



SOROPTIMIST  
Best for Women

*Improving the lives of women and girls  
through programs leading to social and  
economic empowerment*

## SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS

# Key Messages FY17/18

## Our Organizational Change Strategies

In 2014, clubs were asked: What do you see as the biggest barriers SIA faces in increasing its collective impact? Clubs were clear—membership is by far the greatest barrier, followed by public awareness and financial concerns.

The SIA Board believes we have another barrier—program focus. We live in a world that requires distinction and specialization. “Improving the lives of women and girls” is just not specific enough.

The world should associate Soroptimist with economically empowering disadvantaged women and girls who transform themselves and the world around them through access to education.

This has led to our organization’s changes strategies of:

- Attracting more members
- Attracting more financial support
- Gaining more recognition, and
- Focusing on programs that economically empower more disadvantaged women and girls through access to education, so they may live their dreams.

## Working Together As One

Tomorrow calls for a different way forward. To realize our hopes and dreams for Soroptimist we must define our brand through our Dream Programs. There are an estimated 20 million disadvantaged women and girls in SIA’s 20 countries and territories who need our Dream Programs. To help more of these women and girls, and to define our brand, SIA regions, clubs and members must unite at a greater rate to deliver our Dream Programs. While programs are carried out by clubs on a local level, SIA is first and foremost a global organization. This requires us to see beyond our local communities and work as one on a common program focus. Our Dream Programs, which are designed to serve our 20 countries and territories and their myriad cultures and needs, provide this focus.

If we work as one, this is what success for SIA will look like: Soroptimist being better known for greater societal impact made by economically empowering more disadvantaged women and girls through our brand-unifying Dream Programs.

## **2021-2031 Big Goal: Survey Results and Next Steps**

As SIA prepares for our second century beginning in 2021, we are exploring ways to remain a vibrant, dynamic organization. We have been gathering information to understand the hopes, dreams, priorities and challenges of our clubs. We have learned we need a motivating Big Goal to guide, focus and inspire our future work.

In our 2015 Big Goal exercise, clubs identified *Invest in the Dreams of Women and Girls through Access to Education* as our Big Goal for 2021-2031. Clubs said this goal reflects:

- The service they deliver today, and
- The service they want to do in the future.

This Big Goal will require us to work differently.

Our 2016 Big Goal exercise identified what we would need to do and stop doing to meet this Big Goal. Improving the club experience to support recruitment and retention, and discontinuing long-standing activities and projects that do not directly support SIA's goal of increased collective impact, were the top strategies clubs tell us they will do to devote more resources to our Soroptimist Dream Programs

We still have three more years to create our plans, align our resources and build excitement for our next Big Goal. Look for more results of the second Big Goal survey and additional opportunities to engage in shaping our future!

## **Philanthropy and SIA's Ability to Deliver on Our Big Goal**

With all the progress that's been made in gender equality, women and girls continue to be at a disadvantage in every country throughout the world—simply because of their gender. The unfortunate truth is an estimated 20 million women and girls within SIA's territorial boundaries need our help.

Soroptimist's very own life-changing Dream Programs help to even the playing field by providing the resources for women and girls to achieve their true potential. We know the best way to lift up communities, nations and the world is to educate women and girls. Our Dream Programs empower disadvantaged women and girls by providing access to education. For SIA to have greater impact, we must exponentially increase the number of disadvantaged women and girls we serve with our Dream Programs. That requires our clubs to:

- Make Soroptimist their cause of choice
- Redirect club funds given to other organizations to our Dream Programs, and
- Support the investment in our capability to cultivate major gifts and engage corporations and foundations as partners in our cause.

By focusing our fundraising efforts in these areas, our additional investments will help disadvantaged women and girls live their dreams.

## **Online Clubs: A New Path for Membership Growth**

Chartering new Soroptimist clubs is essential for maintaining the vibrancy and future of our organization. Imagine how different the world would look with more Soroptimist clubs and the possibilities of what could be achieved. With each club focused on our Dream Programs, we could empower so many more disadvantaged women and girls to be their best and to live their dreams.

Ideally there could be a new Soroptimist in every city, province, prefecture, and territory throughout the world, but busy lives require new ways to approach how Soroptimist conducts business. An exciting alternative is to charter an online club or transform an existing club into an online club.

This type of club is one where club members choose to meet and conduct SIA mission-focused business primarily through technology (for example: telephone, video conferencing, social media). Delivery of Soroptimist's Dream Programs may be conducted as determined by the online club—using technology and/or face-to-face methods.

Online clubs are also connected to one specific region based on the SIA Procedures. Members have the opportunity to gather occasionally, participate in region face-to-face Dream Programs activities, and attend region meetings and other events.

The development of online clubs is a new and flexible way to engage members both locally and across borders. This model provides benefits to women who may not be able to participate in a traditional club and presents a new path for SIA membership growth.

## **Transitioning to the “S” Logo**

An essential part of good branding is having a consistent visual identity. Successful branding positively affects SIA's ability to increase our recognition, recruit member and fundraise outside of our organization—with the greater goal of increasing our collective impact through our Dream Programs. After working with several marketing firms, SIA introduced the modern-looking and professionally designed “S” logo in 2004. Since then, we have encouraged its widespread use throughout SIA.

After recognizing that some clubs have continued to use the SI emblem as their main visual identifier, the SIA Board decided at its January 2017 meeting to request all SIA regions, clubs and members to discontinue using the SI emblem. This pertains to all print and digital materials and products—including websites and social media sites, newsletters, flags, and road signs. Members may continue to wear their SI emblem pins, although SIA headquarters will no longer be producing them. A new line of SIA logo jewelry is being developed and will be available soon.

The SIA Board directed a long phase-in period for the full transition to the “S” logo, with a deadline of December 31, 2019.

## **Celebrating Soroptimist’s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

In October 2021, Soroptimist will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Anniversary observances will culminate with all four Soroptimist federations meeting together in the Oakland/San Francisco Bay (California) area on October 2-3, 2021 to celebrate Soroptimist’s ***Bright Past/Brilliant Future***. Work is underway to provide clubs with resources to celebrate our founding and the bright past of our first century. At the same time, clubs and regions will continue to provide input into our strategic direction to lead us into the brilliant future of our second century. New details will be shared as they become available.