

International President's Appeal - 10th December



Although we are nearing the end of the year it's a time many Soroptimists will be renewing their campaign about domestic violence and violence against women in general by supporting the [16 Days of Activism](#) from 25th November to 10th December.

What is the 16 Days of Activism?

The 16 Days of Activism Against Woman & Child Abuse is an important opportunity to raise awareness and call for changes at an international, national and local level, to make women and children safe from abuse.

The decision to make the event span from 25th November to 10th December was deliberate in order to include three more major events: [International Human Rights Defenders Day](#) (29th November), [World Aids Day](#) (1st December) and the anniversary of the [Montreal École Polytechnique Massacre](#) (6th December). This is to highlight the connection between human rights and domestic violence.

Many clubs will be working on projects to highlight each of these days as an individual event and of course the [December 10th Appeal](#) has a special and different meaning for Soroptimism as the International President's Appeal is often supported on this day, on this occasion supporting Nepal.

The huge earthquakes suffered by Nepal brought a flood of support to the country, but many of the problems existed before the environmental disaster. Poverty, lack of education, lack of women's rights, domestic violence - all issues that were made worse when homes and families were destroyed, leaving many women and children even more vulnerable to the unscrupulous such as traffickers.

However you work in these areas, whatever you do, you will have an impact on the victims and I look forward to seeing the projects undertaken to highlight this important part of our calendar.

Barbara Dixon
Programme Director



During December, many of our clubs will support our [International President's Appeal](#), which seeks to Educate, Empower and Enable women and girls in Nepal to overcome adversity, and develop leadership skills that will in turn benefit entire communities.

The first project supported is [The Australian Himalayan Foundation](#) and its Teacher Training & Quality Education Programme.

The second project is proposed by [SI Truckee Meadows](#) and works to remove the barriers to education for women and girls in Nepal.

The [Tharu Women's Project](#) is the third project to be supported by the Appeal. Developed by SI Oita-Midori, Japan, it aims to provide literacy opportunities to 200 women.



These first three projects alone will provide access to education and livelihood for at least 200 women and girls. By meeting or exceeding the donations from previous appeals, we will increase access to education for more than 1,000 women and girls. How many depends on our fundraising success!

There are a further 23 projects for consideration that have been submitted by clubs across all federations and these include three from our Federation supporting women's education and economic empowerment, teacher training and education scholarships. November and December will be busy months for us including our [Malta Conference](#) so keep up the good work and see you in Malta.

Rayner Rees - APD Economic Empowerment

Abolition of Slavery - 2nd December

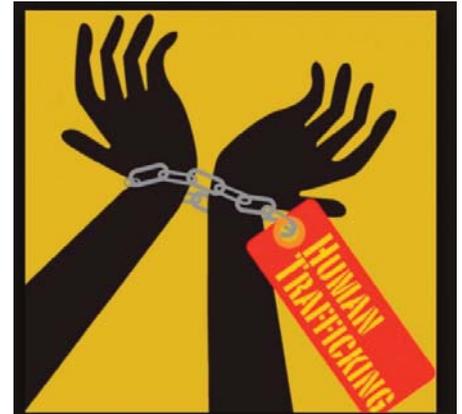
On this International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, let us resolve to use the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a road map for stamping out the root causes and freeing all enslaved people around our world. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon



Slavery that exists in modern times comes under a variety of guises and this includes:

- **Forced Labour** - in domestic servitude, the construction industry, the food and garment industry, the agricultural sector and in forced prostitution.
- **Child labour** – which goes against the UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child *"the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development."*
- **Trafficking** – which is the trafficking in persons and means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion for the purpose of exploitation.

The UK is leading the way in establishing regulation on slavery. The [Modern Slavery Act](#) forces large UK and international companies that supply goods or services within the country to disclose what measures they are taking to remove slavery from their global supply chains. At a domestic level, high-profile incidents of slavery frequently occur in the UK in sectors such as agriculture and the service industry. However, the recent creation of a government taskforce to train the police to identify and investigate slavery-related crimes was a key factor in the country's strong performance in the index's enforcement pillar, which inched it into the 'low risk' category. (The EU generally is in the medium risk category).

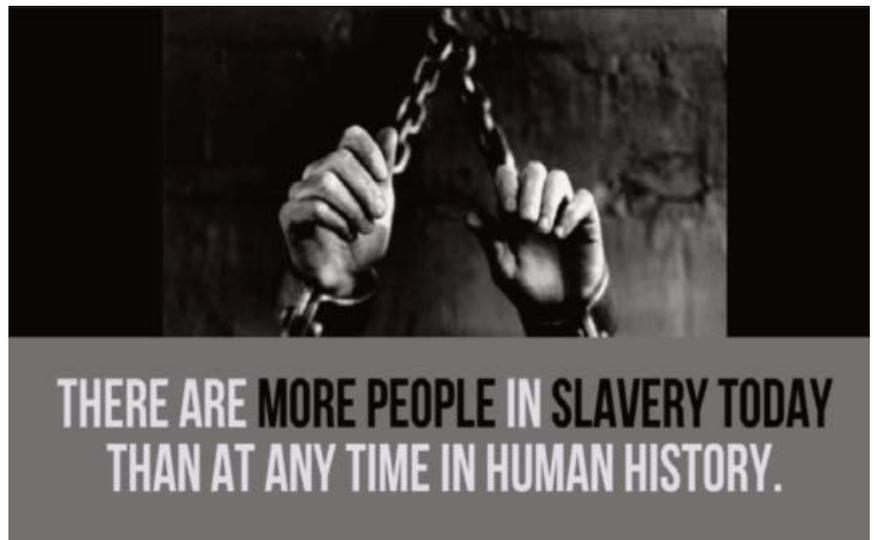


Signs of slavery are often hidden, making it even harder to recognise victims around us. Whilst not exhaustive, here is a list of some common signs, which we need to be aware of:

- Physical appearance
- Isolation
- Poor living conditions
- Few or no personal effects
- Restricted freedom of movement
- Unusual travel times
- Reluctant to seek help

We know what to look for but how can we be sure that we are right? None of us can honestly say that the clothes we buy have been ethically sourced. Only today (24th October) Marks & Spencer has used a source that employs low paid workers and last week I bought a coat from another company that must have used a factory with low paid workers when the quality and workmanship for £25 is unbelievable! Then if I had not bought it, maybe those workers would have received nothing. It is a dilemma!

This is not an easy area to write about as it is vast and ongoing but it is gratifying to look at our club programme activities and note how many of us are fully aware of the issues. These range for support for the [Purple Teardrop Campaign](#), holding and attending Modern Day Slavery forums, supporting 'Unchosen' in their use of film to fight Modern Day Slavery and to create greater awareness of the problem, Seema's project in India and visiting schools to raise awareness.



Rayner Rees - APD Economic Empowerment

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