



PAM

(Programme Action Magazine)

April 2011



Soroptimist 2011
19th International Convention
July 19 to 24, 2011 - Montreal, Quebec, Canada

April 15th. Go to www.si-montreal2011.org and get yourselves there.

E TIS; A really good read and lots about the celebrations for International Women's day. There is also a section on CSW and President Liz is featured.

Soroptimist  International

SI WEBSITE: Gets better and better! Look for ACT NOW to help you with your advocacy work. Look for the Global Voice to see what we are doing and how to have real impact

MONTHLY FOCUS-ON THE SI WEBSITE: This will communicate what UN reps are involved in. There will be a different focus every month e.g. victim centred: Women from the green economy.

Each week in the month it will focus down onto- Awareness, advocacy, action, useful links and resources.

WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE: A competition run by the Commonwealth. We entered six nominations from our members. Two of them have been submitted to the Commonwealth. They are Matilda Matthias from SI Bangalore and Rose Simba from SI Thames Valley .All the nominees will be featured on the SI website in the blog spot starting at the beginning of April.

The Commonwealth has issued a call to action recognising the transformative impact that educating women has on society.

Can I urge members from Commonwealth countries to access this via our website and use it to lobby governments?

Hilary Ratcliffe SIGBI Programme Director .

MONTREAL CONVENTION

JUNE 10-14 2011: Don't miss such a marvellous opportunity to share an exciting and stimulating time with your Soroptimist sisters from all around the world. Registration is up and running and the early bird registration ends on

CONGRATULATIONS -

to Penny Veness who has been re-elected as a Soroptimist to the Board of Directors of Trade Justice Movement UK.

The British government's new white paper has ensured that trade continues to be high on the agenda and we welcome the election of Penny as an opportunity for Soroptimists to make their voice heard. Penny and I look forward to receiving members input and comments on how they would like to see us taking trade issues forward.

Sue Challoner APD Economic and Social Development



HEALTH PROVISION IN AFRICA

A key problem in the provision of health care in Africa is training and retention of medical staff, including doctors. The emigration of African medical graduates has contributed greatly to the shortage of doctors. A health policy paper from the sub-Saharan African Medical Schools Study in this week's issue of *The Lancet* has laid bare the difficulties involved in educating medical students in sub-Saharan Africa.



On March 7, 2011, 240 people from 30 medical schools in Africa and 20 institutions from the USA met in Johannesburg for the first annual symposium of the Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MEPI). To encourage more graduates to stay where needed. MEPI schools will use a combination of factors including the use of community-based education and early exposure to rural practice. Indeed, March, 2011, had the potential to be an inflexion point in the history of African health-care provision. **Rita Allen APD Health**



The Bridge event was a great success. We all stood for women's rights to mark IWD. But sadly, women are facing the worst levels of violence especially in conflict areas.

A recent report from GNWP (Global Network Of Women Peacebuilders) highlights this:

"The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire has already manifested into a disaster of grave magnitude, with over 500 deaths reported and a civil war in full flow. The current situation has created a refugee crisis in neighboring Liberia where 90,000 have already fled to escape the ongoing violence." One of the most blatant and symbolic crimes against

women in Côte d'Ivoire took place in Abidjan on the 3rd of March 2011, when seven women were shot and killed by security forces during peaceful protests.

Worryingly, due to the international commitment to the humanitarian crisis in both Japan and Libya, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is rapidly evolving into what could be a 'forgotten humanitarian disaster'

Disturbing reports suggest the violence being inflicted on Côte d'Ivoire citizens goes beyond anything being reported in the media; "civilian homes are being burnt, some relatives are being burnt alive and disgorged from their homes. In bizarre circumstances, new-born babies have been pounded to death. Women are not being spared in the butchery."

It is of deep concern that while we are standing for women's rights, Côte d'Ivoire even after 3 months is still in a place of distress and that the threat to civilians, especially women, develops daily with sexual violence against women being used as a weapon of war. You can read more about it at: <http://www.gnwp.org/category/gnwp-activities> **Talat Pasha APD International Goodwill and Understanding**

AROUND THE FEDERATION

On 8th of March, **SI Nigeria Association** held a live media interactive session on Women's achievements, Soroptimist contributions past, present and future, the need for quality education for the girl child and the disturbance in the African country of Cote D'Ivoire as it affects our sister Soroptimists. The session was held at the Nigerian Television Authority Channel 10, in Lagos. **Nneka Asoluka**



SI Turks and Caicos have adopted some of the under-privileged 'girl children' at a Government Primary School on Providenciales. We have provided hygienic items for them and will do so on a quarterly basis. We also planted a number of trees at this school as

our day of Service. Local television was on hand to cover this important milestone in our Club's history. We are only two years old, but have been doing great things in our community to assist the less fortunate 'girl children' at two of the Government Primary Schools. **President Blythe**

S.I. North Bombay helped organize a 'Fun Run' to raise awareness of the 'Right to Education' and 'Equal Education to All', it brought to the attention of the authorities and the public various social issues affecting the citizens specially children's right to Education. The event got excellent media coverage in all the leading news papers of Mumbai.



Annette Mascarenhas

Anguilla Soroptimists hold rally for the centenary of International Women's Day 2011



It was attended by representatives from several other organizations including the Teachers' Union, the National Council of

Women, the Methodist Church Women, Family Hope Network, Sisters for Sisters, and Women in Development. Soroptimist Brenda Carty pointed out that in Anguilla there are several women in key positions including the Speaker of the House, the Judge, the Magistrate, the Deputy Commissioner of Police, and the Permanent Secretaries for finance, health, education and administration. She said that efforts must now be made to have a woman as an elected member of government. **Brenda Carty**

We all love the lighter evenings now summer time is here. In much of the developing world - particularly in rural areas - when the sun sets and darkness falls, the day is done and the opportunity to work and study is over. In Africa, just 41% of the continent's one billion population has access to electricity, 25% in rural areas. This is why Fairtrade premium projects to electrify communities are so important and revealing. In Malawi, an adult education project for 550 pupils aged between 18 and 80, and supported by the Fairtrade premium is teaching illiterate workers, many of them women, to read.



For the first time, farmers are taking exams they never had the opportunity to sit when they were children. The classes take place after work when it gets dark. They can only run because workers voted to invest in a micro-solar project funded by the Fairtrade Premium.

Sue Challoner APD Economic and Social Development



Published jointly by **Plan International** and the **Royal Commonwealth Society** to co-observe with International Women's Day and to mark Commonwealth's 2011

theme, 'Women as Agents of Change' is an excellent report. It is not long and tells the worst and best places for a girl to be born. It can be read in full by following this link to my page on the SIGBI website: <http://soroptimist-gbi.org/our-work/apd-information/education/>

Helen Owen APD Education

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2011A big thank you to all you Soroptimists, who organised and attended efforts in recognition of the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. Some used the event to celebrate women's achievements over the last 100 years, others to raise awareness of our work, or to raise money. Many also took on board the Women for Women International theme of holding their events on local bridges. The latter was so successful that it is likely to continue in future years.

MEN IN WOMEN'S SHOES!

There is an old saying that "You can't really understand another person's experience until you've put on her shoes to know where it pinches". This was taken literally when men in the Cameroon were asked to show commitment to ending violence against women by putting on a pair of high heeled shoes on March 08, 2011, and joining an organisation called "A Common Future" (ACF) to walk a mile. By doing this the men showed that they were committed to help end violence against women in this region, noted for its aggressive culture toward women.

ACF works with men in ending violence against women, by proposing alternative models of masculinities that are not necessarily in opposition to models of femininity and that allow men and women as well as boys and girls to share love, decision making and reproductive health responsibilities.

ACF recognizes that while men remain the primary perpetrators of violence against women, they also need to be central to the solution to ending it, as Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary General declared at the launch of a Network of Men Leaders in 2009. After the "walkathon", a men's programme with the objective of carrying out intensive gender-sensitive training for men was launched. **Jackie Paling APD Human Rights and the Status of Women**



SIGBI FEDERATION SUCCESSES RECORDED IN MARCH:

201 Reports: Funds raised: \$70 557 Women helped: 18,685 Girls helped: 11,433

