

 MEMBERS LOGIN

Soroptimist
Federation of the



International
South West Pacific



I hope members recognised **World Environment Day 5th June**. The theme this year was '**Beat Air Pollution**', a very appropriate theme for those cities/countries like Ulaan Baatar/Mongolia and Canberra/Australia which burn wood or coal and create lots of smog during their cold winters. Another environmental issue is the availability of water. You may remember that the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028 'Every Drop Counts' was declared by the UN General Assembly at the end of CSW 62 last year, a very timely reminder for our International President's Appeal 'Women, Water & Leadership'. Water is as you know essential for life. The increasing demands of a growing population and a rapidly developing global economy combined with the effects of climate change will exacerbate the lack of access to water and sanitation for domestic use.

International President's Appeal

Speaking of the International President's Appeal (PA), currently the moneys raised have achieved 320,000 UK pounds but if all the projects in Malaysia and Indonesia are to be supported (and we have been particularly fortunate to receive moneys from the PA for Indonesia), the PA needs to have raised 390,000 as at end of May and definitely by the time of the International convention in July in Kuala Lumpur. So keep fund raising and donating to the PA and perhaps both the communities damaged by the tsunami in Lombok and the earthquake/tsunami in Palu may be fortunate to receive funds towards the rehabilitation of their communities. Restoration of these disaster areas were over and above the plans for this PA which already supplies funds to WWL projects in Sabah & Sarawak. [To Donate please visit the SISWP Website](#)

Indigenous

Those of us in Australia have just celebrated Reconciliation Week with a theme of '**Grounded in Truth Walk together with Courage**'. As you are probably aware Australia like many countries around the world has an indigenous or native population and when we ask in the programme reporting form about whether the project/activity benefited indigenous women, we need to make sure that we have checked whether indeed indigenous women have benefited. In Australia many of our indigenous Australians may be as pale as I am but due to their forebears can be classified as indigenous so when reporting it would be wise to ask a few questions of the audience or

recipients of our activities as to whether there is an indigenous component amongst the audience or recipient/s. Caucasians arrived in Australia only just over 200 years ago but the original residents of Australia we understand may have been here for over 40,000 years so don't forget if your country has an indigenous population a few questions need to be asked about the constituent of the audiences benefiting from your club/region and country activities.

Speaking of the indigenous members of our society you may or may not be aware that we are celebrating the International Year of Indigenous languages. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the General Assembly on 13 September 2007 by a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against, (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine). 11 years have passed since the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 4 countries that voted against the Declaration have now reversed their position and now support the Declaration. This declaration is a very comprehensive instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples and was developed in association with indigenous communities and establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world. The declaration elaborates on existing human rights standards and the fundamental freedoms associated with the specific situations for indigenous peoples. For more information see <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>

Voluntary National Reviews (VNR)

An issue that will be of interest to some members is that the governments of **Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia and New Zealand** are supposed to provide an update this year on their country's review of progress towards achievement of the SDGs. This is a voluntary review and government officials of these countries may seek advice from grass roots organisations like ourselves. It is wise to be prepared just in case Soroptimists in your country are approached to help the government officials prepare this review on progress towards achieving the SDGs. Australia was to report last year and I recall being part of a group that briefed the government officials on the ways it could achieve information to be recorded in the voluntary review. PNG, Samoa and the Solomon Islands are due to provide their country's VNR of progress in 2020.

I gather from an article I have read that the Asia Pacific region is not on track to achieve any SDGs by 2030 if it remains on its current trajectory. The report 'Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2019' found that for more than half of the goals, progress has gone backwards or has stagnated, particularly on clean water and sanitation SDG 6, decent work and economic growth SDG 8 and responsible consumption and production SDG 12.

Please see further information I have prepared about the UN days for July further in this bulletin.

I hope you enjoy the articles prepared for you in each eSPAN edition, please remember to keep the programme team informed of your club projects.

Catherine Evans

SWP Programme Director.

Advocacy Work

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

Soroptimists from both Regions in New Zealand are working on a national report to the Government in response to the CEDAW report. The members are progressing this report and will be presenting the report to the NZ Government prior to the end of the current financial year.

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

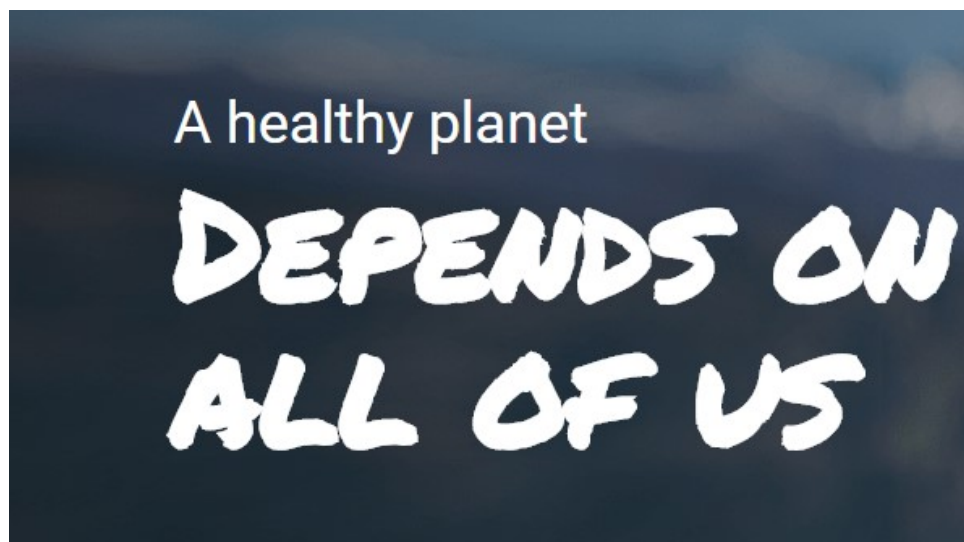
UN SDG Work

Wednesday 5th of June, World Environment Day.

Whilst the message this environment day was about improving air quality, this article is about the role women play as environmental protectors. Women, in particular indigenous women, experience the first and worst effects of climate change globally, and are often in the front line to protect their environment.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in 2010 “The World’s women are the key to sustainable development, peace and security. Because women are the chief resource managers for their families in many part of the world, their engagement in remedies for and adaption to climate change is essential.”

Women play a critical role in managing natural resources, and are most affected by environmental degradation, fighting against climate change whilst making sustainable consumption choices. In communities around the world, women manage water, sources for fuel, and food, as well as both forests and agricultural terrain. Their voices must continue to be heard when policy is being developed, and at every stage of implementation for the well being of future generations.



I hope you enjoy reading these couple of articles listed below:

This story about New Zealand Maori’s and their beliefs that guide Maori culture, humans are considered equal to and at one with the land, sea and rivers. The idea is reflected in the Maori word ‘kaitiakitanga’, which means guarding and protecting the environment in order to respect ancestors and ensure its protection for future generations. Read this story here about the rights of

a river.

<https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/story/indigenous-people-protecting-our-planet>

Indigenous women the frontline protectors of the environment.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2017/04/indigenous-women-the-frontline-protectors-of-the-environment/>

A recent story about the risks indigenous women take in South America to protect the environment.

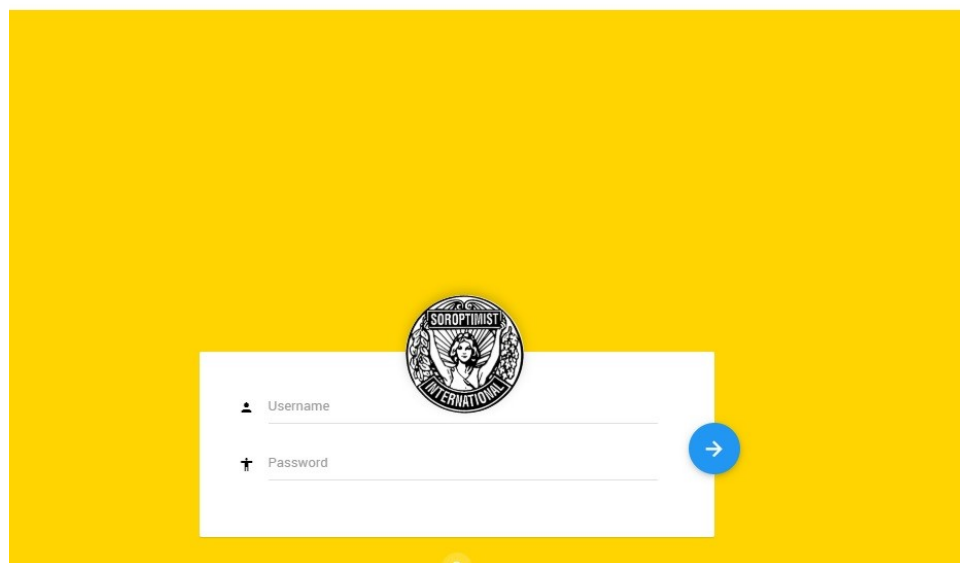
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/05/risks-women-take-defend-environment-indigenous-people/>

Programme Database

President Anusha Santhirasthipam along with Programme Director Catherine Evans, proudly announced the launch on Wednesday 5th of June, of the SWP Programme Reporting Database.



Women Inspiring Action, Transforming Lives



Need to know how to access the database, links have been created on SISWP website, in the footer area on the front page, under SISWP website, and when logged in as a member a link can be found in the Members menu.

Remember login is via a Club username, all details have been sent to club siswp email addresses. If you haven't receive your login details and password please contact swpasstprogrammedirector1@siswp.org

How to and Help Documents have been created and they can be downloaded from the SISWP Website Downloads area - Resources > Programme Reporting Database Help Documents.

The Programme Team are assured the database will provide clubs and regions with ease of use, and the ability to report on a whole range of SISWP projects.

For assistance on the use of the database please contact your zone coordinators.

Need help with Getting Started. SISWP have provided a high level navigation and how to webinar

on the SWP Programme Reporting Database, [view the webinar by following this link.](#)

Soroptimist International Reports



Soroptimist International has written a High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) paper which provides a critical opportunity to review progress to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This paper deals with the work of Soroptimists world wide in achieving SDG 4.

“Civil society organisations, such as SI, are in a prime position to observe and respond to gaps in efforts to achieve the SDGs. CSOs implement multidimensional projects that recognise the interconnected nature of the SDGs every day.

Through working with communities, civil society organisations play a critical role in identifying gaps in implementation – it is important to continuously ask, ‘who is not

being included in development efforts’ and ‘who is not fully benefiting from development efforts’? All too often, it is women and girls who are not being equally included or fully benefiting. To support the HLPF process, Soroptimist International will provide key information on its efforts at the grass roots level to realise the universal achievement of the SDGs, ensuring that no one gets left behind.

The importance and value of SDG 4 ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’, strikes to the heart of SI’s mission – to educate, to empower and to enable women and girls. Many SI grassroots projects use education as a critical cross-cutting mechanism to unlock the potential of women and girls, both as individuals and as members of a community who can promote development. “

This publication covers many grass roots projects and includes projects from our Federation – Mongolia, Fiji and the Women Water and Leadership projects in Indonesia.

I encourage every Soroptimist to read this important paper, [which can be downloaded here](#), or is also available on the siswp website downloads area.

Is your club considering taking advocacy action or holding an event around either of these two upcoming UN Days.

World Youth Skills Day - 15 July, or

World Day Against Trafficking in Persons - 30th July.

Then consider reading these two Soroptimist International Position Statements to assist you.

[Access to Education](#)

[Human Trafficking](#)

UNITED NATIONS UN PEACEKEEPERS

29 May was the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. Protecting Civilians, Protecting Peace.

This year, the United Nations celebrates the 70th anniversary of UN peacekeeping, a unique and dynamic instrument to help countries torn by conflict transition to lasting peace.

Over the past 70 years, more than 1 million men and women have served under the UN flag in more than 70 UN peacekeeping operations. More than 100,000 military, police and civilian personnel from 125 countries currently serve in 14 peacekeeping operations to address a range of mandates set by the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

Peacekeepers serving under the UN flag work in difficult and dangerous environments, risking their lives to protect some of the world's most vulnerable people.

What do Peacekeepers do: Protect civilians; Prevent conflicts; Build rule of law security institutions; Promote Human Rights; Empower Women (WPS); Deliver field support.

What does it mean to the civilians: Shows someone cares; Message of hope for a future; Role models for kids; Pathway to capacity building; Refugee / survivor pathways.

More than 14,000 civilians now serve in UN peacekeeping operations around the world. As peacekeeping operations have become more multi-dimensional, the need for specialized civilian skills is ever in demand.



Women as PeaceKeepers

It is an operational imperative that we recruit and retain female peacekeepers to achieve gender equality. Gender equality contributes to lasting peace as women and men experience, engage in and are affected by violent conflict differently which causes different understandings of peace. Increasing the number of women peacekeepers will encourage women from the countries we operate in to participate in public life and help dismantle harmful stereotypes and assumptions that impede women's ability to play a central role in public life, including in peace-building processes.

Read More Here <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/civilians>

21st of September - International Day of Peace. Talk to your club members and plan a club activity around this day. Here are some ideas to get you started on your project.

- Organise a public peace vigil, light a candle and stand and unite in peace.
- Involve schools or individuals in your community by organising a poetry or storytelling competition on peace.
- Organise a movie night to watch a movie on peace

Around the Federation

Members from the Region of South Queensland decided that with the onset of Winter what better excuse to raise funds for Soroptimist projects than these unique events.

SI Gold Coast - Held their annual "Fashion" event clothes paraded by Bagus Bali Bits. But there was a catch attendees had to wear an outfit created by ethically sourced clothing (2nd hand shops). Our fashion expert judge, Rachel Syers, judged the creative op-shop ensembles and much-needed funds were raised for our projects to support women and girls

SI Logan - Held their annual "Frock Swap" this is where attendees take along 2 articles of clothing and are able to swap this with 2 articles of clothing, as well as purchasing other clothing. Once again ethically sourced clothing, responsible recycling. Their funds will be donated to the SISWP Sanctuary Shelter for Women, and the SISWP President's Special Appeal: "Soroptimist Makmur Indonesia" Tsunami & Earthquakes Appeal.



SI Ramu - "Its Time for Action"

Education Awareness for World Menstrual Hygiene Day 2019, the club members visited Ramu International Primary School, for a speaking engagement with the young girls from Grades 5-8 about the subject. The club organised for Dr. Maiti to speak to the girls on what menstruation is including symptoms, whilst Sr. Maggie Adam from Gusap health centre and a Soroptimist spoke with the girls regarding the hygiene aspect of it.

The students were engaged with the speakers and responded with good questions during and after the presentation. The President for SI Ramu spoke with the young girls saying that having your period is not an illness and should not stop you from doing everything you love doing, it's a natural process, unique to women and is a beautiful reminder once a month that you are a woman! Each of

the students were presented with a booklet to take home and were encouraged to have further discussion with their mothers, and aunts and not be afraid to talk about periods. Members also checked with the School to see if it had proper Menstrual Hygiene Management in place. This awareness was done to empower young girls and women to ensure they continue to attend school on their flow days and be empowered as women.



We always knew Soroptimists are multi talented using both their left and right sides of their brain. Here SI Moreton North and SI Townsville Breakwater, use their creative side to have a bonding session with members and create some beautiful works of art. SI Moreton North Members left and SI Townsville Breakwater right



SI Albany - Annual Foodbank Project Appeal

Since 2011 Soroptimists Albany have had an annual collection for donations to Foodbank Albany. We encourage our members to set up a donation box at work or at a regular place of visit. This appeal is conducted through June and July.

The poster (as seen below) is stuck to an empty cardboard box - with a contact name included.

Suggestions for the box: baked beans, spaghetti, rice, pasta, tinned vegetables, soup, canned fish, long life milk

This year pick up will be by the 3rd week in July. Hunger and Homelessness are a major concern for most areas in Australia.

Australian Bureau of Statistics reports and this is the latest report available, as the report are produced every 5 years. That the number of homeless people in Australia jumped by more than 14,000 — or 14 per cent — in the five years to 2016, according to census data which also reveals a "significant" increase in older women on the streets and a growing group living in overcrowded accommodation.

Paul Jelfs from the ABS said the number of women over 65 who had become homeless in the five years to the 2016 census was significant. "This is probably related to things like domestic violence, social relationship breakdowns and economic status, where they just don't have enough money to support themselves, or sufficient superannuation," he said.



United Nation Days

Planing your clubs dinner meeting topics around UN Days, provides themes which helps Soroptimists raise awareness.

Some significant UN International Days for late June

17 June World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought is another significant UN day of relevance to the environment. Desertification occurs because dryland ecosystems are extremely vulnerable to inappropriate land use. Poverty, political instability, deforestation overgrazing and bad irrigation practices can all undermine the productivity of the land. The purpose of this UN celebratory day is to promote public awareness of international efforts to combat desertification.

20 June World Refugee Day. It was resolved at the United Nations General Assembly that, from 2001, 20 June would be celebrated as World Refugee Day. In this resolution, the General Assembly noted that 2001 marked the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

UN Days of July

All months have special United Nations Day, three in July come to mind, **11 July World**

Population Day, 15 July World Youth Skills Day and 30 July World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

World Population Day was established by the then-Governing Council of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in 1989 and in 1990, the UN General Assembly decided to continue observation of this day to increase awareness of population issues, including their relations to the environment and development. United Nations

15 July World Youth Skills Day

Young people are almost three times more likely to be unemployed than adults and continuously exposed to lower quality of jobs, greater labour market inequalities, and longer and more insecure school-to-work transitions. That is why education and training are key determinants of success in the labour market. To raise awareness on the importance of investing in youth skills development, the United Nations General Assembly decided in resolution A/RES/69/145 to designate 15 July as World Youth Skills Day. United Nations

30 July World Day against Trafficking in Persons:

Human trafficking is a crime that exploits women, children and men for numerous purposes including forced labour and sex. Every country in the world is affected by human trafficking, whether as a country of origin, transit, or destination for victims, and children make up almost a third of all human trafficking victims worldwide. Additionally, women and girls comprise 71 per cent

of human trafficking victims. (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Global Report on Trafficking in Persons) In September 2015, the world adopted the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and embraced goals and targets on trafficking in persons. These goals call for an end to trafficking and violence against children; as well as the need for measures against human trafficking, and they strive for the elimination of all forms of violence against and exploitation of women and girls.

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