

I left home on 7th November headed for Malta and the Annual SIGBI Conference and finally got home on 27th to a cold, damp house. The heating had tripped during my absence and storms had forced rain into our lounge, wetting carpet, curtains and furniture.

I had a really good moan whilst we sorted things out, lit a fire, restarted the boiler and made ourselves a drink.

As we sat in front of the fire with our hot chocolate my despair fled and I berated myself for my initial selfishness - I had a home, a roof over my head, the means to warm and feed myself and security within that home.

How easy it is to feel sorry for ourselves when our usual comforts are taken away, however briefly. I became annoyed with myself as I thought of what I had just experienced on my travels.

The Malta Conference highlighted the amazing work being carried out by clubs all over our Federation to improve the lives of women and girls and "Pink by the Pool" raised over 1,000 euros for Breast Cancer - what a way to have fun!

From Malta I travelled to Greece where the financial and refugee crises are causing many to live in poverty with little hope on the horizon.

From Greece I returned to the UK and drove straight to Solihull for a meeting of the UK Programme Action Committee (UKPAC), once more hearing of the sterling work being carried out across the Regions under the UKPAC banner.

I am so proud to be a small part of such a wonderful team of women - let's spread the word, increase our membership and carry on with the good work.

Barbara Dixon
Programme Director

World Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) 27 January, is a national commemoration day in the United Kingdom dedicated to the remembrance of those who suffered in The Holocaust, under Nazi Persecution, and in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. It was first held in January 2001 and has been on the same date every year since. The chosen date is the anniversary of the liberation in 1945, by the Soviet Union, of Auschwitz concentration camp; the date also chosen for the International Holocaust Remembrance Day and some other national Holocaust Memorial

Days. The theme for 2017 is:
'How can life go on?'

The horrendous crimes against humanity committed during the Holocaust are never forgotten. From 1941 to 1945, Jews were systematically murdered in the deadliest genocide

in history. Adolf Hitler's Nazi Germany and its collaborators killed about six million Jews. The victims included 1.5 million children and represented about two-thirds of the nine million Jews who had resided in Europe.

HMD's Statement of Commitment is a series of pledges adapted from the Stockholm Declaration which was first announced in 2000 at an international conference on Holocaust education, research and remembrance and can be used as part of commemorative events. The Statement states that it recognises the Holocaust was unprecedented, that it believes it must have a permanent place in collective memory; ensuring that future generations understand the causes and consequences of the Holocaust. It states that it values the sacrifices made to protect or rescue victims and recognises that humanity is still scarred by the evil that was the Holocaust.

It is essential to understand that all of those involved in the Holocaust were human beings. Reflect, review and consider today's challenges, humanitarian issues and the theme of HMD 2017, "How can life go on?"



World Laughter Day

Turning to a totally different 'world day' in January - World Laughter Day on 10 January. The first celebration of World Laughter Day was in 1998 in Mumbai, India, and was arranged by Dr. Madan Kataria, founder of the worldwide Laughter Yoga movement. He was inspired to do this in part by the facial feedback hypothesis which states that facial movement can influence emotional experience. For example, an individual who is forced to smile during a social event will actually come to find the event more of an enjoyable experience.

The celebration of World Laughter Day is a positive manifestation for world peace and is intended to build up a global consciousness of brotherhood and friendship through laughter. The day is now celebrated worldwide and its popularity has grown exponentially.

Don't forget - a smile is the same in any language and is the shortest distance between two people.

I challenge you to watch this [video](#) and see if you can get through it without smiling!



Margaret Clark - APD Advocacy

Dry January

Dry January sees one of the biggest social movements in the UK with 1 in 6 Britons taking part. It is becoming one of the fastest growing charity challenges around.

Alcohol abuse across our Federation impacts negatively on the lives of women and girls and will hinder the success of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the following ways:



- SDG 1 No Poverty - Alcohol can push people into poverty for generations.
- SDG 2 Zero Hunger - In some low- and middle-income countries, more is spent on alcohol than on education, health care and healthy food.
- SDG 3 Good Health and well-being - Alcohol affects the health and well-being of the alcoholic and their entire family.
- SDG 4 Quality Education - In many deprived and vulnerable communities, children bear a disproportionate burden and alcohol does play a tremendous role.
- SDG 5 Gender Equality - There is a strong relationship between alcohol and domestic abuse, partner violence and sexual assault.
- SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation - Over 40% of all people without improved drinking water live in sub-Saharan Africa, alcohol production is a threat to water security as the water footprint of both wine, and beer is horrible.
- SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth - Alcohol is a significant risk factor for absenteeism and in the UK 37% of workers admits going to work with a hangover.



- SDG 10 Reduced inequalities - Inequalities in alcohol-related harm exist based on factors including economic status, education, gender, ethnicity and place of residence.
- SDG 11 Sustainable cities and communities - In England, Wales half of all incidents of alcohol-related violence take place in or around pubs and clubs.
- SDG 12 Responsible consumption and production - Alcohol production is jeopardizing natural resources, especially water.
- SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions - Alcohol violence affects physical, mental and sexual health. It considerably burdens the public health system and other public sectors, making it a major sustainable development issue.
- SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals - Independent science shows that employing evidence-based alcohol taxation measures reaps benefits across 10 out of 17 SDGs.

Together we can make a huge difference to the lives of those affected by alcohol. SI Bolton support Street Angels, which is a charity that supports young women who have had trouble after a night out in town.

SI Richmond and the Dales have focused on domestic abuse precipitated by alcohol and SI Barry has raised awareness of the health and safety risks of over indulgence in alcohol especially among young women.

Through project focus on alcohol abuse, we can support the lives of women and girls and help to ensure the success of the SDGs through action and advocacy.



Rayner Rees - APD Economic Empowerment

Federation Programme Team



Barbara Dixon
Programme Director



Jan Hemlin
APD - Education



Rita Beaumont
APD - Food Security/Healthcare



Margaret Clark
APD - Advocacy



Nisha Ghosh
APD - Violence/Conflict Resolution



Naina Shah
APD - Environmental Sustainability



Rayner Rees
APD - Economic Empowerment