

# Soroptimist International Annual Report 2023



## Global Impact excerpt



# Global Impact



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## **Purpose**

The Global Impact Committee's (GIC) purpose is to enhance the work of SI by providing a Global Voice for Women through collaboration with the five Federations. The GIC Members include representatives from all Federations who work together to develop, plan co-ordinate and promote Soroptimist International Impact campaigns that are aligned to the SI Vision, Mission and Objectives. Thus, this Committee acts as a conduit between SI and the Federations through sharing examples of good practice and project work that relate to the UN International Days, coordinating the activity for SI annual attendance at the Commission on the Status of Women in New York and agreeing the SI Campaign for the 16 Days of Activism to eliminate Violence against Women.

The Global Impact Committee met at least four times during 2023 and for the first time, included a second Representative from each Federation, who was under 40 years of age. These young members brought a richness and different perspective and voice to the meetings.

## **UN International Days**

SI recognises that the UN International Days are days when it has an opportunity to educate Soroptimists on the various issues that affect women and girls and to celebrate the grassroots work that Clubs carry out across the World. Many Soroptimists organise activities and events.

President Maureen, in her goals for the 2022-2023 biennium, indicated that she wanted the five Federations and SI to mark specific days together to celebrate Awareness, Advocacy and Action as carried out by Soroptimists.

Outcomes of this joint working were:

### **Webinars:**

- 24 January 2023  
International Day of Education – 'Prioritising Education: Empowering Women and Girls'
- 5 June 2023  
World Environment Day – 'Joining Forces to Beat Plastic Pollution'
- 28 October 2023  
SI Youth Forum – 'Green Horizons'

### **Videos:**

- 8 September 2023 – International Day of Literacy – sharing of Federation Projects
- 11 October – International Day of the Girl Child – sharing of Federation Projects

These may all be viewed at [www.soroptimistinternational.org](http://www.soroptimistinternational.org) website.  
Some of the presentations given are also available for viewing.



# Global Impact continued

## 16 Days of Activism – Violence Against Women

Violence against women and girls remains the most widespread breach of human rights globally. 2023 was marked by escalating conflict and further shrinking of civic spaces, with the lives, bodies, dignity and freedom of women and girls under assault from threats and acts of violence.

The 16 Days of Activism which takes place every year from 24 November to 10 December was marked in 2023, by a number of events throughout the world such as buildings were illuminated by orange lighting, orange ribbons were tied to fences, and orange shoes were displayed in shop windows – all to draw attention to the meaning behind the 16 Days of Activism campaign. SI created a Trello board and used social media channels to raise awareness on the various forms of abuse that cause harm to women and girls.

## 67th Session of UN Commission on the Status of Women

The 67th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) was held 6 to 17 March 2023. The main focus was on innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age. The SI delegation of 65 Soroptimists gathered in New York to collectively engage at both the UN CSW67 and NGO CSW67 parallel meetings as an SI Global Voice for Women.

Due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CSW67 took place in a new hybrid model, that is a mixture of virtual and in-person meetings and events. Most of the side events hosted by Member States within the UN were in person, while the parallel events were a mixture of virtual and in-person.

To prepare the delegates for participation within CSW67, SI held a virtual training event on 8 February and produced and circulated an SI Advocacy Resource Pack to maximise Soroptimists attendance at the New York meetings.

A WhatsApp group was created for the members to communicate and also post interesting information and photos from the sessions attended. We held informal training in New York for the delegation on the process of the document that became the Agreed Conclusions from CSW67.

The CSW67 Themes for the Session in 2023 were:

- Priority theme: Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls
- Review theme: Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls (Agreed Conclusions of the sixty-second session)



# Global Impact continued

Under these themes SI hosted a number of parallel events. Here, SI showcased 'Best Practice Projects' selected from the five Federations and SI projects.

These presentations demonstrated how Soroptimists have successfully addressed the specific issues for women and girls, within their communities.

## **6 March 2023**

'Achieving Gender Equality and Empowerment through Innovation, technology and education'

## **7 March 2023**

'Opening Doors to Bright Future: Educating, Enabling and Empowering Enabling Rural Women'

## **10 March 2023**

SI and Taiwan Coalition Against Violence (TCAV)

'Survivor Voices - Public-Private Partnerships to Support Victims of Stalking in the Digital Age'

## **14 March 2023**

SI and Women for Water Partnership (WfWP)

'Technology, Water and Women'

## **15 March 2023**

SI and Zonta International

'Leadership-Violence Against Women'

## **16 March 2023**

SI and Global Alliance on the Rights of Older People

'Strengthening the Rights of Older People in Rural Areas'

Socially, SI delegates enjoyed meeting up with old friends and making new ones during their time at CSW67. All delegates were invited to join with the SI New York City Club's 100 Anniversary celebrations held on 7 March at the Cornell Club in Manhattan and the SI reception followed this event.



*Photo: Soroptimists learning from Pat Black, SI Advocacy Advisor, about the CSW67 documents process that becomes the Agreed Conclusions at the outcome of the meeting. Held in the Vienna Café within the UN building*



# Global Impact continued



## The Commonwealth

During 2023, the SI Representative to the Commonwealth, Pat Dale attended many meetings in London, both in-person and virtually where she had the opportunity to maximise SI's accreditation to the Commonwealth. In August 2023, President Maureen had the opportunity to attend the 13th Commonwealth's Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting in Nassau, The Bahamas, under the theme 'Equality Toward a Common Future'.

Since the previous meeting in 2019 in Nairobi, and the impacts that COVID-19 had in the intervening year on climate change, economic turmoil, and many other crises, this event gave Ministers the opportunity to reflect on these and share the progress and initiatives from their countries that had been developed to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.



## Every Woman Treaty

SI has been collaborating with Every Woman Treaty (EWT) since 2022 to develop a Treaty to End Violence Against Women, which both organisations believe could be a positive step in ending violence against women and girls. SI distributed an EWT message on a postcard to each Soroptimist attending the SI Convention in Dublin in July 2023, and all Soroptimists were encouraged to sign the EWT petition.

During the latter part of 2023, SI and EWT were concerned about the pushback to women's rights globally, and the difficulties that go with obtaining major support from Member States for a Treaty, so efforts became more focused on seeking to bring about the advancement of introducing an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Committee in Geneva.



# a global voice for women

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