

DECEMBER 2017

# Soroptimist News

**SIGBI  
Conference  
in Cardiff:  
full report**

**SIGBI  
President  
visits  
South African  
Clubs**

**New SIGBI  
Club chartered  
in Gwarinpa,  
Nigeria**



- **SIGBI Conference 2018: is in Liverpool! Put it in your diary!**
- **Meru Women's Garden Project update – what are you doing for Meru?**
- **Soroptimist International 21st Quadrennial Conference in Kuala Lumpur!**

**Women inspiring action,  
transforming lives**

[www.sigbi.org](http://www.sigbi.org)



**Patricia Gatherum**  
Federation Project Liaison

At the Cardiff Conference I was delighted to inform delegates that the project is now well established and going well.

Agricultural training is in full flow. There are now five groups consisting of 194 women and four men. These groups were selected by Margaret Ikiera of CIFORD (Community Initiative For Rural Development), village chiefs and Elders because they showed commitment to attend and had greatest need. They will graduate next April.

They are being taught to be self reliant in agriculture and to grow in confidence. A financial tool helps Margaret to keep track on spending. She is also able to monitor attendance using an evaluation tool. These will enable future groups to continue this good practice.

As well as kale, onions and spinach, they are now producing seedlings in three nurseries, to sell during the rainy season as an alternative source of income. Some of these seedlings will eventually be planted on their own farms.

They have just received twenty 3,000 litre water tanks – all with Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland logo on them. These will mean that they will no longer have to walk many miles to wells. Another 20 are expected soon.

The women on this programme are very resourceful. When they heard that there were plastic chairs for sale locally, they bought some with their own money and they now use them to sit on at training sessions. They even rented them out for meetings during the election.

CIFORD continue to hold workshops for girls about the facts and dangers of FGM. These workshops teach the girls that FGM is not something you have to endure to become a woman. They have also held one for boys to help them to understand the training the girls are having and why.

We were delighted to be joined in Cardiff by our partners and friends, Amanjit Dhillon and Martina Gant from Child.org. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to get to know Soroptimists and vice versa. They also worked very hard on our stall updating everyone on progress in Meru and selling raffle tickets.

Programme Director Barbara Dixon made a beautiful patchwork quilt to be raffled at conference and this raised an amazing £640. Thank you so much to Barbara and to all those who helped us to sell the tickets.

Two years ago we set out to raise £152,716. To date you have raised £88,430. That leaves £63,286. We have 16 months to achieve our goal. I know we can do it. Last month alone you raised £10,000!

Please continue! ReMember even if you have not raised any money yet it is never too late.



**MERU WOMEN'S**  
GARDEN PROJECT

A partnership between  
**Soroptimist International**  
Child.org  
Charity No. 1118528

To support the Meru Garden Project, Anuradha Pradeep, President, **SI Bangalore** and Members decided to publish a special edition of a book written by its Member Dr. Prathiba Vinay, a renowned research scientist with a doctorate in Palynology. The book titled 'First Aid – by Nature' shows the easiest ways to prevent illness and promote positive well being. This edition is dedicated to the Meru Garden Project.

The sales of the book, some of them at the SIGBI Conference, raised £300 which President Anuradha presented to Patricia Gatherum and unsold books were given to the UK Ambassadors who will sell them in their Regions.

**SI Buxton** Members met at the Cavendish Golf Club, Buxton to hear the latest information on the Meru Garden Project. Jan Stoper Clark is taking queries from the Buxton Members to her meeting with the Kenyan representatives shortly. Celia Beesley, Ambassador for the North half of the project gave new figures.

**SI Bristol** (joint Presidents Lucy Swithinbank and Pauline Hurst) held a "Sausage Sizzle" and as part of the event they had a stand highlighting the project and sold produce from their gardens including jam. They have been fundraising throughout the year and will send the total donation next March.

**SI East London** held a Pan-African buffet lunch to raise funds for the Meru Women's Garden Project. Melanie Leivers, Club Programme Action Officer, opened the doors to her flat by the River Thames and welcomed Members, family and friends. £530 was raised for the project.

**SI Hamilton** has secured a deal with a Scottish company, JTS to help raise money for the Meru Women's Garden Project. Meru Herbs

is a woman-led co-operative working in the same community in Kenya as our Meru Garden Project. They grow and produce an all-natural organic range of really fresh tasting tomato sauces which have made Meru Herbs a popular Fair Trade favourite in Japan, Italy and the UK. JTS import Meru Herbs products to the UK.

For all orders for JTS Meru Herbs products placed by Soroptimist groups during the three year term of the project they will make a 10p per jar contribution to the project.

To view the range go to [www.jts.co.uk](http://www.jts.co.uk). Please say you are a Soroptimist when you send your email order - [Info@jts.co.uk](mailto:Info@jts.co.uk). Those who attended Cardiff Conference will have seen the JTS stall next to the Meru stall. Ellie Dawes from Child.org was there too, answering questions regarding the project.

**SI Skipton-in-Craven** Members were busy throughout the Strawberry season, serving wonderful strawberry and cream teas at the homes of a number of their Members, in aid of the Meru Women's Garden Project. On 30 July Sheila Tattersall ably assisted by fellow Soroptimist Barbara Sanderson and supported by their Soroptimists hosted a delicious Strawberry Tea and Raffle, which raised £206 for the project. In August, at the home of Helen and Peter Johnson, another Strawberry tea was held. Handmade jewellery and crafts were for sale, as well as quiz sheets put together by Helen. Helen and Anne Reeve were assisted by Jill Spensley and Helen's daughter and husband (Alice and Peter).

The event raised £242.50 which, in addition to the money raised at a Gardener's Question Time in May, brings the Skipton total to £1004.50!

