



PROJECT OF THE MONTH

This month's winner is SI Cotonou-Gazelle (Benin) for their hands-on project "Don de draps à l'hôpital Cugo". Yet another efficient project, providing help where it's really needed and yielding immediate effects. The Programme Focus Objective of this project is no. 3: Ensure access to health care for women and girls.

Following the request from the hospital Hubert Maga de Cotonou, the Club made and donated 500 bed sheets to the maternity ward and delivery room of the clinic. Due to the unsanitary condition of the clinic, women often contracted infections after giving birth. The Club made 500 bed sheets with the SI insignia. The media was very keen on this activity and published it widely.

PFR no. 20220 records that female patients are now cared for in a clean and hygienic environment, reducing the number of infections. Club members dedicated 200-300 hours to the project! Interestingly, the PFR also states that this activity has brought the club members closer, proving once again that they have great potential to contribute to the betterment of their community!

Congratulations Cotonou-Gazelle!

May 28 – International Day of Action for Women's Health

The International Day of Action for Women's Health was declared in 1987 during a meeting of the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights. The purpose is to attract attention to gender discrimination linked to health issues and to call for action against health inequities, especially in the field of women's sexual and reproductive rights.

Maternal health is at the core of Soroptimist mission. Young and poor women who have the least access to health care services continue to die from complications of birth and because they lack access to contraception. Every day over 1000 women die in pregnancy or childbirth. It is presumed that one in three deaths related to pregnancy and childbirth could be avoided if all women had access to contraceptive services. Many low-income countries do not provide adequate services for women. As a result, many women find themselves with deficient pregnancy care or resort to unsafe abortions.

It is vital to inform women about modern and effective contraceptive methods to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies. Especially, establishing programmes to facilitate access to information and to afford contraception could significantly reduce the number of deaths. Planned pregnancies do not pose a lower risk in developing countries. A shocking more than ninety percent of maternal deaths occur in Africa and Asia, where the majority of women die from severe bleeding, infections, eclampsia, and obstructed labour or suffer complications from infections and disabling injuries such as obstetric fistula. To achieve success, it is important to initiate a process of capacity development in maternal care, and in particular strengthening of human resources such as having a trained midwife.



Soroptimist 2011

Have a glance at the workshop programme!

The International Programme Committee has worked hard on compiling an interesting programme and is therefore proud to announce that a list of workshops including descriptions is available on the following webpage (<http://www.si-montreal2011.org/workshops.html>). In addition, all the plenary speakers have now been unveiled and their photos and bios are available online (<http://si-montreal2011.org/speakers.html>).

July is approaching rapidly and soon it will be time to pack your suitcases for Montreal. Make sure you bring your sunglasses for perfect summer feeling in one of the numerous terrace cafés! Green Montreal with all its parks awaits you – so take your walking shoes. And of course your dancing shoes for the

International Jazz festival. Don't forget your good humour for the Just for Laughs festival. And last but not least, bring all your enthusiasm, spirit and joy in order to make the SI 2011 Convention an unforgettable event.

Soroptimist Project Matching

www.soroptimistprojects.org

This month, we feature the project: **“AM0001 – Preventive programme against cervical cancer in rural regions of Armenia”**. The SI Club of Yerevan in Armenia seeks to develop a cervical cancer prevention programme for socially vulnerable women and girls.

An increase in the number of cervical cancer cases in Armenia, prompted the Club to initiate this project. The goals are to improve prevention mechanisms, early diagnostic and treatment of cervical cancer, targeting especially women and girls from socially vulnerable groups. In addition, this project seeks to decrease the high rates of mortality associated with cervical cancer in rural areas of Armenia. **Funding needed: 3445 EUR**

To contribute to this project, please email: suba@soroptimisteurope.org

June 5 – World Environment Day

The purpose of World Environment Day which takes place every year on June 5th, is to raise awareness on environment and the necessity of its protection. This year's theme is “Forests: Nature at Your Service” and emphasizes the importance of taking action to protect forests and their ecosystems which are essential for our survival. For more information or to communicate on



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your own actions, please visit <http://hqweb.unep.org/wed/>



Join the EWL Call for a European Year 2013 to End Violence Against Women - Coalition!

The EWL has launched a massive campaign to raise awareness, advocate and take action to end violence against women. The objective of this campaign is to push the EU to take concrete and clear steps, on the legal, political and social levels, to deal with this issue that affects more than 45% of women across Europe. Join this coalition and send a clear message that violence against women is a violation of human rights and is no longer acceptable!

For additional information, please click on <http://www.womenlobby.org/spip.php?article1594>

SoroptiVoice Blog

As many of you will have seen, as part of the SI website's new look, the SI blog has been re-launched! The new SoroptiVoice Blog features guest Soroptimists, sharing the best of Soroptimism. These special guest blog spots explore, share and celebrate Soroptimist Voices from all around the world. The blog articles cover issues of personal importance, news and projects from clubs and Federations, and opinion pieces about global events.

SIHQ are busy lining up the schedule for the next six months and would love to hear from anyone who would like to contribute!

Please email Anna Aiken at hq@soroptimistinternational.org if you would be interested in featuring as a SoroptiVoice.

Monthly Focus

The May Monthly Focus is on the particular difficulties faced by women (and girls) in criminal justice systems around the world.

Visit <http://www.soroptimistinternational.org/monthly-focus1> to find out more about this issue, and to explore the different ways you can advocate for women in these difficult situations. Keep checking back as the page is updated weekly with new resources and ideas!

FEATURED WEBSITES:

www.guttmacher.org/

The Alan Guttmacher Institute provides a wide range of resources related to sexual and reproductive health. It monitors the evolution in the field of sexual and reproductive health, encourages public debate and promotes various programmes in that field.

www.wgnrr.org/



The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights is a southern-based network working for the respect of sexual and reproductive rights. Its main activities are advocacy campaigns, networking and capacity building of members.

www.womenonwaves.org/

Women on Waves is a Dutch NGO committed to the defense of women's human right and the prevention of unsafe abortion and unwanted pregnancies around the world. It helps women getting safe abortions, and leads various advocacy and raising awareness activities to promote a “safe and legal choice” for women.

www.who.int/en/



The World Health Organization is “directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system”. Among other topics, women's health is an area of concern to the WHO.