Programme NEWS

Soroptimist International of Europe
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Project of the Month

This month's winners are the six Dutch clubs SI of Assen, Friesland-Zuid, Friesland-Noord, Leeuwarden "Norderlicht", Stadskanaal and de Reestlanden for their outstanding Advocacy Project "Soroptimist Film Festival for Children". The Programme Focus Objective of this PFR is no. 8: Promote peaceful conflict resolution, inter-cultural and inter-racial tolerance and condemn genocide and terrorism.

The above clubs have worked in partnership with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and ChildLine in organizing an annual film festival for school children from 8 to 12 years of age. The main goal is to make children aware of their rights according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. By showing quality films on children's issues, they learn how their rights are at times violated in their own countries but also worldwide. The films are then discussed in schools with the help of UNICEF. As a result, thousands of children are aware of their rights.

The clubs' PFR no. 17607 asserts how the clubs started and how they spread the idea. The film festival will be organized for the third time with more clubs following the example. This PFR states that 10,000 USD have been raised in funds and 100 women and 2000 girls have been helped. This also created more visibility for Soroptimists! Congratulations!

SI/E Best Practice Award 2011

SI/E Best Practice Awards recognize outstanding club/Union Projects in each of the ten Programme Focus Objectives that transform the lives of women and girls. One best project is chosen per Objective and one overall winner will be named from the **nominated** ten best practices. Each Union is eligible to nominate **2 projects per objective** and each Single Club can recommend **1 project per objective**. Entries are due to SIEHQ in Geneva on or before **February 15, 2011.** The winners will be awarded at the **Governors' Meeting in Palermo,** Italy in May 2011. In addition, they will receive recognition in a special Best Practice brochure, on the SI/E website and in *The Link.*

Water Best Practice Award 2011

"Soroptimists go for Water: Safe Water = Safe Life," SI/E's mandate from 2009-2011, encourages improvement of water and sanitation resources worldwide. All clubs in Europe and Africa are inspired to initiate different projects in the area of water. During the Governors' Meeting in Palermo, Italy, one project will be awarded the ***"Water Best Practice Award 2011".*** *For this purpose, we kindly ask for each Union and Single Club to additionally submit 1 project that has, in your opinion, reached the excellence of this category. Please use the same guidelines as for the Best Practice Awards.*

The entry form and the project description criteria have been distributed to all Unions and Single Clubs and are available on www.soroptimisteurope.org . Please send in your entries to suba@soroptimisteurope.org on or before **February 15, 2011.**

World Aids Day – 1 December and 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign – 25 November – December 10

Women are disproportionately affected by HIV. Hence, the leadership and action for women becomes increasingly important. Gender-based violence, gender inequality and the low status of women remain primary drivers of HIV.
To be more efficient, responses and action to HIV must address the factors that put women at higher risk.



The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign seeks to highlight issues of violence against women and girls worldwide. Evidently, violence against women aggravates the existing high rates of HIV infection among women.

Soroptimists go for water
safe water = safe life

"There has to be legislation on sexual violence and rape, on property and inheritance rights, on quotas for parliamentary representation and on the elimination of user fees since they hamper women's access. The failure of the international community generally to respond to women has never been more dramatic than in the face of the pandemic."

- Stephen Lewis

Violence and most importantly the fear of violence deter women from seeking HIV testing, insisting on using condoms, or disclosing their true HIV status to their sexual partners.

As Soroptimists are celebrating Human Rights Day on December 10th, the human rights of women are particularly vital in the context of HIV. It is vital to protect the rights of women and girls, especially sexual and reproductive rights. This is necessary to put an end to HIV transmission and to lessen the impact of the epidemic on women.

It is crucial to voice the growing concerns that existing strategies against HIV do not sufficiently address women's needs.

The following are some areas that UN agencies and civil society focus on:

- promote women's leadership in the response to HIV
- improve access to reproductive health
- ensure equal access to HIV treatment and care
- advocate increased research and funding for female-controlled HIV prevention methods, such as female condoms
- reduce violence against women
- ensure universal access to education

The Programme Team
Soroptimist International of Europe
72 rte de Florissant,
1206 Geneva
Switzerland

Tel : +41 22 346 08 80

E-mail: suba@soroptimisteurope.org
www.soroptimisteurope.org

2010 December 10 Appeal

Soroptimist International has celebrated Human Rights Day, 10th December,
for many years through special focus on different projects which is called the SI President's Appeal. SI President selects one project to provide direct assistance to women and girls in need. This year, SI President Hanne Jensbo's December 10th Appeal is dedicated to securing funds to support the Long Term Project (LTP) "Soroptimists for Education and Leadership" that will be launched at the SI Convention in Montréal, Canada, in July 2011. Earlier this year, Soroptimists around the world overwhelmingly chose the topic of Education and Leadership for the LTP. For more information, please consult SI's website: http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/html/president_s_appeal.html

Featured Websites:

www.globalfundforwomen.org
The Global Fund for Women is a publicly supported grant-making foundation with the aim of advancing human rights through the promotion of women's economic security, health, education and leadership. The Global Fund for Women provides funds to women-led organizations working towards gender equality.

www.vitalvoices.org
Vital Voices Global Partnership is a non-governmental organization whose mission is to train women leaders and social entrepreneurs around the world. Its core activities are centered on violence against women and girls, social justice and democracy, entrepreneurial and leadership training.

www.hrw.org/women
Human Rights Watch is a non-governmental organization involved in the field of Human Rights. It regularly publishes reports and information on human rights situations in various countries and advocates for the respect of human rights. This part of HRW's website is dedicated to women's rights and features issues such as violence against women, reproductive and sexual rights, HIV/AIDS, refugee women, women in detention, at work etc.

www.un.org/womenwatch
In the UN system, WomenWatch is the information and resources portal for the promotion of gender equality. It is an inter-agency website, created by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), all of which are part of the new entity: UN Women. This site highlights information on critical issues affecting women and their rights as well as on the integration of gender in international governance.

The Programme Team wishes you a Happy Holiday Season!

please donate to projects on:
www.soroptimistprojects.org