


Welcome to the June 2020 edition of Soroptimist Programme Action News (SPAN).

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International

Federation of the

South West Pacific



Yet another month of social Isolation with Covid-19. I do hope all of you are finding productive activities to keep you busy during the social isolation required. In Australia some limited social gathering has started but we are a little more fortunate than some of the countries in our Federation. Working from home is still continuing for some organisations/companies and schools after a long session of on-line learning while their parents were attempting to work from home as well, has been an interesting and challenging experiment for some families. School-age children in Australia have generally returned to school but some schools have been shut down due to positive tests for the virus in students or teachers. Children or teachers testing positive were sent into quarantine, closure of the school occurred and a significant clean down of the school premises resulted until it was considered safe for staff and students to return to school. I gather students in Australia were generally happy to return to school to catch up with their friends but fear that this situation is not possible in some of our countries. In some countries particularly in Africa, schools provide a nutritious lunch for the pupils so when schools have closed due to the Covid 19 pandemic, children may not receive a meal from one day to the next due to poverty and these children will be much more vulnerable to disease. Some of our Federation clubs are stepping up to provide food to communities so that those poorer communities don't go without. The activities of SI PJ, SI UB, and SI Ipoh have been mentioned on the SI website for their contributions in this area.

You will no doubt have heard in the media that the coronavirus affects the elderly more severely than young people. This media coverage is contributing to stigmatisation and discrimination of older persons. Furthermore, older persons not only face a higher health risk, but are also less likely to be able to support themselves in isolation. Those older people living alone, especially those with mobility problems, need help in obtaining food, medicines, and other essential goods. Some older persons require daily care and are at greater risk because of the often daily change of

for older women is not about abandoning older women and continuing communication with them is very important even if they are not familiar or have access to electronic communication. Don't forget that 15th June is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. You might like to read a recent blog by SI member Marion Prechtl and these publications on Covid19.

<https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/SG-Report-Socio-Economic-Impact-of-Covid19.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/older-adults.html>

As I mentioned last year in June-July eSpan, the International Decade for Water was announced at the end of 2018. CSW63 2019 held 2 panels on the importance of water and Past International President Mariet was one of the panel presenters at CSW 63. An informative review of the recently released [United Nations World Water Development Report 2020](#) by SI Special Advisor to Director of Advocacy, Linda Witong can be found on the SI website. The report affirms that climate change affects ecosystems, biodiversity, food security, human health, and economies in various ways, affecting all groups in society with the greatest impact on women.

I realise that fundraising activities are in abeyance at the moment which does leave time for advocacy opportunities doesn't it? When social/physical isolation is relaxed in your country you won't forget that donations are required for the Federation Sanctuary Shelter so that it can be suitably equipped before handover to the Fiji government, the President's Makmar Appeal in Indonesia to ensure training for self-sufficiency and the International President Sharon Fisher's Appeal 'Road to Equality'. All need funding to achieve their objectives and help our organisation achieve recognition and profile.

By now the Programme Database is operational again and can be located at <https://www.reports-siswp.org/>. The team eagerly awaits your COVID 19 reports.

As I write this message yesterday was World Food Safety Day and today is World Oceans Day 8th June. There are a number of significant UN days in June and fewer in July.

Please review all the International World and UN Days below in this newsletter. Review the important days and consider who these can be incorporated into your clubs activities, projects and or social media.

Catherine Evans

Programme Director 2018-2020

Advocacy Work

What are priorities in your country? What are clubs doing in advocacy?

Advocating on behalf of women is a core Soroptimist function, and this month the programme team is pleased to once again be able to report on Soroptimist Advocacy work.

As Soroptimists, we commit ourselves to those 3 As: Awareness, Advocacy and Action. We are quite practiced at gaining awareness and action but sometimes advocacy eludes us or seems too hard and yet recent events around the world and at home have shown us that the voice of the people raised in protest can be compelling.

We may not choose to join public protests but our voice needs to be heard to bring about the changes to which we are committed. It may be a club persistently bringing an issue to the attention of their local government. It may be a number of clubs or individuals writing to their regional or national parliaments of expressing concern or asking questions. It may be a formal submission. It may be making an appointment to see your local member and letting them know that the issue is important. It is Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific making its voice heard to bring about change and it is vital.

Around our Federation clubs are doing all these things. What has your club done? Remember that we change the world one voice and one step at a time and any journey begins with one step. Choose what drives your passion and take that first step. Use the resources available to help you and commit to one action of advocacy in the next few months. If every club in the Federation did this and entered it on the database imagine how widely our Soroptimist voices would be heard.

Clarity of purpose, Safeguard, Confidentiality, Equality and Diversity, Empowerment and putting people first are the principles of advocacy. Tell us what your club is doing to Advocate on behalf of women. Send us the information or complete a Advocacy Programme Report

COVID19, EDUCATION

Covid-19 highlights the stark divide in world wide education of our children as children have to move to digital learning.

The United Nations' education agency UNESCO released figures from the International Telecommunication Union that were collected by the Teacher Task Force, an international coalition of teachers.

At least 1.5 billion students and 63 million primary and secondary teachers are affected by school closures in the wake of the pandemic in 191 countries. The data revealed that half of all students, nearly 830 million children, who are not currently attending school due to stay-at-home orders, do not have access to a computer. More than 40% do not have internet access at home. Low-income and disadvantaged students fall further behind. Mobile phones are the most widely used to access the internet, but these are not suitable for education purposes.

Covid-19 has drawn attention to this disparity and heightened attention

In Australia, [NSW Public Education Foundation](#) executive director David Hetherington said there were hundreds of parents in David's position. see article <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-03->

lack of devices in the home to enable his children to learn whilst in lockdown).. He described Australia's digital divide as "a chasm". "It's bigger than most people think," he said.

Is it up to non profits such as Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific to continue to advocate to government agencies to increase access to technology equally world wide.

Soroptimist International Penang, recently distributed 43 laptops to several local schools to assist the students with online learning whilst in lockdown. Congratulations to President Michele Lim and members of SI Penang for this welcome initiative, laptops will enable continued Life Long Education



Making Masks on the Road to Equality - SI President's Appeal

SI President Sharon states "We have observed how Soroptimists are stitching and crafting, making masks and other protective equipment such as gowns, face shields and more, for themselves, for friends, for their communities and for those on the frontline.

The SI Road to Equality would like to invite each and every one of you to join us as we launch #MasksForEquality and to share your activities with us, both past and ongoing, through a short online survey.

Read the [full story here](#), [CLICK HERE](#) to complete the survey to tell SI what you or your club has been doing. Join the #MasksForEquality campaign.

SISWP Scholarships

In 2019, reports to the SISWP Reporting database show that Soroptimist clubs in the Federation donated **\$136,493 to scholarships**. These scholarship covered primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational scholarships.

The value of continued life long learning through the provision of these scholarships provides active participation to the SISWP Vision ".We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide."

If your club provides a scholarship, how long has it been since your club updated the SISWP scholarship page on the website, or advertised your scholarship on social media, pointing back to the SISWP scholarship page. increased traffic continues to raise awareness to these scholarships.

Programme Reporting Database



Smiling faces all round from the Programme Team now that we can announce that the Programme Reporting database is back up a live. The team at Exorty have moved the database to a new home, you will find the database at this new website www.reports-siswp.org.

All the links on the siswp website have been updated to point to this new URL. The team is eagerly awaiting your clubs reports. Remember if you are reporting on Covid 19 activities, please

- Use the words COVID19 in the title.
- When reporting reports against SDG 3 and Target 3D.

Happy reporting.

Programme Team Reports

This month we bring to you the last report by the 2018-2020 Biennium Team, Asst Programme Director 2, Zareena Bi, Zareena has completed 2 terms as Asst Programme Director 2 and for the 2020-2022 Biennium Zareena will be the Federation Friendship Coordinator.



It has been a pleasure serving with the programme team in the capacity of Programme Director 2 for two terms. These four years gave me the opportunity to see the changes first hand from the old reporting format and data base to the new data base.

This has been a learning experience for not only the clubs but the programme team as well. There is still some confusion regarding the program reports and club annual reports and clubs are advised to seek assistance from either the current or the incoming programme team.

Despite the teething problems we have seen some brilliant project reports which have also been submitted for the Best Practice nominations.

The year 2020 has brought us new challenges with COVID 19 and this will impact our organisation as a whole in a major way. If we focus on projects and programs then we have to accept that we may not be able to carry out most of the projects that we traditionally have been doing and especially those that involve students.

Hence, all clubs will now need to be innovative in their projects with social distancing as a major factor in mind.

It is extremely important that projects go on and we are 'seen' and 'heard' as an organisation in these unprecedented times as otherwise it can have a drastic effect on our existence.

I wish the incoming programme team all the best and encourage all clubs to stay strong and work together with the programme team.

Let us stay motivated and draw our strength from each other.

Zareena Bi

Programme Team 2020-2022

whole team is ready to inspire, educate and encourage new programme activities for the new biennium.

Assistant Programme Director 1 - Joanne Fannin, Joanne was the New Zealand National Rep during the 2018-2020 biennium, and now moves to this role.



Joanne reports that she joined Soroptimist International of Invercargill club in 1998. Has held the positions of Secretary, Delegate, Programme Reporter, Vice-President and President at local club level and completes her term as National Representative/President of Soroptimist International of Aotearoa New Zealand and Director on the Soroptimist International of South West Pacific (SISWP) Board for the 2018-2020 biennium at the end of June 2020.

she is looking forward to taking on the challenge of the Assistant Programme Director position for the 2020-2022 biennium from the end of June 2020 and hopes that her experience with her positions of leadership and the learnings from visiting many clubs nationally, attending Interim meetings and attendance at conferences at National Federation and International level will stand her in good stead. She looks forward to sharing her knowledge and learning from others.

Married to David for 37 years, they have two adult daughters, Kaylee (28) and Shanay (23). Kaylee has her Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and teaches at the Southern Institute of Technology in Invercargill. She is married to Martin and they have three children – Jayden (9), Indie (5) and Lincoln (10 months). Shanay graduated in 2019 with a Bachelor of Teaching (Primary bi-cultural) and teaches year 7 students at Verdon College, Invercargill. Shanay is President of Soroptimist International of Invercargill. Shanay and partner, Khalem, recently announced their engagement.

With over 40 years work experience in administration, Joanne has held positions as Account Executive, Board Secretary and Executive Assistant. She currently works for Southern District Health Board in Invercargill as a Personal Assistant. She is a Deacon for St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Invercargill and a Trustee for the Murihiku Young Parents' Learning Centre (MYPLC).

We welcome Joanne to the Programme Team.

Programme Coordinator for Zone 1 - Anne Allen



Ann reports "I am looking forward to taking on the role of one of the Programme Coordinators for 2020-2022. I believe that programme is the foundation of our organisation and I look forward to supporting Clubs in being recognised for the great work they do.

I am currently the President of the Soroptimist Club of Rockingham and Immediate Past President of the Region of Western Australia. I have been a Soroptimist since 2009 and believe that my membership experience has been enhanced and enriched by being involved at every level possible in my Region.

I currently work at Murdoch University where my main focus is ensuring that our curriculum is presented accurately and complies with legislative requirements. I live in a seaside suburb (only a five-minute walk and I am at the beach) and usually use the train to travel to work (which is about 40 minutes). Currently I am one of many people able to, and encouraged to, work from home. Something I am adjusting to and improving on every day.

I am married, and Gary and I have recently become grandparents. I am fortunate that my daughter (Kat) and our granddaughter (Hazel) live close by. Our son, Rob is currently living in Melbourne and I am so happy that we have technology that allows us to catch up so easily in the virtual space. I hope this same technology will help me connect with some of you as I take on my new Soroptimist role and that we can work together to make our voice heard around the globe.

Anne.

Programme Coordinator Zone 2 - Dixie Brown

Dixie is continuing on from the 2018-2020 Biennium.



I look forward to my second Biennium as SISWP Programme Zone Coordinator, having enjoyed working with many enthusiastic and inspiring members over the past 2 years.

I am a charter member of SI Brisbane Water on the Central Coast of NSW which has dedicated ladies who have worked together since 2006. The club was named after the large body of water that Gosford was built around. I have attended all Conferences of Clubs since 2012 and most Interim Board Meetings.

I have been involved with Programme for many years at Club, Region and now Federation level. I have been a Club President.

My first 24 years were lived in Western Australia when I trained as a teacher and worked in the country. My husband and I moved to Sydney and after 16 years moved to the delightful Gosford area which is 75 km north of Sydney. I have enjoyed the years spent teaching in many schools.

My younger daughter and husband live near with their 4 year old daughter and 1 year old son. I see them most days. During these uncertain times I have been caring for them either at their home or mine while their parents work. I feel very privileged.

My elder daughter is a Disability Inclusion Expert. Recently she has been in Bangladesh, Nigeria and is now in Iraq – Kurdistan.

I look forward to another 2 years as SISWP Programme Coordinator supporting members and clubs as well as reading about the incredible work they do to help women and girls and their families.

Dixie Brown

SISWP Programme Coordinator Zone 2

Programme Coordinator Zone 3 - Kylian Naeman Keni



I have decided to be part of the program Team for two reasons and both are close to my heart. Program is a core part of Soroptimist Clubs. And this is what I am passionate about.

The two reasons that I am driven to be part of this team:

1. A lot of Activities and programs are being carried out in each and every Club but little is being broadcast about it. I want to be part of this vibrant team to be able to get Clubs to talk about their success, no matter how small it is.
2. Second reason is to assist and train Clubs on Program reporting and get them to know the how's and also the why's. I have seen a lot of Clubs struggling with these. If there is a way I can assist my Zone and submit their on line reports, I want to do that.

All in all, I am passionate about Programs in Soroptimist and ready for this role

Kylian

SISWP Programme Coordinator Zone 3

Programme Coordinator Zone 4 - Cesarina Gigante. Cesarine continues in this role from the 2018-2020 Biennium



I have been a Soroptimist since my club's charter in 2005. Professionally I have been a teacher for over thirty years working with students with disabilities. I have also been involved with various community groups undertaking various roles including sharing information, creating displays, fundraising and event coordination.

During my membership I have held programme positions both at club (SI Logan), region I (SI South Queensland) and Federation (Zone 4). I see programme as the cornerstone of our organisation and if we are to progress a local, national, Federation and SI programme agenda it is important that issues related to women and girls are clearly articulated in our projects. I have attended CSW62 and am involved with the UN association in Queensland this has allowed me to develop a greater understanding of the UN, its processes, international mandates and the role of civil society. This understanding is essential at all levels if we are to progress our project work in relation to our objectives, the SDG's, and if we are to hold accountable our national bodies.

I am excited about continuing in my role to further develop and consolidate links with the clubs in my zone to further our programme work and to ensure that our reporting requirements are met. Together we can meet challenges and improve the lives of women and girls.

Cesarina Gigante

SISWP Programme Coordinator Zone 4

Programme Positions Vacant

Nominations are now open for two Federation Programme Positions

Programme Director and Assistant Programme Director

Nominations for both positions must be returned together with CV form and separate jpeg photo for each nominee to Federation Secretary (swpsecretary@siswp.org) with a copy to SISWP HQ (hq@siswp.org) by Midnight Australian Eastern Standard Time on Sunday 12 July 2020.

The elections will be conducted by a secret electronic ballot of clubs from 27 August to 10 September 2020. Voting by clubs will close at midnight Australian Eastern Standard Time on Thursday 10 September 2020. Nominations forms are available from the [SISWP Website](#)

UN SDG Work - Shadow Pandemic campaign

The Shadow Pandemic: Violence Against Women and Girls and COVID-19

Globally, **243 million** women and girls aged 15-49 have been subjected to sexual and/or physical violence perpetrated by an intimate partner in the previous 12 months.

The number is likely to **INCREASE** as security, health, and money worries heighten tensions and strains are accentuated by cramped and confined living conditions.

Emerging data shows that since the outbreak of COVID-19, violence against women and girls (VAWG), and particularly domestic violence, has **INTENSIFIED**.

- In **France**, reports of domestic violence have increased by **30%** since the lockdown on March 17.
- In **Argentina** emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by **25%** since the lockdown on March 20.
- In **Cyprus and Singapore** helplines have registered an increase in calls of **30%** and **35%**, respectively.
- Increased cases of domestic violence and demand for emergency shelter have also been reported in **Canada, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States**.

As stay-at-home orders expand to contain the spread of the virus, women with violent partners increasingly find themselves isolated from the people and resources that can help them.

87,000 women were intentionally killed in 2017. The majority of these killings were committed by an intimate partner or family member of the victim.

Violence against women and girls is pervasive but at the same time widely under-reported. Less than **40%** of women who experience violence report these crimes or seek help of any sort.

The global cost of violence against women had previously been estimated at approximately **US\$1.5 trillion**. That figure can only be rising as violence increases now, and continues in the aftermath of the pandemic.

The surge in COVID-19 cases is straining even the most advanced and best-resourced health systems to the breaking point, including those at the front line in violence response.

Domestic violence shelters are reaching capacity, or unable to take new victims due to lockdown and social distancing measures. In other cases, they are being re-purposed to serve as health centers.

National responses to COVID-19 must include:

- Services to address violence against women and girls**, including increased resources to support shelters, hotlines and online counselling. These essential services should be expanded and adapted to the crisis context to ensure survivors' access to support.
- A strong message from law enforcement that impunity will not be tolerated.** Police and Justice actors must ensure that incidents of VAWG are given high priority and care must be taken to address the manifestations of violence emerging in the context of COVID 19.
- Psychosocial support** for women and girls affected by the outbreak; gender-based violence survivors, frontline health workers and other frontline social support staff must be prioritized.

UN WOMEN

UN Women are reaching out to all networks to request our support in this vital and timely campaign.

"Amid the COVID-19 global health crisis, a huge surge in domestic violence is being reported. This increase in violence is happening at a time of reduced capacity of service providers to cope with the increased demand for support. Women are locked in with their abusers and are isolated from the people and resources that can best help them. At such a critical time for women, urgent action is needed.

UN Women has launched the Shadow Pandemic campaign which gives specific advice on domestic violence with a clear call to action to shine a light on the surge of domestic violence that has accompanied COVID-19 lockdowns. The Shadow Pandemic campaign consists of a comprehensive suite of social assets, including advice from experts on the ground and a Public Service Announcement (PSA) film, narrated by Academy Award-winning actress Kate Winslet.

Please support the campaign using the toolkit and assets to amplify this work. A 60-second film and a press release have gone live on UN Women channels. the UN women Shadow Pandemic Campaign toolkit can be download from the [siswp website here](#)

[Read more](#) and watch the 60-second film on the [UN Women Website](#).

SANCTUARY: Shelter for Women

Theresa Lyford the Sanctuary: Shelter for Women Project Liaison and Immediate Past Federation President, writes her final report on the Sanctuary Shelter Project.

What began as an idea which was presented at the Conference of Clubs in Sydney in 2016 and was voted on by you as Club Members of SISWP as our Federation Project for 2016 – 2018 and then again continued by President Anusha for 2018 – 2020 has finally come to fruition. After 4 years I am delighted to advise that the First Sanctuary: Shelter for Women building has been finished.

[DONATE NOW](#)



What started out as a vacant land and a vision.



The vision turned into reality. A beautiful house.

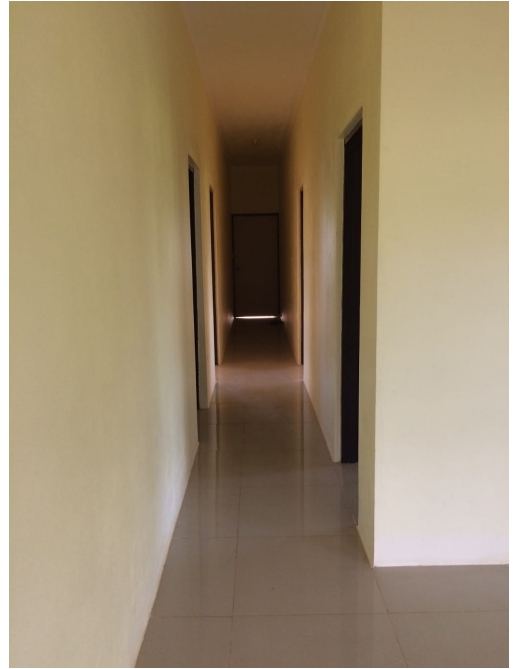
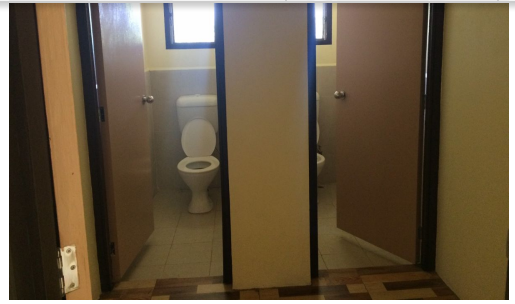
But, our work is not done yet.... We still need your help for the next few months to furnish the Shelter and to enable fencing to be finalised and some ground maintenance to be undertaken before we are able to hand over the finished Shelter to the Fijian Ministry for Women and Children. This has been such an exciting outcome for SISWP and to see a finished building in the current economic climate is an outstanding achievement for each and every one of us as members of SISWP. Please also join with me in congratulating our SI Fiji sisters who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that all the requirements for building, regulatory items and local council requirements have occurred and special thanks to PE Suman Lal, SI Fiji NR Veema Sharma, Dr Maria Doton and all the Clubs in Fiji who have enabled our SISWP Federation Project 2016-2020 come to fruition.

Theresa Lyford

Project Liaison

Latest photos show the interior of the build. Let's make this house a home. Donate now! to enable furnishings to be purchased to make this a bright comfortable home where families can be safe.

[DONATE NOW](#)



Soroptimist International Where We Stand position statements.



If you are writing a submission, preparing to advocate or researching for a prospective project, do remember to always consult the Soroptimist International Position Papers - Where We Stand. Here you will find the Soroptimist International stance on various issues that affect the lives of women and girls. There are 25 published papers covering topics such as the Criminal Justice System, Cyberbullying, Human Rights Defenders, Refugees and Migration. Access all the papers here from this link to the [Soroptimist International website](#)

Makmur Tsunami and Earthquake Disaster recovery

providing "Capacity Building and Training at the Lombok Project. ". SISWP have allocated \$25,000 from the SWP Special Appeal Project Fund to rebuild lives, rehabilitate and build capacity of women and their families.

Training will be provided for the following: Weaving, Sewing, Literacy, Mathematics, Baking and Organic farming.

Read the full report on the [SISWP website](#)

Literacy and Weaving classes in action



Across the Federation

Covid 19 activities undertaken by SI Lautoka, report by Zareen BI

The first case of Covid 19 in Fiji was announced on March 19th and this case was in Lautoka, hence Lautoka was in a total lock down from 19th March to 7th April which meant that no one was allowed to enter or leave the boundaries of Lautoka within these days.

April 4th, SI Lautoka's timely assistance to Golden Age Home, As the lockdown continued in Lautoka SI Lautoka Club extended their hands of assistance to the most vulnerable members of the society at the Golden Age Home in Natabua Lautoka. We donated sanitary items consisting of adult diapers and wipes along with essential aid items such as bath chair, walker and commode. Out of the 51 residents at the home there are around 11 who are completely bedridden and we felt duty bound to immediately come to their assistance. During this very difficult time the clubs assistance enabled the staff at the home to provide better care for the elderly residents.

Senior Welfare Officer at Golden Age Home Clement Dari whilst thanking the organization advised that his team was doing their level best to ensure that the Covid 19 virus does not enter the

April 6, SI Lautoka assists newly born babies and mothers stranded at Lautoka Hospital. The Soroptimist International Lautoka club and the Velovelo Satsang Kirtan Ramayan Mandali jointly assisted 11 newly born babies and their mothers who remained stranded at the maternity ward of Lautoka hospital for more than two weeks due to the lockdown of the Sugar City. The mothers of the babies resided outside the Lautoka confined zone thus they had not been able to return home after their deliveries. Also because of the roadblocks family members of these women had not been able to reach their loved ones with the essential items. Moreover, one of the new born babies from Rakiraki remained in the care of the Lautoka hospital authorities after his mother passed away soon after delivery. His father and family members were only able to unite with him after the lockdown was lifted. The two organizations in their collaborated effort provided items such as baby clothes, diapers, baby wipes, baby powder, soaps, cotton buds and sanitary pads to all of them. While receiving the items on behalf of the Ministry of Health, Civil Society Organization Humanitarian Coordinator for Fiji Council of Social Services Mosese Baseisei thanked both the organization for coming forward to assist these very needy mothers and babies.

April 10, SI Lautoka assists bedridden Sadiyah Nisha. The Covid-19 outbreak in the country has had catastrophic effect on the livelihood of many

Fijian families. One such family in the interior of Lautoka is the Shah family who were currently facing normous difficulty in taking care of their 8-year-old bedridden daughter Sadiya Aminah Nisha. Sadiyah was diagnosed with Hydrocephalus, a condition where there is an abnormal build-up of CSF (cerebrospinal fluid) in the cavities (ventricles) of the brain from birth. Because of her enlarged head, little Sadiya of Buabua, Lautoka has very limited movement and spends most of the time in bed. Whilst her family was normally able to meet the cost of her upbringing, the outbreak of the deadly Covid-19 pandemic in the country suddenly changed their situation. Her father, a bus conductor, was unable to return home from Nadi for more than 2 weeks due to the roadblock in Lautoka and upon returning to his family, was forced to stay home after Suva was also declared a confined zone. This scenario forced the family to seek assistance from relevant authorities as their only source of income ceased. The club members visited the family in Buabua with the much needed essential items such as diapers, baby wipes, soap, baby powder, toys and food items for Sadiyah. The family was unable to fulfill their responsibilities towards their daughter due to the financial hardship they faced because of Covid-19 so the club decided to ease their burden for at least a few weeks.

SI Mandurah - Knitted beanines to Peel Connect, SI Mandurah were perhaps one of the first clubs to be able to do a face to face meeting, and provide Peel Connect with their annual donation. Peel Connect - a support service to locals experiencing homeless, offering Mentoring, Advocacy, Counselling and Support for the homeless and have an outreach service with Night Carers, a team of volunteers who go into the community at night to provide assistance to those who are experiencing homelessness, and are rough sleeping. PeelConnect Incorporated supply care bags comprised of mostly donated items such as blankets, towels, socks, toiletries, and other essential items. Treasurer Julie Whatmore delivering knitted Beanies to Peel Connect.



SI Petaling Jaya - Hungerbuster Project

This continuing project is at present providing food delivery to the refugees and migrant workers who are still struggling under the partial lockdown in Malaysia. The scarcity of jobs remains at critical levels rendering these families at risk. Preliminary discussions were held regarding the provision of basic first aid and the extension of our SPOT programme to women and girls in the shelters and refugee centre respectively. We await the relaxation of the CMCO to proceed in this regard.

For those wishing to donate, please deposit funds into our bank account. The details are as follows: Soroptimist International club of PJ

Alliance Bank 140370010024915. Please WhatsApp the deposit slip to 0123111053 (Debbie). Any and all donations are deeply appreciated. Reports can be provided on the project including the funds disbursement on request. Learn more about our SPOT programme:

<https://www.facebook.com/SPOTeducation/>

International and United Nations Days

17th June [World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought](#) is observed annually to highlight the need to curb desertification. It also aims to highlight the visibility of the drylands issue on the

19 June [International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in conflict](#). The resolution was adopted by the UN General Assembly on June 19, 2015. The date marks the Security Council resolution 1820, (one of the resolutions related to 1325), where sexual violence as a tactic of war was condemned.

20 June [World Refugee Day](#) This day honours the courage, strength and determination of women, men and children who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of persecution, conflict and violence.

23 June [International Widows' Day](#) was introduced to address poverty and injustice faced by widows and their children in many countries. It was officially recognized by the United Nations in 2010 and is observed annually.

26 June The [United Nations' \(UN\) International Day in Support of Victims of Torture](#) is observed annually on June 26 to remind people that human torture is not only unacceptable – it is also a crime.

11 July [World Population Day](#) aims to increase people's awareness about various population issues such as the importance of family planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health, and human rights. The day is celebrated worldwide by business groups, community organizations, and individuals in many ways.

15 July [World Youth Skills Day](#) The aim of World Youth Skills Day is to encourage youth to celebrate the value of acquiring skills like building, making, and creating as a way to achieve personal success and fulfillment.

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