

## Programme Director Barbara Dixon's October 2016 Blog

Over the last few weeks I have had the opportunity to attend two Regional Meetings, deliver a presentation on **CSW** (Commission on the Status of Women) and the **SDG's** (Sustainable Development Goals) at a **WEN** (Wales Equality Network) Conference, visit the Harrogate Horticultural Show to see the Harrogate Club's Meru Garden Exhibit and attend a Train the Trainer event at Westminster, learning how to better engage with politicians at all levels as well as attending Club events and putting the finishing touches to the Programme section of the Malta Conference. In between times I had to work!

It has been a fantastic month, learning about project work all over the country, seeing how different Regions organise meetings and feeling so much a part of the family of Soroptimists. I have been made so welcome on my visits and thank everyone for their warm receptions.

**October** is likely to be just as busy with:



**Painting Towns Pink** for breast cancer awareness, as well as making **pink poppies**,

There is also World Food Day- – *join in the Big Supper Event for the Meru Women's Garden Project*, Anti-slavery Day – working on raising awareness and liaising with police and Serious Crime Officers.

There is the International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October and on 17th October the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.



So long as we have the basic theme of **Educate, Empower or Enable** at the heart of our project work it does not matter if we complete one or twenty one projects. What matters is that we make a difference to women or girls along the way. It is impossible to fit everything in and what is important to some clubs is not so to others.

Although there are 17 Sustainable Development Goals to work on we have to ask if we should concentrate on only a few, narrowing the focus to make a bigger impact. Excellent examples of this are the International Presidents appeal and the Federation Project. Nearly every club works on these and the final result is amazing.

Presidential years are over halfway through and incoming Presidents will be planning their year- **consider** reducing your workload but increasing your impact by cutting down the projects you support and make sure they fit our aims.

**Consider** also asking the project you support to put up a plaque to say "Supported by Soroptimist International of..." – perhaps then we will not be the best kept secret in our Federation and will encourage people to join us.

Whatever your choice I wish you all well in your work and look forward to seeing many of you in Malta.

*Barbara Dixon*  
*Federation Programme Director*