Where We Stand

The role of men and boys in gender equality

Soroptimist International recognises that full gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls cannot be attained without a robust commitment and the active involvement from men and boys. Women and men, girls and boys, all need to be a part of societal changes to achieve meaningful and sustainable gender parity.

Soroptimist International urges governments to:

- Implement and monitor with urgency the conclusions from 48th Commission on the Status of Women;
- Focus on developing national capacity to disaggregate data by sex to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes and any difference by sex;
- Ensure that the education curriculum includes information about gender stereotypes and their role in hampering gender equality;
- When men are in positions of power, including as heads of state, religious leaders, and on boards of directors, ensure gender equality is a priority;
- Ensure work/family balance for all making it easier for men and boys to share in caregiving roles;
- Work with the private sector to break down barriers which lead to occupational segregation.

Soroptimist International will continue to:

- Implement projects and programmes directly benefitting women and girls which include men and boys as appropriate, particularly in the work to eliminate violence against women, to end the spread of HIV, and to eliminate rigid stereotypes impacting both paid and unpaid work;
- Support the equal sharing of family and household responsibilities, including childcare and domestic work;
- Provide gender-sensitive vocational guidance, education, and training aimed at breaking down damaging occupational segregation;
- Encourage corporations and the private sector to roll out programmes and policies which help all employees to achieve a better work-life balance;
- Work in the wider community to end harmful or rigid gender stereotypes which reinforce the patriarchy and outdated definitions of male and female roles;
- Focus on the role of parents in ending harmful cycles of gender stereotypes;
- Encourage the participation of men and boys alongside women and girls to lobby, advocate, and to be involved in policy development that promotes gender mainstreaming and gender equality strategies;
- Work with the media to eliminate the harmful portrayal of gender stereotypes.

Soroptimist International:

- Educates society about “harmful traditional perceptions and attitudes of male and female roles to achieve the full and equal participation of women and men in society” (CSW 48 Agreed Conclusions);
- Empowers all individuals to serve as agents of change to end damaging and destructive gender stereotypes and encourages men and boys to speak out against violence against women and girls and other inequalities;
- Enables opportunities to broadly and comprehensively address gender inequality, including in the home, workplace, society, educational system and politics.