

## APD REPORT 2014 FOOD SECURITY & HEALTH

BARBARA DIXON

It doesn't seem five minutes since I was trawling the database to prepare last year's annual report for Food Security & Health but it is and yet it still gives me a great sense of pride when I go through the reports you have submitted and to hear about the fantastic work that is being done throughout our Federation. It is very humbling to realise what members of SIGBI do in an effort to improve the lives of women and girls.

Only 5 countries have reported any work in my field. This may be due to not working on Health or food Security issues or just that the work has not been recorded. I know you are probably tired of hearing this, but if you don't write it down it hasn't happened.

We all know that there is more going on in Federation than is reported and we also know that there are difficulties in accessing the database at times, but I cannot stress enough the importance of letting us know what you are doing. Without the reports we cannot tell the UN what we are doing and you cannot be considered for a best practice award.

What has been done though is truly amazing.

I will start with our BIG project. We are coming to the end of our 3 years working on Birthing in the Gambia, and although slow to start the final result has been well worth waiting for. The innovative ideas that have produced funding for this project and the focus on the day of action have proved just what Soroptimists can achieve when they set their minds to it.

Over 70 reports have been placed on the database for this project in the last 12 months with \$65,000 recorded when I prepared this report. I will not go into greater detail as I know Rita will be covering this aspect of programme, but it would be remiss of me not to congratulate everyone for their work.

The conference motion on Endometriosis has also been slow to get off the ground, but this is often the case. In the first year we have a trickle of information, but this generally becomes a torrent in the second year and I will be doing an update on Endometriosis during Conference.

### **FIND REPORT FROM AFRICA**

The work of clubs on health projects has been varied and extensive with well over 100 reports to consider and some will be featured during conference.

Clubs within the UK are often involved with supporting specific disease organisations, such as Osteoporosis, M.S. and Gynaecological problems, whilst other countries in SIGBI tend towards general medical health, outreach clinics and safer births.

Basic medical care is often unaffordable and many clubs have worked to redress this imbalance.

**North Bombay** supported a free medical check-up for 180 economically under privileged children

**Pune Metro East** set up an outdoor patient clinic was initially once fortnight which then became a weekly routine.

### **Kodaikanal**

Every week 15-20 children of an orphanage are given a complete and thorough physical and dental check up. The girls are specially talked to regarding menstrual issues and personal issues with a subtle tilt towards any issues of abuse. Free medicines as required are provided.

### **Jersey**

Support the Jersey Nyalkinyi Communities charity in raising money, etc. to support villages in remote parts of Kenya. They support the villagers in sustainable planting, raising chickens for egg production, collecting and taking out to Kenya medicines that are almost out of date but are safe for use, and securing funds for improving health related issues.

### **The Republic of Ireland**

They continue their sterling work on raising awareness of mental health issues and suicide prevention. The amount of work done on this project cannot be truly appreciated from the database alone.

### **South Africa**

Support Tateni Home Care Nursing Services is a NGO working in Mamelodi to the east of Pretoria. They have healthcare-givers who visit ill patients (mainly suffering from HIV/Aids and/or TB) at their homes to ensure proper health care and support for family members, including food parcels where needed.

They also Hosted an evening of awareness raising and information sharing on women's health issues.

### **S.I Arusha Tanzania**

is implementing a project in a Health Centre on the outskirts of Arusha town. Mkono Health Centre is owned by the Government through Arusha City Council .In 2013, the Arusha members agreed to engage a project on safe delivery of babies in the maternity ward. There is a lack of proper infrastructure and facilities for the deliveries

### **United Kingdom**

Many UK clubs work with friendship links or other clubs abroad to facilitate their projects one example being S.I. Richmond and Dales working with S.I. Harare on a birthing project . Many rural women in Zimbabwe do not attend hospital to give birth. This increases the risk of maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity. The traditional birthing attendants' project was set up by the government to give village women basic training in supporting other women in childbirth. SI Harare has undertaken ongoing support of this project by providing equipment and they have also paid for the birthing attendants to have training in basic life support skills, and S.I. Richmond helps fund the project

### **Dungannon in N. Ireland**

Support Charlene's Project a charity based in Northern Ireland, in memory of Charlene who died of cystic fibrosis She had fundraised and now 2 schools have been established in Uganda from her work and community programmes established which deliver health advice to the local women

### **SI Tynedale**

Dealt with Problems of Temptation involving the misuse of alcohol, the internet, and substances. There are country wide issues from alcoholism, social media misuse and substance abuse. Educating ourselves and raising awareness on a regional wide basis to demonstrate such problems exist at all levels of our society.

### **Beckenham and District**

Worked on FGM collecting and collating data for a regional project BARBARA DIXON

### **Thames Valley**

Decided to knit blankets and woolly hats to keep elderly people warm as one of the many aspects of their Kori project.

### **Beckenham and District**

Addressed the lack of accommodation for people in an area of Kenya as a result of illness /death in the family sometimes as a result of Aids working within the RUSH community in Kenya ... reaching the unreached through self-help. The development of the community, including schooling and enterprises etc has been supported for many years by a school where a club member works and by the UK Charity RUSH UK.

### **Kenilworth and District working with SI Cardiff**

Support Friends Of Sick Children in Malawi with their work in helping to create and develop essential health care for Malawi's children. There is no primary health care in Malawi. Half the population are children. Life expectancy is about 25 years less than in the UK. To support a nurse based at the Queen Elizabeth Centre hospital in Blantyre.

The work in the field of health is varied as can be seen from the few examples I have given.

Much of the work done under the blanket of food security involves the support of various food banks, especially in the UK reports where 61 reports have been filed.

**It is a sobering thought that in the UK , with all its state benefits and social policies an increasing number of people are unable to feed themselves or their families due to increased financial pressures.**

**Imagine what it is like in developing countries where adverse climate, archaic laws and lack of education result in abject poverty with no government assistance available.**

Some clubs are able to work with partners and friendship links to reduce food deficits abroad.

#### **London Chilterns**

Work with a club in Lima to support street children, encouraging them to attend a centre where they receive food and education as well as basic health care

#### **Bilston & District**

Work with Friendship Link SI North Jamaica in raising money for water tanks to help poor families to give access to clean water.

**St. Austell & district and many other clubs** from the UK support Mary's meals, providing locally sourced food for children at school. These children would often go hungry if they did not get the food at school, making learning difficult.

This is a wonderful example of the cross over in the programme areas of our work, covering food security and health, education and social and economic development.

#### **Windermere & District**

The PIES charity require funds which are sent every month to continue to provide food and education to children in Swaziland

It is impossible to highlight all the examples of good work being carried out within the field of Food security and Health, and I apologise for those I have not mentioned.

I will close by once more thanking you all for the work you have done and especially for sharing it with us by entering it on the database.

Barbara Dixon

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