



The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP

Minister for Women and Equalities

Secretary of State for Education

25 June 2025

Dear Ms Phillipson,

Advancing Gender Equality through Mandatory Gender Impact Assessments

Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland ([SIGBI](#)), a registered women's charity founded in 1934, is part of Soroptimist International, a global organisation formed in 1921, born out of the service movement. The organisation – which has consultancy status at the United Nations – focuses on empowering women and girls to achieve their full potential and works to eliminate barriers and discriminations that hinder women's progress. The charity does this through its 248 clubs throughout the UK, Ireland, Malta, Asia and the Caribbean – over 200 of which are in the UK – and currently has a total of nearly 5,000 members.

On behalf of SIGBI, I am pleased to share our position paper in recognition of the new International Day of Hope, 12th July 2025. SIGBI's hope is that government acts to embed Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) at the heart of UK policymaking.

Our Call to Action is to:

- Integrate GIAs in safety & security, justice and education policy making, as well as local governance service delivery as a first step.
- Recognise structural and regional inequalities that compromise the UK's SDG progress.
- Incorporate civil society insights into policy design and evaluation.
- Allocate investments in gender-disaggregated data collection and accountability mechanisms.

SIGBI proposes a coordinated reform led by the Government Equalities Office, involving the Ministry of Justice, Department of Education, Home Office, and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. HM Treasury would support this reform through Green Book revisions, including updated tools and templates for a gender-first approach to policy design (Annex 1).

Targeting ministries with cross-departmental influence and gender-relevant policy domains linked to SDGs, we believe, is the best strategic course of action. SIGBI asks that the government rethink its policy-making culture, especially in developing, discussing, and testing policies. Gender equality relies on new practices and procedures, which legal structures can then lock in and make consistent. Starting with pilot programmes that encourage departments to use GIAs more consistently will help build the habits, systems, and awareness needed for meaningful work. This will create conditions conducive to a formal legal requirement for GIAs, such as through a Statutory Instrument, ensuring any legal change is practical, impactful, and long-lasting.

The paper reflects the lived experiences of Soroptimist members who work to improve the lives of women and girls through voluntary action and advocacy. Our grassroots presence across the UK uniquely positions us to see firsthand the gaps and opportunities in current equality frameworks. The data we present underscores the need for consistent, systemic approaches to gender equality, which we believe will lead to greater economic growth and productivity.

Soroptimists in the UK believe the time is right for bold, coordinated action. As leaders in government, you are in a unique position to advance this agenda. I respectfully invite you to review SIGBI's recommendations and I welcome the opportunity to meet with your representatives to explore ongoing collaboration.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to equality. I and Soroptimists across the UK look forward to contributing further to this important work.

Yours faithfully



Ruth Healey
President

Cc:

The Rt Hon Angela Raynor MP
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer

The Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Secretary of State for the Home Office

The Rt Hon Shabana Mahmood MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary of State for Justice

Sarah Owen MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Committee