



PROJECT OF THE MONTH

This month's winner is SI Krakow (Poland) for their project "Help for people after flood". The Programme Focus Objective of this PFR is no. 6: Mitigate the effects of climate change and integrate sustainability into personal choices and government policies and programmes.

Numerous towns, villages, homes, schools and libraries were swamped during the floods in Krakow and Katowice region. Three Polish Soroptimist clubs collected books for libraries. In the end, 10,400 books were collected and donated to seven libraries, one school and one kindergarten. Some of the books have been donated by publishing houses for the victims of the flood.

According to PFR no. 18672, the project costs amount in € 52,000 and the club members have dedicated more than 100 hours to this project. Congratulations!

SI - NEW WEBSITE

Soroptimist International has launched a new website. Please take a look at : www.soroptimistinternational.org We would like to remind you that the member login remains the same. username : member password : cambridge



To read the new TIS magazine, please visit : <http://content.yudu.com/A1rfsm/TIS> MARCH11/



Commission on the Status of Women

More than 1400 representatives of 307 Civil Society Organizations met in New York City for the 55th **UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**. The CSW is the global policy making body of the UN that is entirely devoted to monitoring the state of progress for women and girls. This year's theme was 'the access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work'. This topic is very relevant to Soroptimist work as we just have decided to focus on the long term theme 'Education and Leadership'.

28 Soroptimists presented the diversity of our international programmes in partnership with the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). Workshops addressed a range of topics such as 'intergenerational dialogue', 'women and climate change', 'formal and informal education' and 'combating violence against women'. We also advocated with our respective Government delegations for accessible, acceptable, available and good quality education for women and girls as a lifelong process.

The highlight of the two week session was the official launch of **UN Women** under the able leadership of the former Chilean President and now UN Under Secretary General Michelle Bachelet. The messages delivered at the launch were: **Challenges are manifold – Bold action is essential – Results are achievable – Hopes are high – We are ready!**

The new Agency focuses on five priority areas:

- Increasing women's leadership and participation
- Ending violence against women
- Engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes
- Enhancing women's economic empowerment
- Making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon confirmed findings by declaring 'where women are educated and empowered, economies are more productive and strong. Where women are fully represented, societies are more peaceful and stable'.

It was agreed that – in order to create sustainable change - a critical mass of women leaders need to be trained for private and public spheres. Examples of countries where women are represented equally proved the point with higher development indicators.

Even though we still have a long way to go till we achieve full gender equality, the meeting gave a lot of hope and encouragement presenting many diverse ways of strengthening women's voices

and participation in creating a better world for all of us. As Michelle Bachelet states 'women's strength, women's industry, women's wisdom are humankind's untapped resource. The challenge is to show how this resource can be effectively tapped in ways that benefit us all.'

April 7 – World Health Day

World Health Day is an occasion to reflect on the relationship between women and health. Why is it vital to provide particularly women and girls with health services and sanitation? The answer is clear: Discriminating gender norms have a negative impact on the well-being of women. Especially in the global South, women lack economic resources and are thus not able to provide themselves and their families with adequate medicine and necessary hygiene precautions.

Also, they are often subject to harmful practices as female genital mutilation; they are victims of sexual violence and suffer consequently from long-lasting psychic and physical injuries, as well as early pregnancies or sexually-transmitted diseases. As long as these gender inequalities persist, it will be difficult to achieve the various Millennium Development goals such as the combat of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger or universal primary education. Therefore, gender sensitive health policies, programmes and projects are vital to the empowerment of women. This year's World Health Day focuses on antimicrobial resistance and its global spread. For this year's World Health Day, World Health Organization will initiate a six-point policy package to fight the spread of antimicrobial resistance. For more information, please visit <http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2011/en/>



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According to WHO, more than half a billion people per year mostly in sub-Saharan Africa are infected by malaria, and half of the world's population is currently at risk. Over a million people die every year due to the disease, malaria being one of the most frequent causes of death in children under five in Africa. Nowadays, we possess the tools to prevent and treat this disease.

For more information on malaria and the Global Malaria Partnership, please visit http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/diseases/malaria/en/ and www.rollbackmalaria.org.

Soroptimist Project Matching www.soroptimistprojects.org

This month, we feature the project **"RW0001 – Construction of water tanks to collect rainwater"**. This project is so far the most successful project on the Project Matching site. The Rwandan Union initiated this project to help the numerous women who head households in the district of Ngoma, Rwanda. They live in poverty and have limited access to safe water supply. To overcome this, the goal of the Rwandan Union's project is to supply infrastructure for rainwater collection to 20 women-headed households. This will enable girls in these families to attend school instead of walking miles to fetch water and will also protect the environment by reducing soil erosion (resulting from heavy rain seasons, poor agricultural practices and lack of rainwater harvesting). Funds already received: €5400.
Funding now needed: €5168.

To contribute to this project, please email suba@soroptimisteurope.org

7th International Peace Marathon

It will be a unique experience to participate at the Peace Marathon 2011 on 22nd May in Kigali, Rwanda. The country has experienced drastic transformation since the genocide in 1994. The political landscape has changed and women have found themselves increasingly in positions

of power. Rwanda is still the only African country where a majority of parliamentary seats are held by women. This is your opportunity to witness the progress this country has made, be part of the Peace Marathon and visit the numerous water and education projects of the Rwandan Soroptimists. For more information, please visit www.kigalimarathon.com

SI Convention, July 10-14, 2011

The countdown has begun! As of March 8 2011, 334 Soroptimists had committed to being part of his exceptional experience. The deadline for the early registration fee for the full convention of \$600 CAD is rapidly approaching. After April 15, full registration will be \$700 CAD. Please visit the website www.si-convention.org to register and to book social events and tours. For those who need letters of invitation for visa purpose, please be advised that letters can only be issued once registration fees have been paid. Let's break the attendance records in Montreal and make this the largest SI Convention ever!

FEATURED WEBSITES:

www.waggs.org

Soroptimist International has entered into a partnership agreement with 'The world association of girl guides and girl scouts' (WAGGS) an association of 10 million girls. WAGGS is dedicated to end all forms of violence by empowering girls to understand and assert their rights – thus creating a powerful tool for personal and community transformation.

www.ngocsw.org

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women's website features more details about the work of NGOs at the CSW and you can read its outcome document.

www.learningpartnership.org

The 'Women Learning Partnership for Rights, Development and Peace' emphasizes on maximizing learning and cooperation among women with the aim of enhancing women voices.

www.genderprinciples.org

Gender equality principles initiative: a tool for promoting equality in your workplace.