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**Soroptimist**



**International**

Federation of the

South West Pacific



# SPAN

## Soroptimist Programme Action News

**Welcome** to the March 2022 edition of the Programme Action News

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To access all links and stories, [please log in to the website with your member details](#).

## FROM OUR PROGRAMME DIRECTOR



### Empowering Women

Well, the celebrations and assessments about International Women's Day are over. We have had breakfast or lunch or afternoon tea with those who share our commitment and in order to know where to Break The Bias, we have heard information from a range of speakers. It has been frustrating, inspiring and at times heartbreaking as we reflect on what has been done and what remains to be done, for us to achieve our mission.

Being Soroptimists we will not be disheartened but take a deep breath and continue to work in our communities and beyond to make a difference. 2022 plans have hopefully been completed by clubs and I am certain that innovative and ongoing projects have been scheduled, fundraising functions planned (fingers crossed) and members readying themselves to again work on advocacy, at its different levels.

We know that the last two years have been difficult and movement controls have seemed disheartening but clubs can really be proud of what has been achieved. When writing my Federation report for the Conference of Clubs I was able to provide the following data, that clubs had reported:

Projects	181 taking 29,049 hours
Advocacy	85 taking 2582 hours
Scholarships	98
Donations	AUD364,273

Please take the time to read the Zone and Assistant Programme Director Reports, which also include some recommendations.

As you can see clubs across our member nations have completed an amazing amount of work, despite difficulties and as you share your club's Annual Reports be sure to congratulate yourselves. I am sure 2022 will see similar activity and commitment.

***Di Lockwood***

**Programme Director**

**Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific**

[swpprogramme2020@siswp.org](mailto:swpprogramme2020@siswp.org)

## Special Report from Anusha Santhirasthiam

### UN WOMEN ASIA PACIFIC event

**MAKING BUSINESS WORK FOR WOMEN: TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION**  
PANEL DISCUSSION BETWEEN EXPERT PANELISTS AND INSIGHTFUL PRACTITIONERS ON 'HOT TOPIC' ISSUES

**Gender-Responsive Procurement**

- Samantha Hung**  
Chief, Gender Equality Thematic Group, ADB
- Nusra Chankaew**  
Cluster Procurement Director, SEAT & ANZ, Unilever

**The Care Economy**

- Dr. Anuradha Mundkur**  
Co-founder, Equals
- Nadira Yusoff**  
Founder, Kiddocare

**The Role of SMEs**

- Lottie-Marie Brouwer**  
Women's Entrepreneurship Lead, BoP Inc
- Gina Priadini**  
CEO & Founder, GoodVibes

REGISTER HERE

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES  
Funded by the European Union

weempowerasia  
Gender equality means good business

UN WOMEN

### Making Business Work for Women:

### Transforming Knowledge Into Action

Anusha Santhirasthiam, SISWP Immediate Past President participated at the UN Women Asia Pacific high priority virtual event in conjunction with International Women's Day on 10 March 2022. The theme was "Making Business Work for Women: Transforming Knowledge into Action" covering 3 crucial topics:

1. Establish gender-responsive procurement by big corporates from suppliers or contractors who are women owned small businesses.
2. Develop the Care Economy as a necessary support system to retain women in the workplace and provide women who have been laid off or are currently unemployed with reskilling to transition into the care sector post-pandemic.
3. Support and strengthen women owned SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) by ensuring that women led businesses have access to buyers and increased role in the procurement value chain is a key part of the overall pandemic recovery.

This is a call to action for all Soroptimist International Clubs to support and grow women led businesses in the Asia Pacific region; accelerate our capacity building programmes for women small business owners. When women entrepreneurs succeed their families and local community thrives. Let's help women in business to succeed and attract them to join our Soroptimist clubs and "pay it forward".

Did you know that in the Asia Pacific, more than 1/3rd of all businesses are owned by women, yet they receive only 1% of corporate procurement spend? Also, women make up only 32% of corporate

boards. Human resources activism is needed only 20% of the workplace are women employees. This means too many women are in the informal work sector and vulnerable to exploitation.

UN Women Asia Pacific has teamed up with WeEmpowerAsia to develop a Gender Diversity Index and Reporting platform. They will track and measure women's participation in corporate governance and decision-making. This is absolutely necessary for effective talent management, succession planning, ensuring sustainable and responsible corporate behaviour towards women employees, suppliers and contractors.

UN Women is advocating for us to raise awareness of the Gender Empowerment Principles and to adopt it within our organization. For more information go to [Women's Empowerment Principles](#).

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## NGO CSW66 Forum 13-25 March 2022



Registration is now open. If you have not as yet registered then you can register [HERE](#)  
Soroptimist International Parallel event "Opening Doors to a Bright Future: Educating, Empowering and Enabling Women **22 March 22 8:00am EST**.

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## Soroptimist International South West Pacific Disaster Fund

SI Lautoka was provided with a donation from the SISWP Disaster fund to assist mothers and babies with emergency packs, after learning that during the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been 177 deaths due to COVID-19 in Fiji; with 175 of these deaths during the outbreak that started in April 2021. Sadly, two mothers lost their lives after deliveries due to this pandemic.

The plan was to make 100 emergency packs for mothers and their newborn babies which would include; baby wipes, baby powder, baby soap, diapers, maternity pads, hand sanitisers and facemasks. The club members of SI Lautoka purchased and packaged up 100 of these packs for distribution to the hospital. Read more [HERE](#).

**Great work SI Lautoka!**



# ADVOCACY WORK



**What are priorities in your country?**

**What are clubs doing in advocacy?**

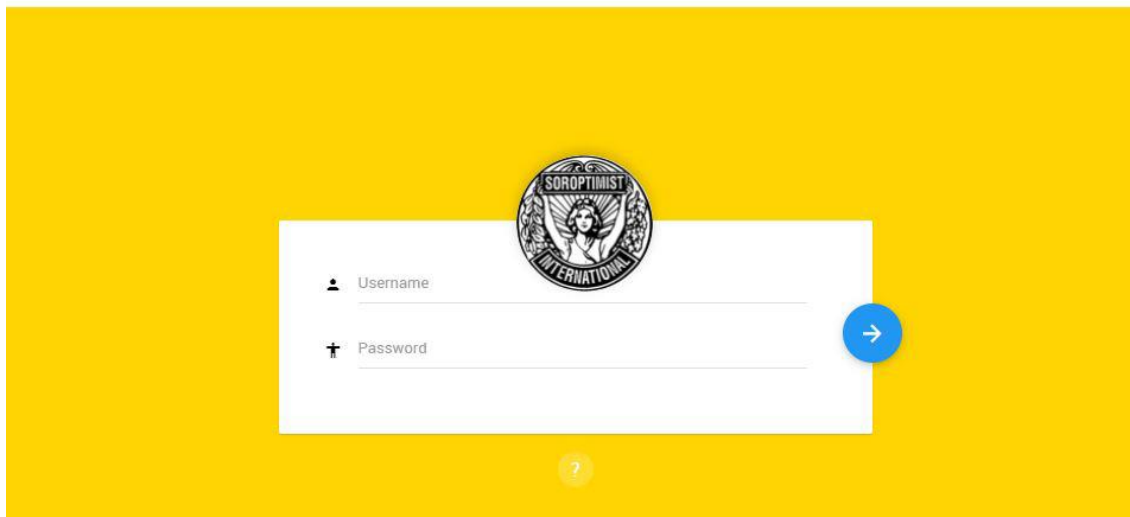
Advocating on behalf of women is a core Soroptimist function.

The Programme team would be pleased to hear what your club is doing?

# PROGRAMME REPORTING DATABASE



Women Inspiring Action, Transforming Lives



## Having problems with the Programme Database?

If you have any issues logging in to the SISWP Programme Database, please contact Di Lockwood, Programme Director [swpprogramme2020@siswp.org](mailto:swpprogramme2020@siswp.org).

# BEST PRACTICE AWARDS



## SWP Best Practice Award Nomination 2022

must have been approved for the 2021 Annual Report. A reminder to apply for the 2022 Best Practice Awards. Eligible reports

Projects which were successful in the last round of awards are not eligible for this round. Projects which were successful in the last round of Brilliant Futures Fund are not eligible either.



### **Nominations closing date: 1st of April 2022.**

The Best Practice Awards are presented at the Conference of Clubs (COC). Information about the awards, a guidance sheet and links to the online form can be found under: downloads, programme information, the best practice awards general information, or you could log in to the [siswp.org](https://siswp.org) website and click [HERE](#).

An award is available in each of the programme objectives subject to other criteria. Some amazing club work has been done. Much has been publicised on Facebook, but remember that a project report must be on the report database for a project to be eligible.

# UN SDG WORK

## SI and the UN

Pat Black, SI Advocacy Advisor reports in her blog on the 7th March, about the current situation in Ukraine which has focused our minds on conflict, especially as there are many Soroptimists impacted by the conflict. She quotes our international President Maureen Maquire's SI statement on Ukraine. Read the SI position papers on Women Peacekeepers and Women, Peace, and Security. [Read more](#)

Bev Bucur, SI Advocacy Advisor, discusses the review theme for this year's CSW, 'Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work'. "Women's economic empowerment will be won or lost in the world of work. It will be reflected in whether and how women gain entry into the labour market. [Read more](#)

Berth De, SI UN Representative in Geneva reports on the rising concern of the rights of the child. that the monitoring process relies on each State's willingness to submit timely reports and reviews to the Committee. [Read more](#)

Evelyne Para, SI United Nations Representative at UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) reminds us that women are still a minority in science. She quotes useful data about the representation of women and girls in science from the 2021 UNESCO Science Report. [Read more](#)

## UN DAYS



### March

21 Mar - [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

21 Mar - [International Day of Forests](#)

21 Mar - [World Water Day](#)

24 Mar - [International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims](#)

25 Mar - [International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade](#)

### April

07 Apr - [World Health Day](#)

21 Apr - [International Girls in ICT Day](#)

# DID YOU KNOW?

## There are Four Federation Campaigns in 2022



**8 March - International Women's Day**

**5 June - World Environment Day**

**11 October - Day of the Girl Child**

**25 November - 10 December - 16 Days of Activism - Orange the World**

We have four campaigns proposed for this year and our first, **International Women's Day (IWD)** is now over. It was great to see the social media posts from many clubs. I was delighted to notice also that a number of schools are making efforts to promote this day.

Remember to report your involvement as soon as possible. If you attended a function it is an activity as are social media posts. If your club organised an IWD event and record all the steps involved, including perhaps a social media campaign it is most likely a project. You may have already put information on Facebook but please ensure that it goes on the report database as soon as possible.

Our second campaign is for June (**World Environment Month**) and we are being optimistic and asking clubs to be active about climate change and the environment for the whole month. This may include sharing UN and SISWP posts, having speakers on a range of topics related to this and trying to organise activities or perhaps a project on this topic. A toolkit will be out shortly and we hope that clubs will respond. It is a topic of concern, particularly among children.

Our next campaign, the International Day of the Girl (**Day of the Girl Child**) is in early October and perhaps clubs could focus on an activity with students. Again, assistance will come via a toolkit.

All clubs are familiar with our final topic which is the **16 Days of Activism** Against Gender-Based Violence and this will, I am sure, be addressed as strenuously as usual by clubs.

# AROUND THE FEDERATION

A reminder to send in your work as soon as you have completed it. The Programme team love hearing and promoting club's advocacy and project work. It also helps provide ideas to other clubs in the Federation.



**Soroptimist International of The Hills District**

## **International Women's Day Breakfast 2022**

So, after a year of Covid-related disruptions and cancellations, our club was excited to restart their advocacy and fundraising work with their annual IWD Breakfast. An event that is aimed to ignite interest in issues affecting females in our local community. The importance of the issues facing women in today's society was reflected by the attendance of a large group of senior female students from Castle Hill High School. Profits from this event were directed to the Sydney Women's Fund and Hawkesbury's Helping Hands - Flood Relief efforts.

This year, the Keynote Speaker was Lucy Brogden AM, who presented challenging facts and statistics from the 'Sydney Women's Fund - Portrait of Sydney Women 2021' report by Dr Rebecca Huntley and Kate Whelan. Not only did Lucy provide the audience with an update on how Sydney women coped and functioned through the pandemic, but she also encouraged everyone to support people in one's inner circle struggling with mental health issues. She stated that "we cannot expect people to be able to ask for help – when they are themselves not coping". By visiting the Sydney Women's Fund webpage <https://www.sydneywomensfund.org.au/> you can explore issues like these.

Mayor Peter Gangemi shared with the audience, The Hills Council's vision and commitment to listening to, and strengthening, the vital work of the local community support organisations. It was gratifying that Senior Students from Oakhill College – Seronique and James, accepted our invitation to share their views on the positive culture being created by their school to address gender bias.

Throughout the presentations, the audience members were invited to imagine their Future Perfect world, to consider the facts and opinions presented and find Small Steps that will help to #BreakTheBias.

Jacqui McLachlan - President – Soroptimist International of The Hills District

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If you would like to download copies of eSPAN to print, go to the [SISWP website](#) and log in using your member login. Go to the **'Members Area'** in yellow at the top left of screen. Or if you are already logged in, [click this link](#). Here you can access all previous copies of archived eSPAN Newsletters.

## COPY DEADLINES

Copy for the April 2022 eSPAN edition is required by 8 April 2022. Please email your submissions to [swpasstprogramdirector1@siswp.org](mailto:swpasstprogramdirector1@siswp.org). Thank you.



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