

SIGBI Programme Director's Blog February 2018

The end of January and the beginning of February has certainly been busy for the programme Team.

This time of year is usually associated with preparations for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and this year has proved to be no exception, but the process has been much more complicated for everyone.



Margaret Clark, APD for Advocacy, Rayner Rees, APD for Economic Empowerment, and I went to a CSW orientation day meeting in London in preparation for our input to the papers that will be discussed at the United Nations. The main theme this year being focused on rural women.

Margaret Clark is now in India working with clubs over there on Advocacy and assisting them in their work, at her own expense I hasten to add.



On 31st January I was in London meeting with the members of Child.org at their annual gathering. They are certainly working hard, not just in Meru but in other areas of Africa and on many child health projects.

APD for Health and Food Security, Rita Beaumont, attended a meeting on sexual and reproductive health on 2nd February on my behalf. The outcome from this meeting will be delivered to the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting



(CHOGM) in April this year and Margaret will once again be representing SIGBI at the meeting.



Kay Richmond, Chairman of UKPAC, and I attended a CEDAW (The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women) consultation meeting in Cardiff on 1st February. Once again the discussions and recommendations will be put forward to influence the action of our own Governments.

I have just returned from a White Ribbon Ambassadors Conference in Bradford, on 2nd February.

It was an interesting and thought-provoking day which made me even more committed to forming a partnership with them. Granted we do not have Michael Kaufmann in the UK but the team I met with today are equally as determined to promote the cessation of violence against women.

I must admit though it was a bit of a shock to be asked to be on the plenary panel at the end of the day, something I was not expecting.

Rest assured I mentioned Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland several times and promoted our work with Karma Nirvana and the spoon project as well as other areas that Soroptimists have been working on for so long.

So if you wonder just what the APD's and Programme team do outside Conference the above may give you an insight into some of the work that goes on behind the scenes.



None of this would be possible though without your programme work – it is your action to educate, enable and empower women to achieve their full potential that gives us the information and statistics to back up our claims and I thank you most sincerely for all your work.

Barbara Dixon

Programme Director