

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR SUE BIGGS, PRESIDENT MARGARET
OLDROYD FEDERATION TEAM, AND DELEGATES TO THE FPAC
MEETING.....

NAMASTE and Good morning.

I am privileged to present the Friendship link Coordinator's report for the period Oct 2013- Oct2014.

Some facts and figures.

In this period, 28 new links have been formed, less than the previous year, but encouraging nevertheless. Its important to note that 12 of these were formed with Clubs in Africa, and I mention this with an eye on the future Africa Federation starting with strong Friendship Links . The opportunities that these links afford to clubs in a new Federation giving them the true international dimension from the word go.

3 Friendship Link Newsletters were sent out to Clubs –. I began with 6 pages in 2013 and now its double digits.Thank you all for your contributions, the wonderful photographs and suggestions.In the last Newsletter I have set a challenge for members and clubs to write in about their experiences of the Grant of Friendship .No prizes for best contribution but yes they will be published in the newsletter.

Now the Friendship Link Register Forms. I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to send in the forms by March every year. This updates the Friendship Link Database as well as the Annual SIGBI Directory. I have proposed to make the form even more simpler – so the next form that will come to you in Jan 2015 will be only one page. This year I recieved only 127 forms and that's from more than 355 Clubs in this Federation.

With the guidance of the Organizational Development Director –the Easy Stage guides were spruced up and along with the A good Friendship Link Correspondent are there on the Friendship Link page of the Members section on the sigbi website.

Friendship Links in their own way contribute to the President's theme 'Women Leading Change Together.' Their joint efforts focused on Soroptimist goals have seen many a change whether through awareness or action and even advocacy. . The selection of Best Practice Awards to joint projects at the last Conference gives a great deal of inspiration to Clubs to work together sans borders.

The following is a compilation of Programme Action, joint, shared, or supported by Friendship Link Clubs, in and outside SIGBI Federation. This information is garnered from the Friendship Link Register Forms .

As 127 Friendship Link Register Forms were received which is half of the total number of Clubs in the Federation. Therefore it does NOT represent the Programme Action with Friendship Links of all Clubs in this Federation.

The joint projects are divided into the five focus areas of programme action. I have randomly selected some shared projects under each of these areas.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

SI Bangalore- for their Bead to Lead project SI Nykobing Falster-Denmark came over to teach and provide material for the jewellery making project. Members help to sell the jewellery for underprivileged girls.

SI Kenilworth and District and SI Cardiff – raised funds for the training of a nurse in Malawi.

SI Dundee -has provided the means to buy 2 cows for a family in the SI South Kolkatta project.

SI Middlesborough- bought and sold reusable bags from their link club SI Pune Metro East. The Bags project of that club gave temporary employment to women.

SI Eastbourne and District – have a joint knitting project with Si Townsville in Australia.

ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY

SI Rhyl and District were supported by their link **SI** Landdudno, along with local beekeeping agencies for the project Bringing back the Bees into the Community .

SI Anglesey - raised funds by accepting donations for Tsunamika dolls gifted by their link Club **SI** Pune Metro East. The funds went to help those affected by Typhoon Haiyan in the Phillipines

SI Bangalore provided Jeevodhaya Ashram a Solar Water Heater, which helped reduce heavy electricity bills. **SI** Land Van Waas, Belgium their link Club- contributed to this project.

SI Kenilworth and District were provided with Quiz on Environmental Issues by their by Friendship link **SI** Arnham Oost of the Netherland

Several Clubs in regions have come together to raise funds for Water Aid, **SI** **Pendleside** along with their link clubs in the region did it in a novel way- Every month – members contributed to a fund, whenever they had tea, coffee or alcohol! How interesting.

FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTH

SI Sheffield –support their reusable sanitary towel project of their very new link **SI** Masaka

Similarly-**SI** Bangor- Works with their link **SI** Cork to support Friends of Londiani Project, which supplies sanitary products for schoolgirls, enabling them to have continuous school attendance.

SI Barnstaple-supports **SI** Bulawayo with the Knickers for Knowledge project which provides sanitary protection to girls so they do not discontinue their education.

All these shared projects are toward hygiene as well as enabling girls to educate further.

SI Harare- receives funds from SI Richmond, SI Kidderminster and SI Kansas_USA for the training of the Traditional Birth Attendent students.

SI Arusha- is supported by SI Falkirk with funds for the Maternity Ward at the Mkonoo Health Centre

SI Edinburgh – sends small donations to assist a school for disabled children a project of their link Club SI Kiev.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

SI Bolton- supports 5 girls with their education at SI Kathmandu. Members of the Club communicate with the girls regularly.

SI Apapa-is supported by their link Club SI Carmarthen for the education of 3 students.

SI Aireborough along with SI Ellesmere Port and District support the education projects at SI Burdwan.

SI Brigend –funds for the education and the library of Chanaser –a project of SI Karachi Central.

SI Calcutta –continues to receive assistance for their project Hold my Hand from SI Olympic Rainforest in the USA.

SI Dundee – gives their support to SI Eldoret's Limbene Project

SI Gravesend- has contributed to bursaries of SI Sierra Leone for the education of girls

SI Selby – have encouraged members of SI Dnepropetrovsk Club in Ukraine to enhance their English language skills through emails and books. Selby has

roped in their German link Club SI Frankenthal to further support an orphanage in Dnepropetrovsk.

SI Winchester – have raised funds for the school building – a project of SI Kisumu.

VIOLENCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

SI Port Elizabeth –receives annual donations from SI Birkenhead for their work with the Thutuzela Centre for abused women and children.

SI Widnes – supports a children’s home with their link SI Bougas Bulgaria.

SI Pune Metro East – received support money for their gender sensitization Project One Billion Rise from their link SI Hobart-Tasmania. Their other link SI Truckee Meadows have also sent in a donation to enable the project to expand and continue.

SI Thames Valley and SI Weston-super Mare- have worked hard to eradicate FGM in Sierra Leone, saving more than 195 girls from the the FGM practice.

SUPPORT TOWARDS CAPITATION FEES

SI Medway and SI Mansfield together pay the capitation fees for SI Harare.

SI Lincoln and District have supported Si Kwe Kwe with capitation fee payment for the last 20 years.

SI Penrith and District – help SI Dhaka with half the payment of their capitation dues.

SI Aireborough and SI Ellesmere Port and District– together pay part of the capitation for SI Burdwan.

Friendly Activity

The following aren't projects as such but a creative way to cement Friendship Links or begin some.

1. SI Gravesend every year pays the delegate's fee, so that their link club SI Freetown member can attend the Conference.
2. SI Guernsey was helped by their link Club SI Stockport to make 300 dresses for Project Rhino in Africa.
3. SI Tamworth- had put together a CD for better running of Clubs. This was sent to their link SI Greenock, which proved very useful.
4. The International Bread Calendar started with 2 European Clubs and finally had 12 contributions from Clubs across 3 federations (4 from sigbi). The profits from the sale of the calendar went to a project of SI St Petersburg in Russia.
5. SI Winchester sent more than a hundred dresses to SI Banjul which is not their link. These are made by members, local school children girl guides and rangers.
6. A mail rerouted by Sally to me, from a Club in Russia- SI Voronezh . It said that their President was visiting England with a bunch of English language students. One of their stops was of course Stratford Upon Avon. Her request to meet some Soroptimists while they were on the visit. Several emails from me to them and to the Stratford Upon Avon Club resulted in a very warm welcome to the Russians, a Friendship Link between the Clubs, and post visit an exhibition of Shakespeare in their town.!

Thank you

Nisha Ghosh

Friendship Link Coordinator

SIGBI Federation