

Programme Action Webinar

24 April 2021

Introduction:

This webinar was designed to seek the views of soroptimist leaders (Country representatives in the Federation Programme Action Committee, Regional PA Officers across the UK and Federation Councillors) about the future of Programme Action (PA) whilst also recognising that membership and development are essential to the success of PA and the organisation. We cannot have one without the others. Thus, the presentations covered these three areas in order to spark off discussions in the breakout rooms. Associate Programme Directors (APD) and the Chairman of the UKPAC facilitated the discussion groups/breakout rooms.

The three presentations are available at:

1. Programme Action - Kay Richmond, Federation Director of Programme (FDP)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0uz73l7hS8>

2. Membership - Chevonne Agana, Federation Director of Membership (FDM)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DescWL14q-Q>

3. Growth Plan/Development Advocate - Dishy Attwood

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j51o8ewam2E>

These are also available in the membership section of our web site as .pdf documents with speaking notes at <https://sigbi.org/members/programme-webinar-24-april-2021/>.

Feedback from breakout rooms, collated:

Programme Action

Clubs usually carry out projects ranging from ones in their own locality to regional, national and international. Some clubs focus only on local ones whilst others extend their interests more widely.

There was discussion about what attracts younger people - some thought only local projects would do so whilst the evidence more widely is that international, particularly our connection to the UN, is more attractive.

Focussing on women and girls is essential as this is our remit but ignoring men and boys means that we will not be able to effect culture change which is essential when addressing, for example, all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

- PA project form - the current form is easy to use but it is worth completing the text sections in the word format document (See Appendix 1) available at <https://sigbi.org/members/programme/>. Before completing the form it is helpful to read this together with a guide to entering projects at <https://sigbi.org/members/files/Completing-the-Programme-Report-Forms.pdf>.

However, some have difficulty in choosing an appropriate 'P' and 'SDG/s'. See

Appendix 2 and the help available on the UN SDG web sites at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

and

<https://dashboards.sdindex.org/profiles>.

Template examples - attendees thought that a series of completed examples for each 'P' would be helpful. These will be drafted by each APD and shared with Programme Action Officers across SIGBI.

Goods or money - There was some debate about the wisdom of sending goods or money abroad with advocates for both. FPD Kay believes that sending goods is, in the long term, harmful and less helpful than funds. There is research evidence to support this view^{1, 2, 3, 4}. Sometimes sending goods can lead to the development of enabling women and girl beneficiaries to become self-reliant if, for example, sending school uniforms for children can then lead to their mothers learning how to make them, after training and provision of equipment and materials.

Federation/International SIGBI project - There was some discussion about a future SIGBI project and the link to the SI project, which is currently the Road to Equality programme. Some were in favour of a SIGBI/Federation project, others less certain as there are 4 levels (local, region, SIGBI and SI) of PA to support. Delegates were advised that the matter is under consideration by the Board currently.

Partnership - be ambitious. Link with local businesses, NGOs and others, for example, ask them to sponsor a young person to become a Soroptimist. Building genuine links can extend our reach and attract new members in all our work.

The UN - there was some doubt about the benefit or not of being linked to the UN. The feedback from delegates who had attended the virtual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65) this year was that they had learned a lot about the problems faced by women worldwide, possible solutions and felt that they would be able to apply that knowledge to work within SIGBI. The Convention to End Discrimination of all Women (CEDAW) is poorly understood - not all SIGBI countries have signed and/or ratified it⁵. For a helpful explanation of its provisions see the links to YouTube at Appendix 3.

Membership

Making it easier/speedier to set up clubs - a comparison of the time it takes for us to approve new clubs against that taken by other organisations such as Inner Wheel shows that we are considerably slower and some potential members lose interest during this time. Can we speed up our processes?

Capitation fee waiver - this was discussed and the recently introduced policy of delaying fees for the first year for new clubs was welcomed.

¹ <https://odi.org/en/events/cash-transfers/>

² https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/-gender/documents/publication/wcms_233599.pdf

³ <https://www.alnap.org/membership/members/the-cash-learning-partnership-calp>

⁴ <https://www.calpnetwork.org>

⁵

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_parties_to_the_Convention_on_the_Elimination_of_All_Forms_of_Discrimination_Against_Women

One of the groups mentioned modernising the organisation perhaps by offering internships and mentoring opportunities for young people and potential members.

PR and Marketing

Publicity within and without the soroptimist world - some members expressed concern that older members are disenfranchised by the increasing use of IT. However, others felt that the use of zoom, for example, had helped some members unable to attend face-to-face meetings to join in again. Given our current ageing membership, how we involve all members needs careful consideration.

Media training - can this be offered regarding use of blogs, social media and the press more widely? Some clubs are able to get regular pieces in their local newspapers, whilst others find it impossible to break through where the local press also has a national focus (e.g. The Western Mail in Cardiff). We need to develop training on the use of and engagement with traditional media and social media.

The future:

Arising from these contributions we should:

- 1) Focus on women and girls in our projects. Other projects without this focus can be undertaken but not reported on the database. This does not mean the exclusion of men and boys where that is relevant within the community setting where, for example, community attitudes need to be addressed, such as for FGMC.
- 2) Redesign the PFRF form in WORD format so that the text boxes only are used when designing a project and in drafting the report; see Appendix 1.
- 3) Examples of good project reports should be available with templates for use by clubs - to be developed by the Federation Programme Action Team which includes the APDs and, hopefully, representatives from our three clusters of Europe, Asia and the Caribbean.
- 4) Partnerships with other organisations and businesses where appropriate are to be encouraged but these need to be two-way and not just be financial contributions.
- 5) We need to increase our involvement with decision makers such as governments whether local, national or international.
- 6) Enable wider understanding of our consultative status with the UN and the importance of CEDAW - see Appendix 3. We need to explain why this is important to all of us.

Appendix 1 - PFRF text boxes:**Step 2 – The Story of your Project . . .**

Your project should demonstrate how the lives of women and girls have been improved through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities. Use these words where possible in the write up below. Overwrite the words already in the boxes:

12. Please enter a concise summary of your project below, so that it could be used in publicity material.*

Type a summary of your report. This should give all the salient information about the project – the Charity helped, what that charity does, how the lives of women and girls were improved by this project and if applicable how much was raised and what the funds raised would finance. The information provided should be able to be extracted in its entirety and used, for example, in Soroptimist News.

500 characters (approx. 80 words)

13. Why did your Club/Region/NA/Network choose this project? What issue did you tackle with this project?*

What was the reason that your Club chose this Project? It may be that it is an issue close to your Club President's heart, or you may have had a speaker on the subject and decided to support it for that reason.

We want to see:

- The project has been researched and an action plan put in place - including reviewing and evaluation
- There are clear SMART objectives:-specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time related

The project responds to an identified need and focuses on women and girls.

700 characters (approx. 120 words)

14. What did the project involve?*

What did your Club actually do in support of this project? What event(s) did you hold to raise funds? Did the project involve hands on service such as packing toilet bags for your local refuge or volunteering at the local food bank? Please say if it involves club members and is inclusive of other clubs/friendship links/organisations where appropriate.

700 characters (approx. 120 words)

15. What was the result of this project?*

How were the lives of women and girls improved as a result of this Project? Were the outcomes of benefit to the recipients? Have the outcomes promoted Soroptimist aims and objectives?

Appendix 2:

SDG No,	SDGs	5 Ps
1	No poverty	People
2	Zero hunger	People
3	Good health & wellbeing	People
4	Quality Education	People
5	Gender Equality	People
6	Clean Water & Sanitation	Planet
7	Affordable & Clean Energy	Prosperity
8	Decent Work & Economic Growth	Prosperity
9	Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Prosperity
10	Reduced Inequalities	Prosperity
11	Sustainable Cities & Communities	Prosperity
12	Responsible Production & Consumption	Planet
13	Climate Action	Planet
14	Life Below Water	Planet
15	Life on Land	Planet
16	Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	Peace
17	Partnerships for the Goals	Partnerships

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

Appendix 3 - CEDAW:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rI8INB-XMIk&list=TLPQMjkwNDlwMjFyh1Qto10mig&index=1>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBdDB5PKrmk&list=TLPQMjkwNDlwMjFyh1Qto10mig&index=2>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umETapJ4b8o&list=TLPQMjkwNDlwMjFyh1Qto10mig&index=3>