



women:

working to implement the

millennium development goals



PEACE: Soroptimist s synonymous with Peace.

The Peace dolls, holding doves of peace, are hand sewn and hand decorated by European members as part of their long term commitment to the promotion of peace. Artists and famous personalities are being asked to take part and to add their signatures to the dolls as well as to the Federation's Peace Charter that all members have pledged to sign and to follow.

Founded in 1921, Soroptimist International is a worldwide organization of women leaders in management and the professions with more than 91,000 members in 125 countries.

We strive to advance human rights and the status of women through awareness, advocacy and action by providing service with a local, national, and international focus.

Soroptimist has general consultative status with ECOSOC, Special NGO status with WHO, UNICEF etc. We maintain representatives to UN bodies in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Paris and Rome. Special Soroptimist Liaisons work with ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP regional commissions.

A Global Voice, A Focused Vision working to promote gender equality and empower women by working together towards our common goal, Our Programme Focus , with an emphasis on The Millennium Development Goals. Here's a small sample of where we are today...



Objective: Work for universal primary education and access to lifelong learning for women and girls

PROGRAMME ACTION

SI America's *Women's Opportunity Awards* assist women entering or re-entering the workforce to obtain education and skills to improve their employment opportunities. Action begins at community level and each year more than 700 Clubs participate to provide more than \$800,000 in awards to needy women.

Partnerships between Clubs and with other organisations provide educational resources, social needs and school fees for underprivileged children. Literacy projects continue to be an important feature of Club activities targeting adults, immigrants and prisoners.

130 separate projects were submitted in support of the recently concluded SI Europe's Federation project *Education the Key to Progress*. Ten of these were awarded 'best practice' recognition. They included resource support for a centre for blind children and a PC based reading course

for blind adults, courses for illiterate women and a training centre for girls, three new classrooms for a primary school in Rwanda and a whole new school in Kenya built by **SI Leiden, Netherlands**. Many other Clubs work in lifelong learning by providing courses in languages, computers and management for women as well as traditional skills to generate income.

Dozens of Clubs sponsor the education of individual children whilst SI Great Britain & Ireland's Friendship links are often direct links to support children through primary education and onto further education. **SI Tyndale's Reaching Out** project is one example; not only have supplies and uniforms been provided but also solar powered computers in an area without electricity. Some on-going literacy projects with Street Children are continuing and closer to home Story Sacks are provided to promote literacy and the enjoyment of reading. Through collaboration and partnership with the Ockenden Venture

who have traditional and established links in Afghanistan, Soroptimist Clubs have been privileged to assist with the establishment of schools in that country.

Another wonderful co-operative venture began when **SI Truckee Meadows**, established contact with village leaders in Thuli Pokhari, Nepal, to ascertain cultural acceptability and support to build a dormitory to enable girls from outlying villages to attend a school campus. Members secured land rights, organised village and specialised labour and once the dormitory was built they established a scholarship programme.

In SI Southwest Pacific Clubs continue to work in partnership with other community organisations and local schools to provide educational resources; to sponsor the education of children and to contribute to the salaries of teachers in developing countries. There has been an increase in the level of such aid to East Timor, Fiji and Papua New Guinea.



Objective: Develop programmes and partnerships to eradicate the extreme poverty and hunger of women and girls.

PROGRAMME ACTION

SI America's Clubs support homeless women and their children by adopting shelters and providing needed items of clothing and personal hygiene products, whilst others maintain transitional housing. In the Philippines members are tireless in addressing the needs of women in poor communities through their support for the *Adopt a Barangay* project; - they organise and teach job skills, gardening and nutritional food preparation, provide for school fees and medical services. **SI Mandaluyong** members are involved in every step of their project that identifies beneficiaries, forms partnerships to provide trainers and venues, su-

pervises training, assists the women to manage their own projects and helps graduates to find employment.

The Federation of SI Europe has created a *Project Exchange Pool (PEP)* bringing together Clubs in 'rich' countries with those in developing countries and with those in Eastern Europe. Clubs in Africa and Madagascar have organised training for women and one great example is **SI Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso**. In the city every day 1000 women remove sand and grit from the streets. The sand is collected and sold for building material. But the removal of the sand is not only unhealthy work it also disturbs the balance of nature. On the other hand a bi product of the

country's plentiful karite almond is butter which is used in the cosmetic industry. The project is aiming to produce soap from the karite and currently 26 women are employed with the Club helping with micro-credits and marketing.

Within the SI Great Britain & Ireland Federation there are many examples of programmes and partnerships aimed at eradicating poverty. In **South Africa, Nigeria, India and Sierra Leone** there are excellent schemes for teaching women basic skills, management skills, food production, and encouragement to rise out of poverty to become self sup-

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Objective: Actively promote awareness of women's needs and their role in combating HIV/AIDS

PROGRAMME ACTION

HIV/AIDS remains high on the agenda of SI Great Britain & Ireland with vital work being undertaken with AIDS orphans and support for families ravaged by the disease. In South Africa the *Vuthamo Project* gives homes and support to children with AIDS and there has been a loving response from Clubs all around the Federation to this project in the form of finance and goods. In India, the Caribbean and Africa the importance of healthy sexual relation-

ships and a healthy lifestyle have been the basis of many AIDS educational projects.

Following a Motion at the SIGBI Conference in 2001 there has been a high level of lobbying on access to affordable anti retroviral drugs.

Information campaigns throughout SI Europe on HIV/AIDS were realised in many Clubs and Unions and donations made to projects in the Ukraine, Kenya, Rwanda and Togo.

In SI South West Pacific Workshops targeting the education of teenagers about HIV/AIDS have been facilitated throughout Malaysia and neighbouring Asian countries. Several Clubs in the Federation continue to support local projects that assist women with HIV/AIDS including sponsorship of *Health Retreats* and assisting as volunteers. Support has also been provided for the children at the *Safe Haven Orphanage* in South Africa and *Childline* in Zimbabwe.

Objective: Improve and increase access to safe drinking water as a basic human right

PROGRAMME ACTION

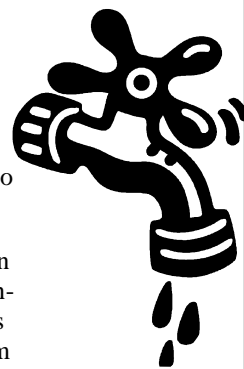
The International Year of Freshwater prompted many projects throughout SI Europe; an international seminar organised by **SI Klagenfurt, Austria**, on *Water, element of life*, the UN-project *a Pump for Zimbabwe*, the establishment of a household water network, a *Clean Water* project to improve the status of water on four continents, cotton bags with the Soroptimist logo and an inscription about the value of clean water and many others.

Water is also dangerous and floods devastated wide regions of Europe in 2002. Since that time Clubs have been involved in the process of reconstruction in particular in The Czech Republic where **SI Prague** has been helped by SIE Clubs to raise 37,400 Euros to buy new musical instruments for a conservatoire badly affected by floods.

World Water Day has been promoted with leaflets to all SI Great Britain & Ireland Clubs and information and encouragement to high-

light the problems of access to water for all.

In SI Southwest Pacific Federation during the 2003 UN Year of Freshwater there was an increase in this activity with projects varying from cleaning catchment areas to investigating water trading practices, installing public fountains, monitoring the salinity level of water ways and providing water tanks for villages in Papua New Guinea.



Objective: Enhance respect for all cultures and halt all forms of discrimination through increased tolerance and mutual understanding

PROGRAMME ACTION

Many Clubs in SI Americas and in SI Great Britain & Ireland have cultural exchanges with their friendship links and this is an effective method of learning about other cultures particularly when they work together on joint projects

In SI Europe last September the three SI Clubs of **Rome** hosted the fifth European Meeting and Friendship Day. These meetings are days of friendship beyond all borders,

linguistic or cultural barriers in a spirit of understanding and peace. The theme for the meeting was *Women's Identity in the Reality of Mediterranean Europe*. Topics of migration, dialogue between populations, understanding between cultures, educational societies and the importance of life long learning were all explored by eminent speakers and brought together 350 women from 21 different countries. International Youth Croisières were organised by several Unions and Friendship Grants offered. In Sep-

tember 2003 the Soroptimist Friendship Rally was initiated.

Clubs in SI Southwest Pacific lobby for changes to legislation regarding women's rights to own property, and to be recognised as equal partners in family separations/divorce. Australian Clubs have lobbied for health and social care on behalf of refugees and migrants who are waiting for their applications for residency to be reviewed.





Objective: A Global Partnership

Soroptimist International and Project Five-O

Soroptimist International joins with Business & Professional Women International, International Council of Women, International Federation of University Women and Zonta International in partnership as *Project 5-0*.

The establishment of *Project 5-0* Projects in developing countries or countries in transition makes a significant contribution to alleviating poverty and improving the status of women by teaching basic education, vocational skills, marketing and

small business operations which leads to employment. Health care, education, and nutrition are also included.

The International committee, consisting of the five International Presidents, an International Coordinator and Treasurer administer *Project 5-0* and approve project selection and funding.. The projects are funded by voluntary contributions from the five organizations and managed by a Local Committee consisting of two representatives of

each organization present in the area. They may also include other NGO organizations as well as the support of local, regional and national governments.

Where are some of the projects? Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Senegal, South Africa, Thailand, Togo, Turkey and Uganda. New applications have been received from Georgia, Mongolia, Rwanda, and others.

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porting. Often Clubs work with other groups and NGO's, sometimes through their Friendship Links, sometimes through contacts made by members on their travels. A recent focus has been on *Fair Trade and the Trade Justice Movement*. Clubs have

been encouraged to look at the reasons for promoting Fair Trade and for buying fairly traded goods.

Throughout SI South West Pacific Clubs are involved in providing *Meals on Wheels*, food parcels for disadvantaged families and food for youth shelters and homeless

people. The ongoing *Soroptisheep* Project has resulted in the delivery of over 1000 head of sheep and rams to Mongolian provinces and the production of chickens at a local orphanage in Singapore is now being enhanced through the gift of an incubator.

Soroptimist International



Joan Cromer, International President 2003-2005

Headquarters Executive Officer

87 Glisson Road

Cambridge

CB1 2 HG United Kingdom

T: ++44 1223 311833; Fax: ++44 1223 467951

Email: hq@soroptimistinternational.org

Website: www.soroptimistinternational.org