

## Executive Summary

### Global Perspectives on Eradicating Poverty and Promoting Prosperity in a Changing World

Based upon the experience and knowledge of Soroptimists who implement transformative projects at the local, national and international levels, Soroptimist International submits the following recommendations to ensure that all people equally benefit from sustainable development and that 'no one is left behind'. Gender equality has a central, cross cutting role to play in realising the 2030 Agenda. As a fundamental requirement for sustainable development, gender equality must become a priority issue for governments.

As 2017 High Level Political Forum reviews the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, focusing on "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world", Soroptimist International (SI) wishes to contribute the views of its members and present examples of evidence from the grass roots of a leading non-governmental organisation. Whilst we have seen millions lifted out of poverty in recent decades, so many others have been left behind. Efforts to reduce poverty are unlikely to be sustainable if specific attention is not paid to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Women and girls constitute the majority of people living in extreme poverty, partly due to having less access to education, employment and other resources which bring about stability and advancement. SI believes promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is a central strategy for eradicating poverty, especially through access to education, financing, decision-making, formalized employment, child care, and protection from violence. In this report, SDGs 1, 2, 3 and 5 will be reviewed and evidence will be provided of direct action taken by SI at a grassroots level to achieve the SDGs, which is both sustainable and transferable across all communities.

### Sustainable Development Goals in Action

SI partnered with several organisation in Nepal, following the devastating earthquake in 2015 to educate, enable and empower the most vulnerable women and girls. There is no doubt the need for assistance is great in Nepal, poverty remains predominantly a rural phenomenon with 96% of the poor living in rural areas; 29% of the rural population fall below the poverty line versus 8% of the urban population<sup>1</sup>. SI has found that projects which focus on skills development and income generation for underprivileged women who endure economic hardship and have no social support in their communities yield the best results. Women and girls' vital role as leaders and agents of change needs to be recognised. Only through increasing education and economic opportunities for women can they reach their full potential and we can live in a truly equitable world.

Using schools as a community focal point, See Solar, Cook Solar, the SI President's Appeal 2013-2015 in Uganda mobilised a global civil network to transform rural communities, providing access to sustainable energy safe sanitation facilities and improved educational facilities. See Solar, Cook Solar addresses all three pillars of sustainable development, providing social, economic and environmental benefits.

In Papua New Guinea, many women live in isolated and rural communities, far from educational and medical facilities. By creating opportunities for healthcare clinicians to up-skill, particularly those in the rural and more remote areas of

the country, the outcome for pregnant women and their babies is greatly enhanced and is one way of assisting in the reduction of the high maternal mortality ratio. The Birthing in the Pacific training programme has equipped participants to effectively identify problem areas and high risks signs and indicators early in pregnancy for mothers and predict complications early so appropriate management of patient care is applied. What began as a project in response to MDG 5, has gone on to greatly contribute to several SDGs; this project has undoubtedly contributed to assisting health clinicians to save the lives of mothers and their unborn babies.

### Recommendations for Policy and Implementation

To effectively contribute to leaving no one behind in the achievement of SDG1 and related SDGs, policies need to be adjusted in different contexts. Through increasing support for inclusive social and economic empowerment, this can provide a holistic approach to tackling poverty. In line with the 2030 Agenda, governments need to provide comprehensive approaches across sectors, bringing together relevant ministries to addressing cross-cutting issues in a more coordinated manner. Government support should address multiple and interrelated forms of discrimination, and provide quality education and skills training to ensure the full, equitable and effective participation of all. Inclusive education strengthens democracy and allows greater access to information.

---

<sup>i</sup> [http://www.searo.who.int/nepal/CCS\\_2013\\_17.pdf?ua=1](http://www.searo.who.int/nepal/CCS_2013_17.pdf?ua=1)