raise awareness of unconscious biases and stereotyping, and how these can lead to inequality in the workplace. The training was grounded in recent advancements in neuroscience and organizational and social psychology. It was provided by [Tanya Odom](#), a highly regarded consultant and coach and a former Georgetown University and Princeton University faculty member.

The training was mandatory for nominated senior managers and Professional Staff. Over 25 per cent of Professional Staff employed in UNIDO headquarters took part. A total of 33 senior managers, of whom 6 were women, participated in the workshops, while 45 Gender Focal Points and other nominated staff, of whom 24 were women, participated in the training for staff.

The aim was to stimulate managers and staff to lead by example in changing mindsets, addressing inequalities, and creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

### First UNIDO Gender Resolution in 31 years

During the last General Conference in December 2015, UNIDO Member States adopted a resolution on gender, entitled "UNIDO, Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women" ([GC.16/Res.3](#)). The resolution reinforces the priorities of the updated gender policy and strategy, and shows Member States' support for UNIDO's approach to promoting gender equality within the organization and in its technical cooperation. It also requires a report from the Director General on its implementation, to be submitted at the next General Conference in 2017.

### Speed mentoring with the UN VBOs

More than 50 experienced staff from Vienna-based UN organizations gave up their lunch breaks on 9 March 2016 to provide advice and guidance to younger female staff and consultants. [The speed mentoring event](#) was organized to celebrate International Women's Day, which this year had the theme: "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality".

UNIDO's Gender Coordinator ad interim, Hedda Öhlberger-Femundsden, explained, "This speed-mentoring event is a fun way for experienced staff to share their professional journeys and to give younger colleagues a better understanding of the career paths others have taken."

The event received very positive feedback from mentors and mentees alike, with almost all of them wanting to participate again. This comes as no surprise, given the numerous studies that show the lack of access to informal networks is a structural obstacle to women's career advancement. Faced with an ever-present glass ceiling, mentees' demand points to a clear need for more mentoring in UN organizations.

## Sustainable Leadership: Women in Business event

To mark International Women's Day 2016, UNIDO organized a panel discussion focusing on the leading role of women entrepreneurs in managing environmentally sustainable businesses and how to best apply their examples to transform and "green" productive sectors.



Explaining the significance of the event, Director General Li Yong said, "UNIDO recognizes that investing in the economic empowerment of women sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive industrial development."

The event featured female sustainable development experts and businesswomen discussing their approaches to creating and leading sustainable enterprises. The panel was comprised of Ayo Elizabeth Olaogun, Creative Director of the Nigerian fashion label, [Ayo van Elmar](#); Janne Vangen Solheim, Chief Executive Officer of Norway's [Janusfabrikken AS](#); Marilyn Mehlmann, General Secretary of [Global Action Plan International](#); and Sarah Toumi, Founder, [Acacias for All](#), a social enterprise working in North Africa.

## Calling a halt to all-male panels

On 15 March 2016, United Nations Global Compact Executive Director, Lise Kingo, called on staff members at the initiative's headquarters in New York to pledge not to take part in or to host panels comprised only of men. [The UN Global Compact Panel Pledge](#) is a new effort to help put an end to all-male panels.

"Too often, I've been the only woman on a panel. It is time that we challenge the status quo and stop making excuses – there is no shortage of qualified women," said Kingo. She emphasized that "achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require greater equality and opportunity for women and girls everywhere. One practical way to start is by pledging to make both women's and men's perspectives heard on stages everywhere."

## Do you think UNIDO should pledge not to take part in or organize panels comprised only of men?

Visit our online survey [here!](#)

## Resources

Online training course:

[I Know Gender: An Introduction to Gender Equality for UN Staff](#)

This course aims to develop and/or strengthen awareness and understanding of gender equality and women's empowerment as a first step towards behavioural change and the integration of a gender perspective into everyday work for all UN staff at headquarters, regional and country levels. It provides an introduction to the concepts, international framework, and methods for working toward gender equality and women's empowerment.

UNIDO brochure:

[Gender equality and the empowerment of women: an overview](#)

## Meet the team



Office for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

From the left: Hanna Sands (ext 4755), Gender Expert; Thouraya Benmokrane (ext 4149), Gender Officer and Gender Coordinator ad interim;

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