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*Front cover picture provided by Chora Chori, our partners for the Empowering Girls in Nepal Project.*
Foreword by Isobel Smith
Chairman of the Board 2019-2020

Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) is a registered charity (1179433) and company limited by guarantee (7058666).

It is a volunteer membership organisation and the Board is elected by, and accountable to, the members. The Board meets at least four times during the year. There are also four Standing committees: Finance, Membership, Programme and Organisational Development, and six working parties: Governance, Website, PR and Marketing, Partnerships, Patrons and Safeguarding. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the charity delivers on its aims and objectives is delegated to the Executive Officer.

Trustees have continued to keep the governance needs of the organisation under review and the current Board structure will change from 11 Board Members to 6 skills based Board Directors to increase the agility of the organisation. This year saw the Board undertake a skills based recruitment for two new Board Director positions of PR and Marketing and Governance who will join the new structure in October 2020.

Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Limited is a charity working to improve the lives of women and girls through its programme work. Working to the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals and the 5 P’s - People, Prosperity, Planet, Peace and Partnerships. Our volunteers undertake service, advocacy and action projects on the ground and fundraise to educate, empower and enable women and girls. We work throughout the United Kingdom, Anguilla, Bangladesh, Barbados, Grenada, India, Jamaica, Malta, Pakistan, Ireland, Sri Lanka, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks And Caicos. This is the last year that our membership includes Clubs in Africa, as the new Africa Federation will be chartered in the coming year. We congratulate our African sisters on their achievement.

SIGBI Ltd Trustees 2019-2020
Isobel Smith, President
Johanna Raffan, President Elect
Cathy Cottridge, Vice President
Sue Williams, Immediate Past President
Ruth Healey, Finance Director
Claire Bell, Membership Director
Kay Richmond, Programme Director
Judith Chaddock, Director Without Portfolio
Shirley Jones, Director Without Portfolio
Val Hills, Director Without Portfolio

Our Key Achievements 2019-2020:
• Increased Social Media presence with campaigns to support the UN Days and the activities of our volunteer members.
• The COVID–19 pandemic hit towards the end of the year and our members stayed connected with each other, working on projects in their local communities, supporting Care Homes, Refuges, Schools, Hospitals and much more.
• Launched a new website which I encourage you to visit to find out more about us and the volunteer opportunities www.sigbi.org.
• Soroptimist News, our in-house magazine, became an online publication, both as a page-turner and as an app on iTunes and Googleplay.

We promote either directly or by working with others:
• The advancement of education
• The advancement of health and saving lives
• The relief and prevention of poverty
• The advancement of good citizenship and community development
• The advancement of human rights throughout the world.

We use the Charity Commission’s Code to govern our activity.
Programme Action Overview 2019-2020

During this reporting year we have changed from the previous Programme Focus areas to using the 5Ps of the UN, for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- People - SDGs 1-5;
- Prosperity - SDGs 7-11;
- Planet - SDG 6 & 12-15;
- Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions - SDG 16;
- Partnerships for the Goals - SDG 17.

Reports using the Programme Focus areas at the start of the year were migrated to the 5Ps using an algorithm to enable consistency of reporting across the SDGs. Another significant area of change was the requirement to use specific beneficiary numbers and exact funds raised, from the ranges used previously. For this year, exact values cannot be reported; hence percentages of reports in each SDG are used. In future years we will be able to report more accurate and detailed data.

There were 2194 reports last year, 2142 this year. The analysis shows (Figure 1) that SDG3 (Health 42%) is the most popular with SDG 4 (Education 21%) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality 18%) following on.

We have used the 3Es (Educate, Empower, Enable) in line with Soroptimist International but have returned to including the 3As (Awareness, Advocacy, Action) since the 3Es cannot be delivered without the 3As. This shows (Figure 2) that Enable (86%) and Action (75%) are the most popular.

The Covid-19 pandemic arrived in the latter part of this reporting period and there are two reports included in these numbers - one supporting the local Healthcare Trust, the other the local Foodbank. Since then many more have been added and will be reported in the next Annual Report.

There will be more work for us to do given Covid-19’s effect on so many people worldwide, in particular on those least able to combat it. This stretches across all SDGs and highlights the inequalities which we have been trying to address. We will need to redouble our efforts and use SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) as a foundation for achieving all the others; in other words we need each other in order to achieve success.

As always, Programme Action depends on the activities in all our clubs everywhere; from the UK to Asia, The Caribbean and Malta. Thank you for your continued dedication to helping women and girls, from local to global, be the best they can be.

Reports on each of the 5Ps, from the Assistant Programme Directors, are on the following pages.

Kay Richmond, Programme Director
Our achievements towards the 5Ps

People

Key achievements:

- Many Clubs from across the Federation have been working on projects relating to menstruation from addressing period poverty in the UK in partnership with the Red Box Project, providing sanitary bags for school girls in Zambia, enabling women to make reusable sanitary pads in India or educating girls on menstrual hygiene in India and Trinidad and Tobago.

- Soroptimists from across the Federation continue to organise STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) projects in a variety of ways from supporting girls to undertake STEM education by offering bursaries/grants to organising STEM workshops, Robotics and coding challenges, Skirting Science and DigiGirlz 2019.

- Many Soroptimist projects are designed to educate and empower women with skills to enable them to gain employment such as SI Bangalore’s Vocational Training Centre – GARIMA, where computer skills, tailoring, saree tassel making, candle and soap making are taught. SI Bromley’s provision of essential quilting equipment to the Mongolian Quilting Centre, Ulaanbatar ensures that the programme of teaching, supporting and developing the skills for women from poor and challenging backgrounds can continue and grow.

Prosperity

Key achievements:

- Clubs continue to support women around the world by working with organisations which can provide loans to enable them to start their own businesses. These fair and ethical lending schemes help women entrepreneurs transform their lives by developing their business ventures. Lending alongside thousands of others is a powerful and sustainable way to create economic and social empowerment across the World.

- Clubs have continued their work promoting Fairtrade. The current theme is ‘she deserves Fairtrade’. The aim is to ensure that all farmers are paid fairly for their work and are able to earn a living income. The focus is on women farmers.

- Prosperity includes not just economic wellbeing. Other associated factors are happiness and health. Clubs have been involved with running or funding workshops designed to help children and young women build self confidence and learn new skills.
Peace covers SDG16, and it is heartening to see how clubs have adapted to this for their projects.

- "Peace begins with Me" was the clarion call of Soroptimists of several clubs who carried the message of the need for peace to school children. Soroptimists explained the importance of World Peace Day, which is so vital in these conflicting times.
- The Bromley Club joined forces with the campaign to Free Nasrin, and the Canterbury Club called for Amnesty International to write to the Saudi authorities to free Israa - both human rights activists imprisoned for speaking up.

Partnerships

Key Achievements:

- One club raised £5,300 for various charities by organising a fun day in partnership with the local Rotary club.
- Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery – clubs continue to work to raise awareness of the issues surrounding the victims and to provide support wherever possible.
- Support for women’s refuges throughout the UK continues and clubs organised/attended awareness events during the 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women. Two clubs have developed partnerships with their regional police forces to enable them to observe proceedings at the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts.
- Women in Prison – clubs continue to work on projects in this area and our partnership with the Prison Reform Trust is ongoing.
Benevolent Fund - Charity No: 211840

For the year ending 31 March 2020, the SIGBI Benevolent Fund has continued to operate, via regional trustees, to assist present and past Soroptimists with financial help. Over the twelve months 13 women were in receipt of discretionary grants totalling £62,894, an increase of £18,295 on the previous year. The Benevolent Fund is dependent on income from investments, contributions from members via membership fees, donations and legacies. In the past year the grants given have outweighed annual income by £20,136.

The Fund continues to offer help, totally confidentially, to those members in the United Kingdom and Ireland. This can vary from a one off payment for a needed piece of equipment, house repairs, or continuing financial help during job loss, or ill health.

During the year the Fund’s constitution was updated with the approval of the Charity Commission and is shown on their website.

For any further information please contact the Chair of the Benevolent Fund or your regional trustee.

Emergency Relief Fund Charity No: 211231

The Emergency Relief Fund is used to help those people in immediate need of primary relief due to disasters throughout the world. Individual Members may recommend that funds are provided for particular situations. The Trustees then consider the recommendations and where applicable the amount of the grant.

The operating protocol has been changed going forward and funds will only be sent to approved charities operating in the area where the disaster has taken place.

Disbursements for 2019-2020 were:

- £2,000 Victims of Cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe
- £1,000 Flooding in Nepal
- £2,000 Childline Zimbabwe
- £2,000 SI Australia Bushfire Recovery Support Appeal
- £2,000 Syrian Refugees
- £9,000

Diamond Education Grant - Charity No: 1139668

Income for the year was £32,119, made up of donations, legacies, investment income/other income. Expenditure for the year was £15,468, to include the grants made and overheads incurred. There were 27 grants awarded, from 428 applications received. The total amount allocated in grants was £14,105.

"With the £500.00 grant, I paid for my second year tuition fees, bought thermometer, blood pressure machine and stethoscope which am using during class and field work practicals." Atupele Chikakuda, Malawi
Company Details

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About Us
Soroptimists educate, empower and enable women and girls to improve their lives.
Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) has 6,000 Members in 266 Clubs operating across 18 countries in Asia, the Caribbean and Europe.
The word “Soroptimist” is a combination of the Latin words “soror” meaning Sister and “optima” meaning best - so we want the best for women.
Soroptimists implement projects across the world, advocate at local, national and international levels and enable women and girls to reach their full potential.

Vision
Women and girls will achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.

Mission
Soroptimists transform the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities.

Founded in 1921, Soroptimist International is a worldwide service organisation for women. We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, realise aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.