Programme NEWS

Soroptimist International of Europe
Issue No. 23, September 2011

Project of the Month

This month's winner is SI Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy) for their hands-on project "Libia Libia". The Programme Focus Objective of this project is no. 7: Meet the needs of women and girls during and after armed conflict and disasters.

The main objective of this project is to support young mothers and their babies in a country affected by war. This initiative was undertaken in collaboration with *Coordinamento Italiano della Comunita' Libica.*

With a club member born in Libya, having continuous contacts with her homeland, Club Cortina collected medicines and milk powder to be sent to women and children caught up in the conflict, being under siege and constant bombardment by the loyalist forces in south-west Libya. Apart from buying milk powder, the club has also alerted all physicians and pharmacies in Cortina and organized a collection of medicines and medical equipment.

PFR no. 21251 asserts that approximately 50 women and girls have been helped and the project cost amounted to a maximum of 500 USD.

Congratulations to SI Cortina d'Ampezzo!

Programme Voting Delegates decided on the new Programme Goals during the past SI Board meeting in Montreal as follows:

SI Programme Goals for 2011 – 2015

Goal 1: Soroptimist International will improve the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment or enabling opportunities.

Objectives:

1. Increase access to formal and non-formal learning opportunities.
2. Improve access to economic empowerment and sustainable opportunities for the employment of women.
3. Eliminate violence against women and girls and ensure women's participation in conflict resolution.
4. Ensure women and girls have food security and access to highest attainable standard of health care.
5. Address the specific needs of women and girls by improving environmental sustainability, and mitigating effects of climate change and disasters.

Goal 2: Soroptimist International will be a global voice for increasing access to education and leadership for women and girls.

Objectives:

1. Strengthen and increase SI's presence as an advocate at all levels.
2. Intensify activities and partnerships that raise the international profile and visibility of Soroptimist International.
3. Ensure that the foundation of SI's global advocacy is local and global project activity.

Updated PFR database live!

SI has made some changes to the Programme Focus Report form and database! After undertaking a worldwide consultation last year, the programme team has been working on several much needed changes and updates to make the system more user friendly, more modern, and more informative. Some of the key changes include: less mandatory questions for those who felt the form was too long, more questions with answer choices to standardize responses, the ability to upload photos or press clippings directly onto the database, the ability to save your report and come back to edit or finish it later, and a notification system whereby you can receive updates on the approval status of your report. SI has provided FAQs and a video tutorial to help you learn how to use the new form. More training tools will be posted in the coming weeks.

http://reports.soroptimistinternational.org/
username: sie
password: geneva

2011 President's December 10 Appeal

SI President Alice Wells has chosen "Birthing in the Pacific" as her December 10 Appeal. This project aims to increase skills, further educate birth attendants, and improve facilities to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. For more information, please visit: http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/our-projects/december-10-appeal/birthinginpacific

Soroptimists go for water
safe water = safe life

You can send your donations to SI/E HQ, Geneva for onward transmission to SI.

Soroptimist Project Matching
www.soroptimistprojects.org

As we are approaching the first anniversary of the launch of the Soroptimist Project Matching website, we would like to remind our Unions and clubs to realize more ambitious projects through partnering. We suggest you look at the website regularly. You are also welcome to suggest a project yourself for funding. A number of changes to the Soroptimist Project Matching system will be instituted for 2011 – 2012 year. Recently, SIA and SI/E approved a new logo and the website is undergoing a redesign to accommodate the suggestions we have noticed and to respond to some of our members' comments. It all will be presented to you in the coming issues of the Programme News.

The MDG Report 2011
The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals to be achieved by 2015 that respond to the world's main development challenges, including promoting gender equality and empowering women (Goal 3) and ensuring environmental sustainability (Goal 7).

The 2011 Report notes that significant progress has been made towards achieving Goal 3, though for Goal 7, it has been harder to obtain the expected results. For Goal 3, improvements were seen in women's leadership as well as gender parity in education, in the workplace and in public offices. In education, girls are gaining ground whereas in some regions inequalities persist. Gender disparity in developing regions is declining, particularly in primary and secondary education with 96 girls enrolled for every 100 boys in 2009. However, at the tertiary level of education a great gender disparity can be observed. With respect to employment, the share of women in non-agricultural paid employment increased by 5 per cent in the last two decades. Yet progress has slowed in recent years due to the economic crisis of 2008 – 2009. Unfortunately, the fact that the unemployment rate for men declined faster than that for women in 2010, suggests that the gap between women and men in many regions will not close any time soon. Good news is that representation by women in parliament is at an all-time high, with women holding on average 19.3 per cent seats in single or lower houses of parliament worldwide, although this is by no means close to parity. Nonetheless, quotas and gender sensitive electoral arrangements taken by political parties continue to be key in promoting women's participation in politics.

As for Goal 7, the 2011 MDG Report demonstrates that progress to improve access to clean drinking water has been strong. Globally, coverage increased by 10 per cent in the past decade. Nevertheless, in all regions, coverage in rural areas lags behind urban areas. The world is also far from meeting the sanitation targets. Sadly, at the current rate, it is estimated that it will take until 2049 to provide 77 per cent of the global population with flush toilets and other forms of improved sanitation.

Global Impact Report 2010 – Educate to Lead
The GIR 2010 was presented at the SI Convention in Montréal this summer. Please visit the following link to read what Soroptimist worldwide have collectively accomplished to transform the lives of women and girls through access to education and leadership skills. It is also an excellent resource to get data of your country's development in regard to the status of women and girls.
http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/resources/global-impact

October 16 – World Food Day
"FOOD PRICES – FROM CRISIS TO STABILITY" has been chosen as this year's World Food Day theme. Price upswings represent a crucial threat to food security in developing countries. Rising food costs continuously push people into extreme poverty. The aim of the upcoming World Food Day is to shed some light on what can be done to mitigate its impact on the most vulnerable. This is also in line with President elect Kathy Kaaf's biennium theme "Soroptimists go for water and food".

FEATURED WEBSITES:
www.stoprapenow.org/

UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action) unites the work of 13 UN entities with the aim of ending sexual violence in conflict. It is a concerted effort by the UN to improve coordination and accountability, support national efforts to prevent sexual violence and respond effectively to the needs of survivors. UN Action works with peacekeeping operations to build programmes and operational strategies. In advocacy, the programme works to create public awareness and political will as part of the campaign StopRapeNow.

www.peacebrigades.com/

PBI is an international NGO that promotes nonviolence and protects human rights. It works to provide moral support for local activists to carry out their work without fear of repression. It does the following through physical presence, physical accompaniment, public relations, networking, observing, reporting, and building international support networks. PBI sends teams of volunteers backed up by an international support network to accompany human rights defenders and communities in areas of conflict enabling them to work with greater confidence despite threats.

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