Partnership with My Book Buddy Marks International Literacy Day

Dear Union Presidents, dear Single Club Presidents,

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of International Literacy Day on 8 September, I am proud to announce our cooperation agreement with the Dutch organization, "My Book Buddy", which aims to provide disadvantaged children with a greater access to books. My Book Buddy has developed a concept based on outfitting schools with books in custom-made bookcases. With the unique library system at the schools the children can take the books home and share the reading experience with the entire family.

Many Unions and Clubs have already signed up to participate. I hope that all 1265 clubs of our Federation will follow this lead so we can really make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged women and girls.

There are two ways to show your support:

1. You can raise funds to finance the cost of a bookcase, which is estimated at €750,- for about 40 books, including rucksacks and training.

2. Another possibility is to identify a school that is in need of books. For this, please complete the application form that will be available on our website so that we can start the communication with the My Book Buddy organisation on how to implement the system.

In the coming weeks, HQ will make all the necessary forms available on the website and provide details of the account where you can deposit the funds you have raised.

The Programme team has also come up with an idea for a special fundraising event in the second week of November. It involves organizing a sponsored reading day at schools under the motto '**Children read books for children who need books'.**

We suggest you to find a teacher or a mother in your club who can encourage a school to participate in this reading event by sponsoring children to read from books for a certain amount of money. Perhaps they prefer to read to each other or at events for clubs. Or you could invite the parents and grandparents. You may also want to engage the support of local companies for this good cause! There are many possibilities so why not use your imagination!

It would be great if as many clubs as possible would be willing to finance a bookcase. I appeal to your creativity to help a whole class together with their families gain access to books and promote literacy. With this project we can show the world that the clubs of SIE are truly **Investing in Education**!

Our SIE Programme team, Marlène van Benthem and Caroline Junier, will work with PDs of the Unions and Single Clubs in our Federation to facilitate the partnership agreement. If you have any questions please address email Marlène at marlene.vanbenthem@soroptimisteurope.org

Yours

Maria Elisabetta de Franciscis
SIE President 2015-2017