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

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Soroptimist



International

Federation of the

South West Pacific

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Message by Anusha Santhirasthipam, SISWP Federation Immediate Past President and Interim Programme Director (Biennium 2020-2022)

COVID-19 has proven loud and clear that we have missiles but not enough masks. We have guns but not enough gloves. Governments are being held to account and all human beings are forced to re-examine our values, priorities and systems especially in times of crisis. No Soroptimist club is spared as we embrace the New Normal and adapt to the new challenges. Do we merely survive or do we flourish and thrive? Do we create new programme opportunities and use more effective platforms to reach out, improve our connectedness and grow stronger?

There are signs worldwide of escalating intolerance, anger and impatience, defiance and violence. Sexual harassment and gender-based violence are increasing at an alarming rate across all countries. SISWP, being a Special Consultative Status ECOSOC Organisation, will continue to use our potent voice and strategic influence on governments at UN events and high level international forums. We urge all Soroptimists to do the same at national and local level, to create highly visible and tactical public awareness campaigns, lobby and advocate for law reform and improve enforcement to end to all forms of violence, sexual harassment, discrimination at home and in the work place. Read the [SI Position Statements here](#) to assist you with this advocacy work.

Governments to urgently ratify, adopt and implement ILO C190 (International Labour Organisation Convention 190) across all economic sectors, including home-based enterprises and online businesses. The Call to Action is actively supported by Soroptimist International as part of our global advocacy initiative. SI is a member of NGO CSW New York, NGO Committee on Financing for Development, NGO Committee Social Development, NGO Committee on Migration and NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons. We encourage you to download and share this document to influence your government officials, Parliamentarians and enforcement agencies. [Read More Here](#)

The Programme team (Biennium 2020-2022) are planning exciting, purposeful and focused activities that will coach, further develop and strengthen programme reporters and region programme/UN liaison work, improve and expand database usage, targeted training on advocacy initiatives and how clubs can excel at social media campaigns and prosper through crowdfunding.

If you have any special training needs regarding advocacy or programme work, please drop us a note. We are ever ready to assist as much as possible to enable all clubs to build Pathways to Prosperity. Details of upcoming Webinars, troubleshooting tips and tools will be shared very soon. Among the high priority topics under consideration for your enrichment and growth are:

- How to Co-Create Programmes for Young People
- How to Expand Friendship Links and Boost Inter-club Skills Exchange
- The Hidden Treasures within SISWP Programme Database
- How to Mentor Champions of Sustainability in Your Local Community
- Funding, Fund-raising & Nurturing Resilient Social Enterprises

The newly invigorated programme team has a great blend of wise women with seasoned programme experience and an infusion of fresh talents with passion, creative energy and pragmatism. Read all their efforts and news stories below and do contact us to share your success stories, your challenges and innovative solutions with us.

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.

Programme Zone 4 coordinator Anne Allen

Following on from last month's reminder about the importance of Advocacy, the Region of Western Australia put together some helpful hints on Advocacy, below is an extract from the information that was circulated to Clubs in that Region. Over the next months we hope to share in the eSPAN some

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Included are links to a guide to linking to Sustainable Development Goals and Where we Stand Statements .

“Club advocacy ... Through their clubs, Soroptimists advocate for women and girls in many ways. This includes their day-to-day work and presence within their communities through to their efforts to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. The latter may involve letter writing/petitioning (both easier to organise currently although any results may be delayed).

Club advocacy may address issues relating to the local community through to advocacy that targets state and federal governments and government agencies. Clubs could also usefully link with and advocate through government and non-government agencies that specifically support women and girls.

Prior considerations ... Before you begin, consider the following:

- Ensure that your proposed advocacy is consistent with Soroptimist Objectives,
- The [Where We Stand Statements](#) and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Ensure that the advocacy adheres to the Soroptimist requirement of not supporting a specific religious or political group or cause.
- Know your subject ... Be sure of your facts. Research your topic. Make use of club members' inside knowledge of issues and organisations involved, but ensure that knowledge is accurate and relevant. Nothing kills an argument more than out-dated and incorrect information.
- Presentation ... Hitting the right tone is very important. Be persuasive. Be concise. Be firm but courteous. Consider what might best convince the recipient to go along with your argument/cause. Use correct protocols and terms of address. At all times remember your voice is representing Soroptimist International.

[Reporting database](#) ... Remember to record your advocacy on the database.”

Tell us what your club is doing to Advocate on behalf of women. Send us the information or complete a Advocacy Programme Report



Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific

Pathways to Prosperity • 2020-2022



ACN 147 990 627

President Suman Lal, has launched her theme for the 2020-2022 Biennium, Pathways to Prosperity. "Together we will celebrate our 100 years of existence. Time to Embrace and Create pathways for our Women to Prosper, Grow and enjoy a Sustainable Future."

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GOALS AND PRIORITIES

- Interclub Skills exchange
- Helping Mentor young Creators
- Promoting Social Enterprising
- Developing projects Across Borders



Clubs are encouraged to embrace "**The Goals and Priorities**" for this Biennium which will provide opportunities for club projects, a special focus should be on the Interclub skills exchange, incorporating the pathways to prosperity by joining with your friendship club or reaching out to other clubs for joint projects. Clubs seeking to partner with another club are encouraged to use the [Club Partnership page](#) on the siswp website, here you are able to advertise that you are seeking to partner with another club, this partnership could take the form of offering to provide financial assisting or seeking financial assistance, offering advice, skills or seeking of advice or skills.



Inc

Yesterday at 8:34 am · 🌐

It was a wonderful experience last night to meet via Zoom with ladies from our friendship link club, SI Madurai in India to discuss a proposal for a joint project. We look forward to meeting with them again shortly.



👍❤️ 12

1 Comment

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

Recent initiative by SI Brisbane Waters where they held a Zoom meeting with their friendship link club, to discuss a joint project. If any other clubs would like to share with us how they interact with their friendship clubs on projects please do so.



The Road to Equality
SI PRESIDENT'S APPEAL 2019 - 2021

MAKING MASKS ON THE ROAD TO EQUALITY



As you may be aware, the SI President's Appeal 2019-2021 has taken us on the **Road to Equality**. As the Anti-FGM programmes were progressing, we were all hit with Covid-19, movement control orders, lockdowns and the like. Thus, SI reacted in a proactive way, by encouraging Clubs to report all activities being done by them in light of the corona virus pandemic, and thereby become a part of the #MasksforEquality campaign.

As you understand, through the #MasksforEquality campaign we are measuring our organization's collective and global impact in response to Covid-19, and more reports will help us create a greater impact.

Are you stitching and crafting, making masks and other protective equipment such as gowns, face shields and more, for yourselves, for friends, for the elderly, and those working on the frontline?

If YES, tell us your stories, please come on board the #MasksforEquality campaign. Join us by filling in this short online survey: <https://forms.gle/1hFVJat6MfSPdMzx5> and share your wonderful stories with us.

The Road to Equality Appeal addresses inequalities --- Covid-19 pandemic has made it worse : increase in domestic violence, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and child marriage, with many older women facing this battle alone and refugee women dwelling in overcrowded conditions lacking adequate health care and sanitation facilities. Women frontline workers in most countries are at an increased risk and working tirelessly, often for less pay than their male counterparts.

Are you or your Club doing a project to address these inequalities? If YES, we would like to hear from **YOU!**

SISWP clubs, please share your photos and stories and email SI President's Appeal Co-ordinator **Ayushi Kundu** at sipacoordinators@soroptimistinternational.org. SISWP clubs' projects need to be seen and heard!

[DO JOIN the SURVEY & BE COUNTED](#)

DONATE what you can to support the SI President's Appeal and support our new partnership with Days for Girls. [DONATE HERE](#)

[Days for Girls International](#) a movement that has reached more than one million girls with menstrual care, education, and sustainable sanitary solutions. Through this partnership, we will fund Days for Girls' sewing groups and micro enterprises in developing countries, who are providing masks to local women and girls.

The Road to Equality has been created as a new section in the SI website. For more news and information please visit: <https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/action/road-to-equality/>

projects and activities you are doing to support women and girls in response to COVID-19.

Soroptimists around the world have leapt into action in light of the global pandemic, supporting local communities and those facing increased physical, mental, and financial challenge. Learn more about The Road to Equality at: www.soroptimistinternational.org/action/road-to-equality/

Stay Safe!

With kind regards,

Nora Lam (email: nora@nswlam.com)

SISWP Representative

SI President's Appeal 2019-2021 Committee

Covid 19 - Gender Equality

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on women, and provides opportunities for Civil Society groups such as Soroptimist International to bring about policy change on how World Governments will address the issue.

This following information from the **UN Policy Brief - The Impact of COVID19 on Women** [available to read by clicking on this link.](#)

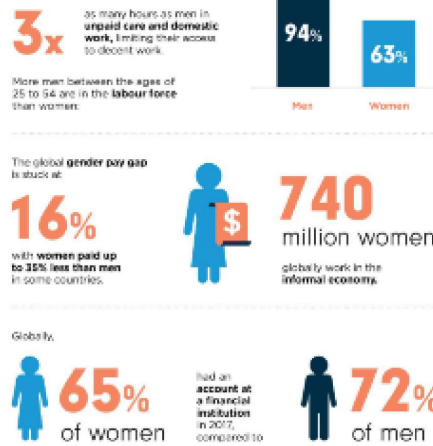
"COVID-19 is not only a challenge for global health systems, but also a test of our human spirit. Recovery must lead to a more equal world that is more resilient to future crises. Fiscal stimulus packages and emergency measures to address public health gaps have been put in place in many countries to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. It is crucial that all national responses place women and girls - their inclusion, representation, rights, social and economic outcomes, equality and protection - at their centre if they are to have the necessary impacts. This is not just about rectifying long-standing inequalities but also about building a more just and resilient world. It is in the interests of not only women and girls but also boys and men. Women will be the hardest hit by this pandemic but they will also be the backbone of recovery in communities. Every policy response that recognizes this will be the more impactful for it. "

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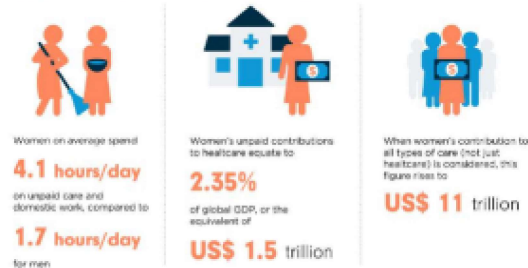
R3



Covid19 has impacted on the ability for women to support themselves, women tend to take the casual, part-time work which is often at the lower end of the payment scale and more often than not in the health care sector, retail, unpaid care, teachers, and more than likely in the front line work such as aged care workers and nurses. These sectors have been hardest hit with forced closures of business, and loss of jobs and income for women, but history has shown us that disaster can bring about change and opportunities.

A recent article by Shazia Juma-ross Ceo of Skills and Thrills, states that " Women face greater economic insecurity and will be hit hardest by any possible recession, but in the long term it is likely that the pandemic will increase flexible work arrangements and lead to greater gender equality. -- Women carry a 'Triple load' during the crisis, paid work, domestic labour and the mental stress that come with feeling responsible for the wellbeing of their families. Business will embrace flexibility which will lead to more women particularly mothers in jobs previously denied to them, ... the change to mindset to remote working and improved flexibility will see a increase in roles offers for women..... Remote working will see a movement towards managing staff by outcome rather than by input... no longer about working a set number of hours but about what you produce and the outcome you generate." Whilst the above information is an abridge version of an article written for the Courier Mail, similar information can be read [here in this article by Shazia](#)

The unpaid care and domestic work performed by women is critical for sustaining societies, has immense economic value and needs to be supported through adequate policies.



Gender Equality and Women's Organisations in Australia, have united to call on the Australian State and Federal governments to address the gendered impacts of COVID-19. You can read the statement [here](#), if you are an Australian Soroptimists you are encouraged to use this template to write to your local state and federal member.

Programme Reporting Database

Continuing or reoccurring Projects.

If your project is a continuing or reoccurring project how do you report this on the database? When reporting on projects that are reoccurring projects or continuing projects, please report your start date and end date as the current year your are reporting in, and also only report on the activity carried out during that reporting timeline. For instance you may have a project which began 2019, but am reporting in 2020, please enter the start date as January 2020, if you completed the project in 2020 then put in the actual end date, otherwise if the project is continuing into 2021, put the end date as December 2020, and only report on the activity for the timeline. then in 2021 report on the activities undertaken for that year.

The programme team is having to reject reports submitted due to the wrong start and end date, reason being is that the annual reports for clubs, regions, countries and zone reports is based on the current year, i.e annual reports will only report on reports submitted between the 1 January and the 31st of December for the year being reported on, so if you submit a report with a start date of 2019 and a end date of 2020, then the report will not be included in the 2020 annual reports, it is vital to SISWP that we are able to report on all club reports for a given year. Please contact your zone representative for further clarification.

Programme Team contact emails

As announced in the eBulletin there has been changes to the Federation position holders generic emails, please note the following changes

Programme Director - swpprogramme2020@siswp.org

Asst Programme Directors -

swpasstprogrammedirector12020@siswp.org, swpasstprogrammedirector22020@siswp.org

Zone Coordinators:

swpprogrammezone12020@siswp.org

swpprogrammezone22020@siswp.org

swpprogrammezone32020@siswp.org

swpprogrammezone42020@siswp.org

This information is also available on the [Programme page on the SISWP website.](#)

Zone Map

from the Programme page on the [SISWP website](#)

UN Generational Equality

Soroptimists need to keep abreast of changes at UN Women, as they move to Realizing Generational Equality. UN Women is bringing together the next generations of women's rights activists with the gender equality advocates and visionaries who were instrumental in creating the Beijing Platform for Action more than two decades ago. Collectively, these change makers of all ages and genders can tackle the unfinished business of empowering women through a new groundbreaking, multigenerational campaign: **[“Generation Equality: Realizing Women’s Rights for an Equal Future.”](#)**

The Generation Equality Forum has announced the leaders of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions, to achieve gender equality and all women’s and girls’ human rights.

The Action Coalitions’ leaders will come together in the coming months to co-design concrete, game-changing Blueprints for action to be implemented over the next five years. Beginning in September 2020, a set of virtual public conversations will mobilise and capture women’s and young people’s voices to inform the Action Coalitions. The Action Coalition Blueprints will then be refined at the Generation Equality Forum in Mexico City, during the first part of 2021, and officially launched at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris, later in 2021.

To better understand these changes review the [Generation Equality: Realizing women’s rights for an equal future factsheet](#).

The news is also available at <https://forum.generationequality.org/news/announcement-global-leaders-generation-equality-action-coalitions-accelerate-gender-equality>

The full list of Action Coalitions and Leaders are available at https://forum.generationequality.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/AC_Leadership_Structure_Full_List_PDF_English.pdf

In the Asia Pacific Region, ARROW has been selected to co-lead the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Bodily Autonomy and SRHR,

[Download this resource](#) document which showcases the 6 action pillars and the responsible alliance groups for delivering change.

Around the Federation

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2020 has thrown up many challenges over the past few months due to the Covid -19 virus and while it has not been “business as usual” for our Club because of isolation regulations it does make everyone become more creative and think up new ways to continue advocacy projects and communicate for Business Meetings.

Zoom has been a really effective tool with most members joining meetings over the past three months. We have also been able to have invited guest speakers join us and provide accompanying PowerPoint Presentations. We were also able to successfully navigate the SISWP website as part of our Training segment at our June meeting and plan to have a Zoom meeting as a lead-up to a special function “Women in Service Dinner” now deferred until 2021. Guest speakers will be invited along to give us an update as to how they have managed their roles during the shutdown.

The Dinner is held annually and hosting shared between Women’s Service Clubs in our community - a time to get together to share fellowship and ideas that can improve the lives of women and girls.

Our annual community “Relay for Life” event rather than cancel altogether went online for the day. Our Club has provided morning tea for carers and survivors since its inception and we were invited to join in with a segment to give a snapshot of our history and activities. Three of our members chatted over a “cuppa” with the interviewer and photos were posted on their Facebook page.

Following our very successful community Forum held just prior to the shutdown addressing the increasing problem of homelessness for older women and the lack of safe, affordable and social housing we have continued our efforts to bring the issue to the attention of government at both State and Local levels. Some transitional housing in the area is in the early stages of planning.

We continue our focus on the elimination of single use plastic bags with members given a monthly challenge to be the most innovative in reducing the use of plastics.

Working with a local Church our members have enthusiastically adopted the “Blankets and Beanies” project to provide blankets and warm clothing for homeless people through local charity the Parramatta Mission. The project has been shared amongst friends and Facebook followers with a great response and an army of knitters have been busily creating beanies and scarves (in the hundreds) to add to the collection. We have been overwhelmed with the kindness of everyone so willing to help those less fortunate than us. Local Secondary schools have also joined in with blanket and clothing drives. We plan to continue with this project each winter in the future so COVID-19 has broadened our horizons and as we emerge from the crisis we will continue to adapt and “think outside the square” that we hope will energise our Club members.

Fundraising events will return when the time is right but in the meantime we will devote our efforts to Advocacy and look at how we can expand into new projects for the future.

Bev Richardson

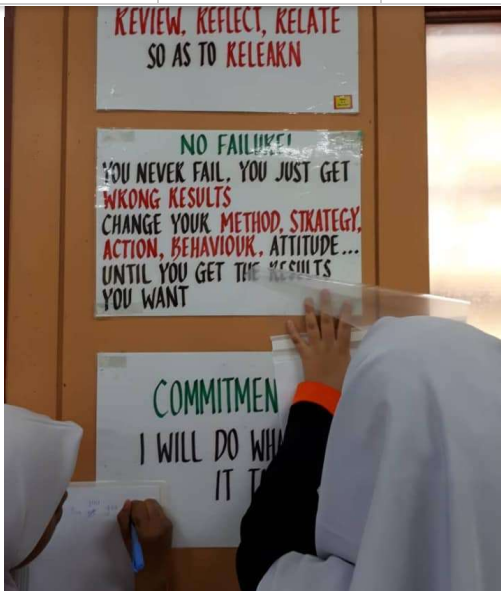
Soroptimist International of The Hills (NSW Region)



SI Penang - Project Blossom - Bridging the Gap - Personal Development

Recently the Penang girls, hosted a personal development course for 30 students. Project Blossom is a ongoing campaign, courses in personal development and financial development are provided to identified communities and school groups.





SI Bangsar - Covid 19 Front line support.

In support of our front liners, SICB donated 33 cartons of Milo UHT drinks to the health professionals looking after the Covid_19 patients at Kuala Lumpur General Hospital. Hopefully this will help them when they don't have time for meals or serve as a snack between meals.



UN and International Days

International days are occasions to educate the general public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity. The existence of international days predates the establishment of the United Nations, but the UN has embraced them as a powerful advocacy tool.

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of the day. Organizations and offices of the United Nations system, and most importantly, governments, civil society, the public and private sectors, schools, universities, and, more generally, citizens, make an international day a springboard for awareness-raising actions.

Read further information about UN days, and links to all the UN days over a year in this [resource document](#) prepared by Zone 4 coordinator Cesarina Gigante.

UN Days for July

15 July [World Youth Skills Day](#) (A/RES/69/145)

18 July [Nelson Mandela International Day](#) (A/RES/64/13)

28 July [World Hepatitis Day](#) [WHO]

30 July [International Day of Friendship](#) (A/RES/65/275)

30 July [World Day against Trafficking in Persons](#) (A/RES/68/192)

August

9 August [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#) (A/RES/49/214)

12 August [International Youth Day](#) (A/RES/54/120)

19 August [World Humanitarian Day](#) (A/RES/63/139)

Upcoming UN days of significance for Soroptimists, are the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, International Youth Day and World Humanitarian Day. Members are reminded that advocacy and projects showcasing the important impact work that Soroptimist perform in these areas should be showcased via your social media sites. Raise your voice to bring about change.



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Educate, Empower, Enable



Copy for the August eSPAN edition is required by 5th of August to swpprogramme2020@siswp.org.

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