

JUNE 2010
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TIS



Soroptimists saving lives in Haiti with clean, safe water

plus:

- The Long Term Project
- Making partnerships work
- Cluster munitions banned

The International Soroptimist

WELCOME TO THE NEW DIGITAL TIS!

Focusing on

Partnerships

a global voice for women

Soroptimist International



President's update



Dear Readers, Dear Soroptimists,

As International President it is my privilege to take part in many conferences and meetings and I take this opportunity to inform you a little about my activities, where I have had the pleasure to meet – face to face – with hundreds of Soroptimists, full of

energy and dedication to the projects they are undertaking. The Clubs with their members are the base of our organisation. Not all are aware that they belong to an international network of professional women, but they all are happy to be Soroptimists and THAT is important for our future.

With 24 Soroptimists from the Netherlands and from Denmark I visited India on a 16 day tour, where we participated in the chartering of SI Bombay Gateway and SI Pune Metro East. The Charters were presented by SIGBI President Jackie Mosedale. We encountered real Indian hospitality and saw a lot of excellent projects carried out by Indian Soroptimists.

Another highlight was my attendance at the very

well organised Conference of Clubs in SISWP, held in Gold Coast, Australia from 16-18 April. On a friendship evening, the delegates around the West Pacific showed us the variety of cultures in performing songs and traditional dances. A delegation of four high ranking members from the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) joined the meeting and shared experiences in how to empower women. At the gala dinner President Elect Yvonne Simpson wore a special woven Maori cloak when she received the President's chain from the outgoing President Leigh Ellwood-Brown.

I also had the chance to visit the very active Soroptimists in Malaysia and here too I was met with warm friendship and hospitality.

Recently I participated in the 6th Peace Marathon in Kigali in Rwanda, which was a success with a large attendance. The marathon is copied in Afghanistan, where 80 soldiers run a Peace Marathon on the same day.

My visit to Rwanda was combined with a visit to Kenya, where Minister for Gender Esther Murugi opened the Danish-Kenyan Climate project, which you can read about in a separate article. Esther was a Soroptimist until she became a minister.

It is impossible to mention all the good projects I have been shown, but I thank you all for your devotion to Soroptimism and for the great job you are doing.

Hanne Jensbo

Global charters



SI OF THE AMERICAS

SI of Indianapolis Metro
SI of Donaji, Mexico
SI of Encarnación, Paraguay
SI of Cucata, Colombia
SI of São Bento do Sul, Brazil
SI of Hyaku Kochi, Japan
SI of Cebu, Phillipines
SI of Bagong Bulakeña, Phillipines
SI of Bacolod Talisay, Phillipines
SI of Global City, Phillipines
SI of Victoria Westshore, Canada

SI OF EUROPE

SI of Yerevan, Armenia

TIS: September & December 2010

The theme for the September issue will be "Peace", in recognition of the International Day of Peace on 21 September. The deadline for submissions is 25 August and the magazine will be published on 15 September.

The theme for the December issue will be the Long Term Project. The deadline for submissions is 24 November and the magazine will be published on 15 December.

Please send the text for your articles or news saved as a Word document or typed into the body of the email and send photographs saved as JPEGs to: editor@soroptimistinternational.org Thank you.

What is Soroptimist International?

Soroptimist International, a worldwide organisation for women in management and the professions, is a global voice for women through Awareness, Advocacy and Action.

Our Vision

Soroptimist International is a vibrant, dynamic organisation for today's professional and business women. We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.

Our Mission

Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls through a global network of members and international partnerships.



From the editor

You liked it!

The first issue of the digital TIS was published in March, but as we don't yet have all your emails, it was only accessible via the SI and Federation websites. Even so, it's been viewed by thousands of Soroptimists in 84 countries - and it was very well received: "Warmest congratulations on the successful launch of the first edition of the electronic magazine." Lorna Mead SISWP IPP.

"It's many years since I even saw a copy, the link to the electronic copy was awesome! I must say it made a huge impression on our friends over at CNN, great job! For someone who receives hundreds of electronic newsletters from Soroptimist, Dept. of Justice, Secretary of State, and the many I produce for clients, I love the version SI has chosen; classy for a classy organisation!!" Michelle A. Bart, SI SW Washington

"I am webmaster for SI of South Lake Tahoe and will be sharing the information with our Club. Thank you - love the new format!" Sue Novasel "Félicitation pour ce magnifique premier no du TIS électronique. C'est super." Eliane Autphenne, Club Arlon (Union Belge).

"Congratulations on a nice job to have TIS on the web for everyone to read (or print and read) in the future." Viia Rosén, SI Stockholm -Södertörn, Sweden.

"We are delighted to receive the on line TIS. Congrats! A commendable feat." Vinodini, SI of Chennai, India

"I am an English-speaking member of SI of Vallauris-Sophia-Antipolis in France and it's a joy to read SI publications like TIS in my mother tongue!!" Lynn Derriman.

"Absolutely superb Sheila!!" Sue Pritt, SIGBI

"I have just read my new format TIS and am well pleased. I confess that I had misgivings about this decision but it is fine - I hope members will respond in a positive fashion." Olive Newton SIGBI Fed. President 1996-7. "Today I read TIS magazine online. I liked it very much. What a wonderful work. Thanks to all of you." Ismet Tekin, SI Izmir (Turkish Union) Past Governor Of Turkish Union

COVER PICTURE:
SI of Europe co-ordinated
Soroptimist aid to Haiti and
worked in partnership with arche
noVa to save lives by supplying
clean water and hygiene
education. Photos courtesy
of arche noVa.
Page 9.

(2007-9), Turkish Union Project Sierra
Coor. (2010)

"Thanks for this it is amazing!!!! I shall pass it round my links - in case they haven't got it yet. Well done - a truly good and informative read." Dot Hunter, SIGBI.

"Have just received E-TIS - Excellent!! Thank you for a magazine we as Soroptimist can be proud of - The instructions at the start were easy to follow and the magazine itself very easy to read and tag. Congratulations!!" Margaret Lobo, PP, Soroptimist International.

"Hi Sheila, - yes very impressed, and the cover is great, a real show-stopper!! I have asked for the link to be placed on the start page of the German Union website and have sent it for distribution on our nationwide Mailing List - also given you a mention on our sites on Facebook and Twitter." Dr Gwendolen Webster, President, SI Aachen, SI of Germany

So, many thanks for your support! I hope you enjoy this issue and please send me ideas or information for topics for the next one!

But just one more thing... the last comment that we have printed, above, from Dr Gwendolen Webster, SI of Germany, really sums up what we all need to do to take TIS to every member in every Club, Country and Federation. Gwendolen's initiative meant that German Soroptimists were the second largest group of members to access the March issue of TIS! Please, if you can, follow Gwendolen's example and distribute TIS by means of the link that you receive, or that you see on the SI website, to everyone whose email address you have.

That way we will increase the readership of the magazine, bring more worldwide members together and, of course, raise the profile of SI through Google rankings and SEO (search engine optimisation) across the globe.

Soroptimist International A global voice for women

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and you will receive your very own digital magazine each quarter, free of charge!

a global voice
for women

Soroptimist International



The Long Term Project

Soroptimists ... all over the world working together to achieve a common goal

Dawn Marie Lemonds, International Programme Director and Reilly Dempsey, Programme Director SIHQ discuss the plans for Soroptimist International's exciting new global project.

DML: SI is embarking on the most adventurous journey for Programme that we have undertaken for years. We are creating and implementing a brand new SI Project that will be launched in 2011 in Montreal. This new project will replace the Quadrennial Project system that SI has used since 1975.

I have asked our new Programme Director at SIHQ to join me in this short dialogue to address some of the exciting aspects of the project that we are working on.

For me, the most exciting part of the new project is that it will truly be a partnered project with the partners being our 3000 Clubs around the globe working together toward a common goal.

Each of these Clubs is voting for the theme of this project and we will know what they have chosen in August 2010!

Reilly, can you share some of the aspects you have been working on toward developing the plan for our new Long Term Project?

RD: Sure, Dawn Marie! First, I'd like to say thank you to everyone who has worked so hard and thought so long about this new project. This change will really give Soroptimists the opportunity to work together in partnership across the globe to achieve a common goal.

As members will know, our first big step is to identify the overarching theme that members wish to address – either violence against women or education and leadership. Once we know which one of these topics our members want to adopt, we will then move forward in designing the various components of the project.

We have also started to creatively brainstorm a title for this project – one that will tell the world who Soroptimists are, what we do and, hopefully, inspire involvement!

Now, Dawn Marie, we all know that I'm still a bit new here – can you share some of the aspects of this project which were decided by the Board and others before I joined SI?

DML: The programme team received many great ideas from members around the world. Some of the most important requirements were that this would be a project that

could be addressed by every Club in the world and represent an effort that worked toward transforming the lives of women and girls. It would be a project designed and implemented by Soroptimists – not through a partner organisation and one that would have clear and measurable outcomes.

Soroptimists from around the world want people to know “who we are and what we do”.



In addition to advancing our mission we know that this project will advance our BRAND!

Reilly- you have worked on some plans for ensuring that Clubs can easily reflect their progress. Can you give us some practical ideas on this?

RD: Absolutely! I think it's really important for SI to adopt this new focused and clear common goal. What a wonderful way to unite Soroptimists from around the world in partnership! It will be very important that we have mechanisms for gathering information from Clubs about local achievements. Club projects are the building blocks towards achieving our new (yet to be determined) common goal.

We have also been hard at work here at

HQ in creating tools that will help us all to collect this information.

Rest assured, this project will definitely have the kind of measurable outcomes that we all want, and I'm here to make sure we can all partner together to collect the information!

One more question for you, Dawn Marie. In the spirit of collaborative working, is there a chance that we will have the opportunity to partner with other organisations or combine efforts to have one really big project in the future?

DML: Partnerships will continue to be essential for the work we are doing. In these days of dwindling resources and economic crisis we have to work smarter and make our precious programme work valuable and meaningful. SI Clubs will want to continue to assess the community and global needs related to the Long Term Project and provide a service with their partners that is clearly a valued and necessary product/ service that advances that issue.

I anticipate that we will see Best Practice projects from Clubs around the world that we will learn from and develop and replicate in more countries and neighbourhoods over time.

This project is designed to expand and last for an unspecified long period – perhaps 10 years or more. Reilly - where can people keep up with the progress of the project?

RD: Thanks for that Dawn Marie!

Please visit our website www.soroptimistinternational.org and the programme blog: <http://siprogrammeblog.blogspot.com/> regularly for information, news, and, of course, inspiration.

We will also soon be posting some FAQs that will be updated on a regular basis to answer all of your questions – even the ones you don't know you have yet!

Our thanks again to everyone who has been working on this new project and a very special thank you to all our members for voting on the overarching topic for the Long Term Project.



Making partnerships work with the 8 golden rules

Rosie Coutts, Executive Director, SI explains:

Golden Rules

The SI Policy, Procedures & Programme document (PPPs) gives 8 golden rules to abide by when considering potential partnerships. You can find additional information on the SI website (Programme - Partnerships - Best Practice guidelines)

Partners must share SI values and be compatible with SI's mission

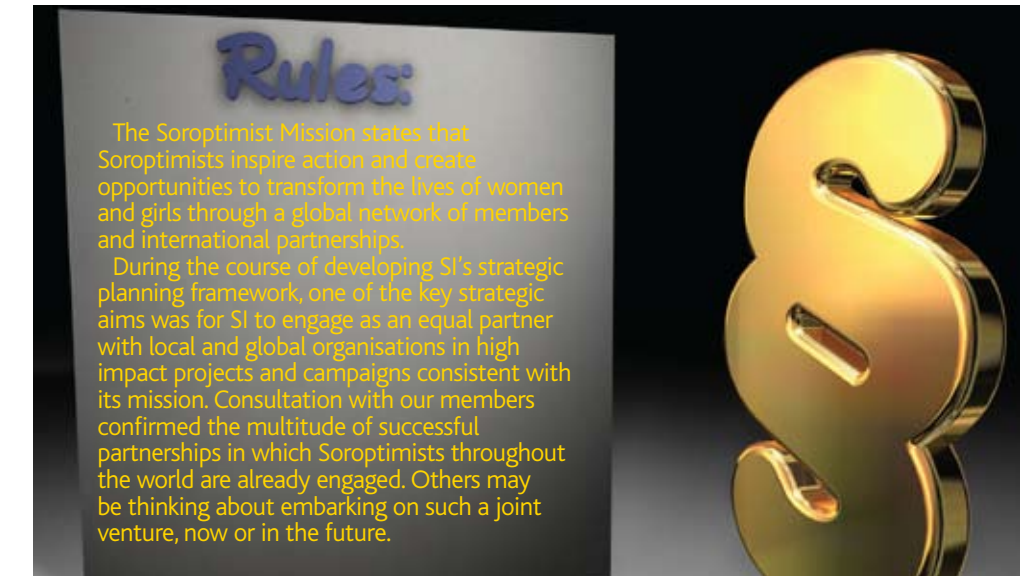
Shared values and compatibility are essential elements in any successful partnership. SI maintains a policy of strict neutrality on matters of political controversy between nations, party politics and sectarian religion, so it is important to ensure that partners are not seeking to advance their own religious or political agenda.

Partners should contribute to the achievement of SI's strategic objectives

There are many ways in which partners can help us achieve our strategic objectives. When asked about the most successful outcomes from their existing partnerships, members cite increased awareness of the organisation; increased membership; education for members; leadership development; helping to work towards the Programme Focus goals. Some partners will join us in our advocacy work; others will be more suited to joint project initiatives. All should actively support our mission of transforming the lives of women and girls.

Partners should put in place contracts to delineate roles, responsibilities, budgets, financial targets, timelines, reporting and evaluation methods.

Unclear agreements are one of the greatest causes of partnership breakdown. One of the key criteria for success



given by members is the necessity to have clearly stated objectives and responsibilities from the outset.

Partners should have a proven track record of achievement in their field

Choosing a partner with an established record of achievement not only minimises risk but is more likely to ensure successful delivery of your project or initiative. At a local level, your partner should have access to a wide knowledge base and many best practice examples to apply to your project.

Partners should demonstrate financial probity

If you are raising funds for a joint project, it is essential that your partner has a sound financial record and can demonstrate transparency in its accounting procedures. Larger organisations publish their annual accounts which are often available on their own website or via government regulators.

Partners should be willing to include both organisations in PR initiatives

Some Clubs have been

disappointed that PR coverage has focused solely on their partner. To avoid this, try to include a clause in your agreement that PR coverage will endeavour to give equal coverage to both parties. If your partner has a newsletter, are they willing to feature your joint project? Will they provide a link to relevant Soroptimist sites from their website? Which partner will undertake to contact the press to publicise your events? Who will pay for distributing publicity materials? The more attention you pay to these questions, the more likely it is that your joint efforts will be publicised.

Operational partners should have capped administration costs at an agreed percentage

Whilst any organisation needs to cover its running costs, future misunderstandings can be avoided if parties agree those costs at the outset. Some charitable professional bodies give guidance on the acceptable levels of administration costs.

The UK website: www.charityfacts.org advises that 15% is an acceptable upper limit, although they emphasise that strong

management is essential for a charity and that comes at a cost. A useful source of information on non-profit organisations in the USA is www2.guidestar.org and internationally: www.guidestarinternational.org

Partners should be willing to demonstrate commitment for the duration of the partnership

Regular communication is a key element in sustaining motivation. An essential method of ensuring ongoing commitment is to put a requirement for regular project and financial reporting into your partnership agreement. Longer term agreements should also include the opportunity for review and revision.

Partnership working is advocated by the United Nations and the worldwide NGO community in the belief that organisations with similar values, working together, achieve more than one organisation working alone. For Soroptimists this concept embraces many of our own Clubs, already working successfully together around the world.



SIGBI

UNICEF, SIGBI & FAWGAM

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation working for children. UNICEF works with families, communities and Governments in more than 190 countries to help every child realise their full potential. Jane Hastings, UKPAC/UNICEF Liaison, reports on their partnership with Soroptimists:

It's 21 years since the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was passed, spelling out the basic rights of children and underpinning UNICEF's work. UNICEF and Soroptimists share the same vision, that through education, particularly of girls, we help lift communities out of poverty. I saw this in The Gambia where FAWGAM, the Federation of African Women in Education, Gambia branch, works with UNICEF to provide small amounts of money for "Mothers Clubs". These Clubs, based on schools, encourage school attendance by lending money to mothers to start up businesses. Money is used for printing materials, for a sewing business making school uniforms, for soap making and for a group to purchase and maintain a milling machine.

These small enterprises give mothers an income and get children into school rather than wandering the streets or helping in the fields. Club Mothers also exert "peer pressure" on the mothers of non-attenders, encouraging their children to go to school too.

Some of the leading women in FAWGAM were members of SI Banjul; practical ladies coming up with great ideas to help women and children. And that is repeated across the world, UNICEF and Soroptimists coming up with sensible, practical ideas.



Jane Hastings (second left) with UNICEF staff from London and the Gambia

Over the next 5 years UNICEF's priorities are:

1. **The right to survive:** every year more than 9 million children die before reaching their 5th birthday, mainly from preventable causes such as malnutrition, diarrhoea and malaria.
2. **Basic education and gender equality:** more than 100 million children, mainly girls, miss out on primary education.
3. **HIV/AIDS:** 15 million young people have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
4. **Child protection:** 300 million children worldwide are subject to violence, exploitation and abuse.
5. **Children in emergencies:** for over 60 years UNICEF has delivered lifesaving help for children in emergencies worldwide. SI has worked with UNICEF on all these areas. SIGBI has provided funding for, and raised awareness of: Malaria, Tetanus, Girls' Education, Schools in a Box, Trafficking and HIV/AIDS.

As times get tougher, it's more important than ever to be confident about your charitable giving. UNICEF's credibility is without question, it is one of the most trusted and influential organisations in the world. Yet it remains entirely dependant on voluntary contributions from individuals and groups such as ours. We have a wonderful relationship with UNICEF working together to improve the lives of women and girls. Long may it continue!



SIA

INTERNATIONAL

Life changing laptops

In November, a media event in Sarasota, Florida unveiled a new partnership between SI of the Americas and Jackson Hewitt LLC, America's second largest tax preparation firm. Debra Beach, SIA Fundraising Director, reports:

The partnership was highlighted by the gift of 25 IBM laptops to the Soroptimist Women's Opportunity programme.

Danamichele Brennen, Jackson Hewitt's Chief Technology Officer and Debra Dowd, VP of Marketing hosted an enthusiastic group that included Jackson Hewitt CEO Harry Buckley, SIA President Cathy Standiford, Soroptimists, business leaders and media.

The match is based on the goal of economic empowerment for women. This gift provides an essential tool as 25 women advance their educations, search for employment and

help their children with school assignments. Jackson Hewitt is committed to women's economic empowerment. Over 75 per cent of its customers are women who are heads of their households – responsible for their dependants. This new, user-friendly, low-cost programme that educates women about tax law, ensures that they understand how to get the tax return they are entitled to and it walks them through the process.

Each year, Soroptimist helps more than 1,100 women with more than US\$1.4 million in Women's Opportunity Awards at Club, Region and Federation

level. The money means a lot to these women, as does the recognition by professional women that their dreams for economic opportunity through education are important. The Women's Opportunity Award is transformative.

IT is the engine that drives much of our educational system. Whether it's internet access, word processing or email communication with faculty, students who lack basic technology face serious challenges. The recipients already face huge obstacles.

A personal laptop is a gateway to educational achievement that goes beyond

money and certificates, so SIA began donating laptops to recipients in 2009. Fiscal restraints did not allow a budget for laptops in 2010.

Thanks to one New York Times advertisement (and to SIA Board taking the risk to fund it), to the compassion of Danamichele Brennan, (Jackson Hewitt) and to the Soroptimist mission, 28 region-level Soroptimist Women's Opportunity Award recipients received new laptops this year.

SIA continues conversations with Jackson Hewitt to explore other ways that they can work together to improve the lives of women and girls.

Teaming up for greater impact

At the initiative of the late Evi Wunder, Austrian Soroptimist and Programme Liaison 2001-3, SI/E introduced a Project Exchange Pool to allow Clubs, Unions and individual Soroptimists to "share" the sponsoring of worthwhile projects. Christine Cromwell-Ahrens reports:

In 2007 the database was posted on the website – www.soroptimistsgoforwater.nl establishing itself as a forum for Clubs to ask for support in realising projects. A Club, let's say in Africa, proposes a project on the website, inviting other Clubs to contribute to the financing.

To qualify for PEP, the project must adhere to specific criteria, so participating Clubs can rest assured that the money is well spent! This includes information on the Club and the project, a description and problem analysis, measures required of the Club posting the project, target groups, details of financing and sustainability.

The proposing Club is also responsible for the follow-up and final evaluation of the project.

WATER PROJECTS MOST POPULAR

In line with SI/E's two biennia themes "Soroptimists go for Water" (2007-2009) and "Safe Water = Safe Life" (2009-2011), water projects have been the most popular in the past three years.

Clubs or Unions have funded or are sponsoring 57 projects involving water or sanitation in 18 countries in Africa, Eastern Europe and South America at a total cost of €400,000.

To illustrate how the PEP functions, Club Antananarivo Mandrosoa in Madagascar proposed a project to restore a dam and an irrigation canal and construct a new canal for a 400 acre rice field.

In addition to their own donation and local sponsors, the Danish Union and Clubs in Denmark, the Netherlands



SIE

and France helped finance the €45,000 project.

Another example is the project by Club Cotonou Gazelle to construct three wells in Dangbo in Benin. Among the generous contributors to cover the costs of €24,000 were an Italian Soroptimist and her husband and Club Lippstadt in Germany. The PEP also presents projects dealing with health issues (in excess of €40,000) and education (nearly €17,000).

AN EXCELLENT INSPIRATION

The SI/E water website is an excellent source of information and inspiration, when it comes to biennium projects. Not all projects fall into the category of PEP because they have been completely devised and financed by Clubs or Unions. The original webmaster Ina

Stoppelberg and now Gerda Rosiers have done a brilliant job of documenting and presenting 187 water projects realised in the past three years for more than €875,000, bringing the investment in water and sanitation projects to nearly €1.3 million.

Beyond one Federation

The PEP has been so successful that SI/E is taking steps to expand the concept to include other Federations.

"Soroptimist Project Matching" is the working title of the network to match resources between all SI Clubs around the world – in other words, those that need assistance with those able to assist. This exciting prospect opens a whole new dimension to SI's objective to improve the lives of women and girls!

PARTNERSHIPS

Electric self sufficiency

SI Jakarta Lucy Heffern, Publicity Officer and Anita Fenton, Membership Extension Officer report on a partnership with IBEKA to bring electricity to rural villages:

What do the village of Krueng Kala, Aceh, in Indonesia and US President Barack Obama have in common?

Well, at the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship which took place in Washington DC on 26 April 2010 Ms. Tri Mumpuni was acknowledged in President Obama's speech as a great social entrepreneur for rural electrification.

The Ashoka Fellow, Tri Mumpuni is an activist who has helped countless numbers of villages in being electricity independent by building

community-based micro hydroelectric power plants.

Her ultimate goal is for this self-sufficient supply of electricity to maximise the potential of these villages so that they may be comprehensively sustainable. Tri Mumpuni was also named as a WWF Climate Hero in 2005 and as one of the 100 Most Powerful Women in Asia named by GlobeAsia magazine.

Tri Mumpuni is involved in various areas of government policymaking in the electricity sector to further the cause and improve the lives of

the marginalised people of Indonesia. She is also the project partner of SI Jakarta, SISWP, which works to electrify rural villages through hydro electricity.

Thanks to their partnership, and connection with an Indonesian NGO (IBEKA), SI Jakarta has provided US\$38,000 for IBEKA to repair a defunct hydro-electric generator. The money will be paid back to SI Jakarta as the community earns income from selling the electricity to the local government electricity authority.

The partnership between IBEKA and SI Jakarta aims to assist the Krueng Kala village become self-sufficient in the area of electricity power generation using renewable energy sources by focusing on improving the economic status of women through income generation activities.

This project integrates energy services for poverty reduction activities through assistance in infrastructure, income generation and capacity building in an area that was devastated by the 2004 tsunami.



SISWP



Roswitha and Dora with the UN flags

Plant seeds, water them... and give them time to grow

Margaret Cook, International Assistant Programme Director visited Vienna to attend a UN Commission on Drugs and Crime

This is what work at the United Nations is all about!

I discovered this when I visited the 19th Commission on Drugs and Crime in Vienna with our UN Representatives Roswitha Benesch and Dora Vrdlovec.

They gave me a glimpse of their work, opened doors for me to meet key personnel working at the UN in Vienna and introduced me to their fellow NGO representatives; I had met some of them at CSW 54 in New York. Roswitha made certain that I knew what was being discussed at this Commission and had arranged appointments for us. I asked her what she saw as her main role, on behalf of Soroptimists, at the UN. She said it is "to represent Soroptimist International, its stance on issues as published in "Where We Stand" and to advise the membership of the discussions and decisions at the UN on these issues".

The plenary sessions of the Commission were on violence against women and the

treatment of women in the criminal justice system. This was reflected in some of the Draft Resolutions debated in the Committee of the Whole.

The NGOs can make a difference to the outcomes by lobbying Government representatives. Within the plenary, NGOs can make statements by requests through the NGO Committee. Roswitha felt that SI should make a statement on Violence Against Women. She asked me to do it and we planned it for Thursday afternoon but the session was delayed so Roswitha read it the next day at the plenary; so SI was brought into the arena of discussion.

"Networking with other NGOs and UN personnel is a very important part of our work" said Roswitha and she made certain that I met as many as possible! Cindy Smith, who represents a UN Institute, the International Scientific and Professional Advisory Council (ISPAC), said the words that

head this article! She also said how important it is to get things into place so we must go slowly and get it right as the UN makes policy that trickles down and affects life everywhere. Roswitha has recruited her to Soroptimism.

Sandra, in the UNGIFT (Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking) office, was passionate about her work and the difference that civil society (us) can make to this campaign. The Blue Heart Campaign has been introduced to us by Roswitha; look it up, there is useful information and indicators. www.ungift.org

The issues of trafficking and those of women in prison were highlighted in excellent side events. The ELFI project was launched under the initiative of Thailand. Enhancing Lives of Female Inmates aims to improve the lives of women in prison. It is hoped that the draft Bangkok Rules – central to this project – will eventually be adopted by the UN thus making this secure.

Iлона Graenitz, the

International Federation of University Women, is Vice President of CoNGO in Vienna. CoNGO is the committee of NGOs and membership eases access to the UN bodies.

I was told, by another NGO representative, that continuity of representation is very important as the "language" of the UN has to be learned as well as "code words" and the impact of meaning. This is very important if we are to be represented well!

Remarks made by several non Soroptimists included: "Soroptimists do things rather than throw money at them", they "broaden horizons" and "know what to do when the need arises".

Clearly Roswitha, and Dora are working well!

I returned home from Vienna more certain than ever that Soroptimists can change the lives of women and girls – not only through our representation at the United Nations but also by "knowing what to do when the need arises".

Cluster munitions banned

Judi Chaddock SIGBI Federation Assistant Programme Director – International Goodwill & Understanding (Acting) reports

Partnerships have been important in getting Cluster Munitions banned worldwide. For many years, Soroptimist International has worked in partnership with the Cluster Munition Coalition and organisations such as Handicap International (UK) to achieve this goal and has now been successful.

International law has been developed to promote and enforce common standards of practice throughout the world.

The protection of civilians from the effects of armed conflict is a longstanding and important branch of international law, known as international humanitarian law (IHL), best known through the Geneva Conventions.

This body of law is constantly changing to

respond to the differing nature of conflicts and the increasing worth societies place on humanitarian values.

The countdown has begun for the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) to enter into force and become binding International Law. Only 15 months after the Convention opened for signature in Oslo, Moldova became the 30th country to ratify on 16 February 2010, triggering its entry into force on 1 August 2010.

Once the Convention takes effect, states will be bound by its terms and the clock begins ticking on deadlines for clearance of contaminated land and destruction of remaining stockpiles.

The next milestone will be the first Meeting of States'

Parties in November 2010 in Laos People's Democratic Republic – the most cluster bombed country in the world.

The CCM urges as many states as possible to sign, ratify and begin implementation of the Convention before the first Meeting of States' Parties. 32 countries have signed Ratifications so far.

The Convention on Cluster Munitions was signed in Oslo, Norway in December 2008 and has since been opened for signature and ratification at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

By signing the Convention, a state proclaims its consent to be bound by its provisions once it ratifies the treaty. Every country signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions must still ratify it



to become a State Party bound by the Convention.

Soroptimists have been at the forefront of the battle against cluster munitions for many years. They have done an amazing job attending many meetings and lobbying governments working in partnership with other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

It demonstrates that Soroptimists CAN and DO make a difference and make the world a safer place for everyone. We have accepted the challenge and secured the future for the world with the abolition of cluster munitions.



Thanks to the success of this first effort and the professional work of arche noVa, a second phase will soon begin.

With the help of Soroptimist funding, arche noVa has been able to install SkyHydrants™ to increase guaranteed access to safe drinking water in the Petit-Goâve, Grand-Goâve areas. These ingenious devices purify water without electricity or chemicals. So far, the arche noVa teams have installed five SkyHydrants. They have also set up a small water-testing laboratory to monitor the quality of the water provided at the distribution points as well as in household spot-checks.

FAST AND SAFE WATER TREATMENT

In Carrefour, a SkyHydrant has been installed in a camp supported by a group of missionaries. Another SkyHydrant supplies patients, staff and visitors with safe

drinking water in a hospital in Carrefour run by ACTS World Relief. The water is also used in a kitchen that produces 3,000 meals per day.

In Petit Guinée on the outskirts of Petit-Goâve where at least 80% of the buildings were destroyed, arche noVa set up a facility to provide drinking water to the community. At a second site in Petit Guinée two SkyHydrants have replaced the original treatment unit set up by arche noVa.

arche noVa has installed a SkyHydrant in a camp maintained by ADRA Czech. As there was no water distribution system here, this site will be the first permanent installation where the community itself will eventually take over responsibility. This will ensure the sustainability and maintenance of the water provision.

Saving lives In Haiti

Shortly after the earthquake in January 2010, SI Europe and the German aid organisation arche noVa agreed to co-operate on a project to secure safe drinking water and hygiene education on a long-term basis in certain areas of Haiti.

Christine Cromwell-Ahrens reports:

HYGIENE EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS

Depending on the raw water source, the water treated by SkyHydrants usually has some residual taste and sometimes even a slight colouration, unlike the water sold by private vendors at a high cost. Although perfectly safe, people often distrust the water quality, as they are not used to drinking water with a taste, even if the suitability of SkyHydrant water is guaranteed through regular testing. It has therefore been necessary to educate the people on this issue, which is why arche noVa started campaigns through its Hygiene Promotion Teams. They also raise awareness of hygiene and act as a monitoring mechanism.

SUPPORTING A SECOND PROJECT

Club donations to arche noVa have continued, and the SI/E Board have also decided to help finance a second project, not

least thanks to the professional quality and success of their work. The goals of this project are to provide drinking and service water to two schools in Petit-Goâve and reduce the number of diseases caused by a lack of water and unhygienic conditions. To achieve this arche noVa will construct and install two water systems, educate the children in hygiene, distribute toiletries and monitor the water quality.

Thanks to the generosity of many Soroptimists, Club Port au Prince hope to fund the restoration of a school. In addition to the donations to the SI/E fund, there have been many other initiatives to help the people of Haiti, including donations of over €25,000 from the German Union to HelpAge International, which has experienced workers on site to support the elderly.

SI South West Pacific Conference of Clubs



Past President Leigh-Ellwood Brown (L) with President Yvonne Simpson

Yvonne said that there is much to do, and members could either sit back and age gracefully or they can get up and promote Soroptimism. She offered seven themes under the umbrella of Education and Celebration.

The other major news was the acceptance of a new Federation project "Birthing in the Pacific: Improving Maternity Services" which will concentrate efforts to provide midwifery and nursing education to enable students to attain international nursing and national midwifery practice standards. It is projected that 120 nurses and midwives will undertake competency based training to bring their level of skills up to international standards.

At the SISWP Conference of Clubs, held in April on the Gold Coast in Australia, Yvonne Simpson, incoming President, spoke about the Future Direction of Soroptimism, asking if members were "Ready to step up". Indrani Manuel reports:

At the Conference, Indrani Manuel, e-TIS SISWP representative and Kerry Garrett Editor of SISWP magazine, interviewed SI President Hanne. Hanne said, "I am proud to be SI President, especially during this time of change with the implementation of the Strategic Plan. I wear my Chain of Office and my badge with pride. I liken my role as SI President to that of the captain of a ship with office bearers as officers and members - well, some are passengers and some are tourists."

Her motto is "Action Speaks Louder Than Words" and she believes Soroptimist International should be more flexible to attract new, young and vibrant members. When asked what she thought of SISWP she said, "This Federation although small, has a mix of culture, colour and dress. It is important to keep these identities and differences separate whilst still being proud to be a Soroptimist."



join our movement is Cambodia from SISWP. I thank President Leigh for a well co-ordinated Conference and wish incoming President Yvonne Simpson from New Zealand and President-Elect Siew Yong Gnanalingam from Malaysia all the best to take Soroptimism to a higher level. Think that as Soroptimists you are the ambassadors of Soroptimism. I would like every member to introduce two members to join SI next year."



Women and Climate Change in Kenya

In 2009, twelve Clubs in the Danish Union were involved in awareness raising climate change activities under the project: "Women and Climate Change". A Climate Change Working Group, in the Danish Union, helped with the co-ordination of the project and was successful in receiving a grant of total Dkr 125.000 (US\$ 22.500) from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Peoples Climate Action (PCA) Secretariat. Else Larsen reports:

The project fuelled innovative activities by members of the twelve Clubs, focusing on public awareness raising events and advocacy amongst local leaders, on how climate change affects women differently from men and how women deal with the adaptation and mitigation of climate change in their lives.

Fifty Danish Soroptimists took turns in managing the SI exhibition at the NGO Forum, which ran parallel with the COP15 (the 15th Conference of Parties) in Copenhagen in December 2009.

INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE

The "Women and Climate Change" project has had excellent international media coverage. It has featured prominently on the PCA website and thousands of people from all over the world, visited the SI exhibition. This heightened the visibility of SI and led to new opportunities. The Danish Ministry of

Foreign Affairs approached the members of the Climate Change Working Group, asking if the SI Union in Denmark would be interested in implementing another, larger scale climate change project, in Kenya. The Danish Union accepted the offer and soon SI Climate Change Project Steering Committees were set up in Denmark and Kenya, each with five members, including the SI Presidents.

RAPID DEVELOPMENT

By email, Skype calls and lots of creative thinking, the project "Women and Climate Change – SI Denmark and Kenya", has developed over three months. The project, which will run for two years, is now ready for implementation with a grant of approximately Dkr 2 million (US\$ 360.000) from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

AIMS OF THE PROJECT

The aim is to strengthen the ability among Kenyan women

to handle climate change mitigation and adaptation through involvement of women, including Soroptimists. Members of the ten SI Clubs in Kenya will be active partners and ambassadors. They will be trained in skills including tree planting, the introduction of fuel saving/fuel less stoves, and other climate change activities suited to local needs.

The project will also focus on the implementation of cleaner production practices in small scale textile and hotel businesses, which employ many women in Kenya. This aims to achieve measurable improvements in the reduction of usage of water, energy and chemicals, leading to financial gains for these small businesses as well as improved work conditions for their employees. This part will be implemented with the help of the Kenya National Cleaner Production Centre (KNPC),

and SI Kenya will act as the facilitators/ambassadors and link between the KNPC and the small businesses targeted under the project.

READY TO ROLL

We are very excited about the project – it is a new adventure, not tried on such a large scale before. It is the first time the Danish Union has received a grant of this size and we are ready to learn from and share our experiences as the project develops. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has shown their trust in SI as a reliable international NGO and jointly, between SI Denmark and SI Kenya we hope to demonstrate that we can deliver the planned results and make a difference to the lives of many women in Kenya. We are now embarking on this two year project and we shall keep readers updated on the progress of the project and our learning experiences over the next two years.

Memories of Sierra Leone

"Touching memories of the third SI Study Tour to our Quadrennial Project in Sierra Leone are fresh in my mind. The tours have enabled thirty Soroptimists from around the world to represent you and witness the impact so far of Soroptimist support for Project Sierra: a Family and a Future." Alison Sutherland, SI Quadrennial Project Liaison 2007-11, reports:

Action



On the May 2010 Study Tour, Soroptimists took part in a live radio discussion, skilfully moderated by Tawo, the advocacy leader at our local partner Help a Needy Child International (HANCI). Local radio is the main medium for community information there.

With Project Sierra's support, HANCI sponsors programmes to address negative attitudes to young single mothers and encourage family reconciliation. Teen mums and young people who had lived on the streets go on air and speak directly to communities that had once rejected them. Their

confidence, communication skills and huge commitment to use opportunities obtained through the Project to help others in similar plight, have validated our partners' professionalism.

"I cannot say enough about the HANCI team and their care for the community. They are wonderful. They are doing so much with so little." We saw this same encouraging spirit in remote villages, having driven through bush roads where we saw no vehicles for miles. By aiming to bring the most vulnerable households "up to community standard"

International Partnerships

Soroptimists and Microcredit

Joan Jackson, President of the new SI Victoria Westshore (chartered May 15 2010) and Past President of SI Chico (California) 2003/04, reports:

Microcredit is a system through which people without collateral or a financial track record may secure small loans for their use towards their business or (less often) personal lives. Sometimes these loans are just a few US dollars, but these few dollars can make an enormous difference in the lives of the person and her/his family.

THE FATHER OF MICROCREDIT

Muhammad Yunus is considered the father of microcredit lending. A former professor of economics and a banker in Bangladesh, he became aware of how a small amount of money could lift individuals out of poverty. He founded the Grameen Bank, a microfinance organisation and community development bank. In 2006, Yunus and the Grameen Bank were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Yunus made his first loan to a group of 42 women in Jobra, totaling US\$27. Charging a fair interest rate and requiring them to meet

regularly for mutual support: the concept of microcredit was established.

FOUNDING KIVA

In 2004, Matt Flannery and Jessica Jackley "witnessed the power of microfinance firsthand". Returning to California they created Kiva.org, "the first person-to-person micro-lending website, empowering individuals to lend to entrepreneurs around the globe."

Lenders are able to access the website, select entrepreneurs and arrange to lend funds in a secure online environment. Brief information about the requesting person, the project that is planned and the loan that they require, is given on the Kiva website.

Lenders log on, "shop" for a person requesting a loan, and make a secure payment to the entrepreneur in increments of US\$25.

Multiples of people form the online lending group; each person's money is repaid securely as credit back to the lender's password-protected site. Since 2004, US\$131 billion has been lent by 700,000 lenders around the globe to 333,000 entrepreneurs, and more than 82% of these entrepreneurs are women.

Members of Kiva Lending Teams lend as individuals, but have the option to count each loan they make towards the overall impact of one of their teams.

www.kiva.org

Microcredit lending is one more way in which Soroptimist members can work on behalf of women and girls internationally, while enjoying the opportunity of making direct choices in the women and projects in which to invest.

to provide children a safe and secure future, no family benefits disproportionately. We witnessed communities' enthusiastic support for this approach, and beneficiaries' active involvement.

Hawa lived in dire conditions caring for six grandchildren. Project Sierra offered materials to rebuild her derelict mud-brick house; neighbours provided the labour. Seedlings and tools to start farming gave her stability and confidence. "I loved the glance in the eyes of both the children and the grown ups. It was very direct, intense and intelligent. It made me believe in them."

Soroptimists shared Zainab's delight as she showed us her mobile "market stall" which she carries gracefully on her head from village to village. Project Sierra lifted her from

abject poverty to care for her two girls. Zainab, along with forty two more families in this rural project location will exit the programme in June, after eighteen months of support and preparation. A tailored "exit package" includes extra business capital. Another 29 families will soon graduate, as more enter the programme. "Project Sierra is another example of a successful project that proves to be triumphant because the change comes from the local people. The beneficiaries are merely helped to help themselves."

Almost £600,000 GBP (US\$900,000) so far sent to Project Sierra from Soroptimists worldwide is achieving profound results. Thank you! We have another year to go, so I give the final words to Andrea Mills (SI New

York City, UN representative): "We Soroptimists are not done. We still need to raise another £500,000. I cannot stress enough, the importance to raise funds at the local level. Please work hard at this."

Below: at the Kissy centre, l-r: Kelfa Kargbo (Hanci Programme Director) Suba Parthiban (SIE), Lois Kamara (Hanci Kissy and urban projects director), Siew Yong Ng (SISWP President-Elect) and Robynne Paget (SISWP)



SI Convention 2011



Will you be with us?

Soroptimists from around the world will gather in Montréal in July 2011 to learn, network and socialise.

The convention theme is Women Leading a Civil Society. This will be complemented by the daily themes of Women as Stewards of the Environment; Women as Catalysts for Change and Women as Role Models.

Inspirational speakers, instructive workshops and enjoyable social events will ensure that your Convention experience is worthwhile and memorable.

Soroptimist International President Hanne says: "For all Soroptimists it is a MUST to participate in a Soroptimist Convention – at least once in your lifetime. For those of us, who have already participated in several Conventions, it is still a MUST to participate, as we don't want to miss this fantastic occasion to meet old and new Soroptimist friends from other parts of the world".

LAUNCHING THE LONG TERM PROJECT

The Long Term Project will be launched at the SI Convention in Montréal in 2011, replacing the Quadrennial Project. The concept for this was developed in 2008 as part of SI's strategic planning process and the project will be owned and operated by SI. The project will be the "centerpiece" of how Soroptimist International works to achieve its mission to inspire action to transform the lives of women and girls through a global network of Clubs and international partnerships. This project will bring Soroptimist Clubs and members from around the world together to work toward a common goal.

ENJOY MONTRÉAL!

Montréal is easily accessed by land, water and air. Downtown is a mere 20 minutes from the airport, which handles some 200 flights daily. Visitors will find this compact island city great for walking, and can easily-and safely- explore its vibrant neighborhoods on foot, at any time of the day or night.

Montréal is also multicultural, boasting more than 80 ethnic communities, and enjoys an outstanding reputation worldwide for gourmet dining.

The Convention hotels have been contracted and we encourage you to make the Le Centre Sheraton (convention hotel), the Marriott Montréal Chateau Champlain, the Delta Centre-ville or the Intercontinental Montréal your home away from home during convention.

While the city has many fine accommodation possibilities, helping us to meet the room blocks will ensure a cost-efficient Convention for all. Montréal Tourism will be managing the housing for us and information will be available on the website.

Every effort is being made to keep the costs of Convention low. The registration fee has been set at CDN\$600. Mark your calendar and plan to be part of this exciting event!



Soroptimist 2011

19th International Convention

July 10 to 14, 2011 – Montréal, Québec, Canada