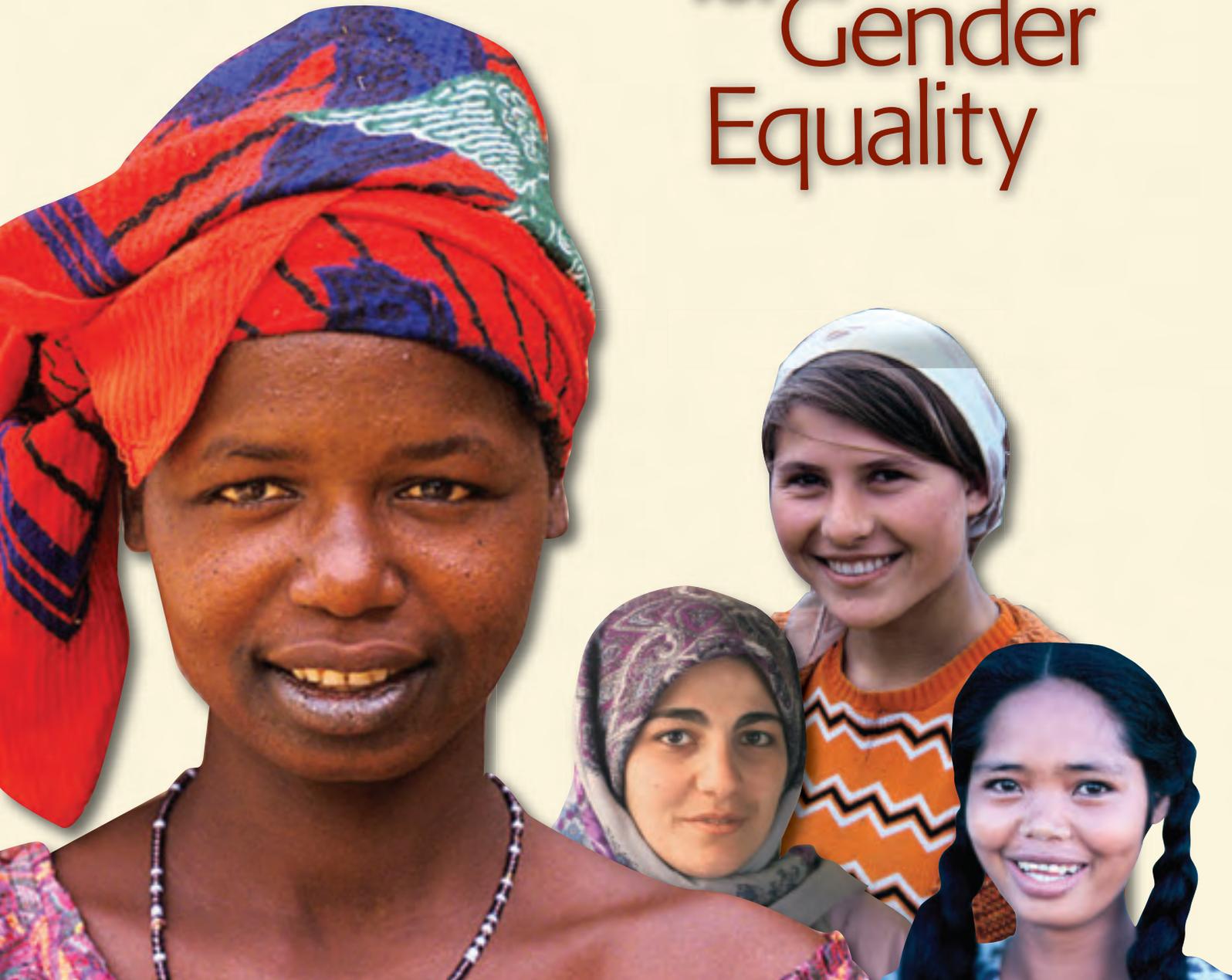


The
Membership Voice
of Zonta
International

ZONTIAN

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

Financing for Gender Equality





THE ZONTIAN

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DID YOU KNOW . . .

2008 Zonta International Convention Registration

Register early for the 2008 Zonta International Convention in Rotterdam and take advantage of early registration fees:

Payment received from
1 April – 31 May 2008

Payment received after
15 June 2008 and onsite

EUR 425

EUR 475

Make sure your club delegate(s) are registered for this year's Convention. For more information on club delegate(s), see the back cover of this issue. For additional information about the 2008 Zonta International Convention, including registration, visit www.zonta2008.com.

Zonta International Web site

The most common question sent to the Zonta Webmaster is "What is my username and password?"

You can retrieve your Username and Password instantly online. Click the *Login Help* link on the left side of your screen and follow the instructions. Requesting your Username and Password from the Web site prompts an automated E-mail to the address on file.

If you haven't already registered your Username and Password, do so today by visiting www.zonta.org.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Zontians:

I write my last message to you this biennium having just returned from my longest working trip yet for Zonta, weaving through the airports of Chicago, New York and Rotterdam over a period of six weeks.

At the Bylaws Committee meeting in Chicago, proposed bylaws changes and conference resolutions that will come up for discussion and decision at Convention were thoroughly and clearly deliberated upon. I hope that before you come to Rotterdam in June, you will have studied and taken up these proposed bylaws changes at your club meetings in terms of their impact on the future operation and direction of the organization. I suggest that these be discussed also during the District Meetings at Convention.

At the District Governors-Elect Orientation, incoming Governors received Zonta knowledge and shared leadership experiences with one another and with Zonta International. In between, there were the Board meetings of our two organizations, ZIF and ZI, where important decisions were made. These include: (a) the Memorandum of Agreement granting UNIFEM US\$100,000 for the project, *Preventing Trafficking of Women in Thailand by Addressing the Normative Dimensions of Demand*, which is awaiting the signature of UNIFEM as of the time of the meeting; (b) another anti-trafficking project in the Mekong Region with the Development and Education Program for Daughters and Communities, which has been signed with initial grant payment made in January 2008. These projects support ZISVAW's focus on the issue of anti-trafficking of women and girls in this biennium. Furthermore, a new UN Trust Fund project on Combating Violence Against Women and Girls in Sierra Leone has been fully funded. For the highlights of the ZI and ZIF Board meetings, check out the ZI Web site at www.zonta.org, Member Resources.

New York's weather was milder than Chicago's bitter winter, but the snow and the rain fell on the pavement a few times while I was there to convene the meetings for Project Five-O and to attend the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. If you have never attended a CSW session, you should seriously consider doing so. You will feel the energy and see the intense networking among women's rights advocates, displaying the scope and magnitude of work NGOs and civil society are undertaking for the world's women – all this, playing alongside the work of the Commission itself and parallel events of UN missions. This year's priority theme is "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women"...also our theme for this issue of *The Zontian* magazine.

The 52nd CSW session provided a unique opportunity to specifically identify and address critical issues related to resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women, providing a special focus on a subject long considered a part of many of the other priority themes since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. This subject examined how the allocation of public resources benefits women and men. The Agreed Conclusions are intended to raise awareness, particularly among elected representatives and civil servants, of the benefits of including a gender perspective in government budgets and resource allocations to ensure women's priorities are addressed in national policies and public expenditures. The session also looked at the broader topic of development, articulating the goals and approaches for gender equality and the outcomes to be achieved.

My final destination, Rotterdam, was just as challenging as it was happily anticipated. Emerging from a wakeful night on the plane on a Sunday morning, meetings were set for me four hours after my arrival. For the next two-and-a-half days, details of the Convention were scrutinized, probing questions were asked,

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Olivia Ferry

"Very many thanks for your support of the 2006-2008 Biennium, which has allowed us to move forward in our goal of advancing the status of women worldwide through service and advocacy."

FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Zontians and Friends of Zonta,

It is hard to believe that we are already approaching the end of our 2006-2008 Biennium! By the time you are reading this, there will be less than two months remaining – that's less than two months to reach the Foundation fundraising goals for the Biennium (all contributions for the 2006-2008 Biennium must be received at Headquarters on or before 31 May 2008).

As of 29 February 2008, we are about US\$1 million short of our overall fundraising goal of US\$3,805,000. If you have not yet seen *The Zontian's* feature article, *Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women*, please take a minute to read it. This article underscores the importance of the Zonta International Foundation and of your generous contributions in support of Zonta programs. While we have seen progress made in global commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women, more resources are needed to fund these commitments.

Without adequate funding, gender equality may never be realized. Today, women continue to have little input into political and economic decision making. Yet women most feel the weight of the results of those decisions – globally and locally – in their daily lives. Despite the advances and improvements in many women's lives, women constitute the majority of the world's poor.

On behalf of the Foundation Board, I extend our appreciation for the support you have already given this Biennium. I ask you to consider increasing your support, if possible. If you have not yet made a personal contribution to the Zonta International Foundation, I invite you to do so. Please consider the many ways that your generosity helps the Foundation support Zonta programs and the ways in which those programs are *funding gender equality and the empowerment of women*.

Let's take a minute to review what your generous donations have funded this Biennium alone:

- 70 Amelia Earhart Fellowships
- 12 Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarships
- 10 Young Women in Public Affairs Awards
- International Service projects providing for
 - Education for more than 2,500 women and girls in eight community-based educational learning centers in Afghanistan, plus training for teachers and administrators, as well as providing vital medical care services for women and their children;
 - Establishment of 161 credit and savings groups to help meet the socio-economic needs of 3,835 women affected by HIV/AIDS in Niger;
 - Vocational training for 428 girls and women in Bolivia; and
 - Hands-on assistance to women and women's groups affected by the 2004 Tsunami and by the war in the North and East Regions of Sri Lanka to revive their economic livelihoods.
- ZISVAW projects providing for
 - Efforts to prevent trafficking of women and girls in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, southeast and east Asia;
 - Combatting violence against women and girls in Sierre Lione; and
 - Implementation of laws, policies and action plans to reduce violence against women in Niger.

Please know that without your generous support to the Foundation, these programs would not have been funded and the lives of these women would not have been improved. I hope you are proud of Zonta's accomplishments – you should be – your contributions helped make them possible.



Betty Jane Bourdon

"Without adequate funding, gender equality may never be realized."

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Financing for Gender Equality

and the Empowerment of Women

“Vital financial resources for development are increasingly being steered towards meeting monetary and financial goals, to the neglect of meeting basic human needs, such as health, education and social services. Debt servicing, lack of development assistance targeted to women’s needs and unregulated private capital flows often increase the burden of care on women, decrease their access to health care and education systems and increase the incidence of trafficking of women and girls as families are forced to find alternative means of survival.”

Leading Economists Explore Impact of Financing for Development Process on Women’s Lives, UNIFEM

Important progress has been made in the development of global commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Governments at the international level are continuing to make commitments as seen by the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000), the Millennium Summit (2000), the Monterrey Consensus (2002), and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005). However, more progress is needed in allocating resources to these commitments. Without appropriate funding, gender equality may never be realized.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women selected *Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* as its priority theme during its 52nd Session, held 25 February to 7 March 2008. Warning that there can be no sustainable development if women and girls are left behind, gender equality experts addressing the 52nd Session urged Governments to work harder to ensure that all aspects of development financing fully recognize women's economic contributions and support their economic rights and integration.

During the 52nd Session's opening discussion, Julio Peralta (Paraguay), Vice Chairperson of The Bureau of the Commission, said that the international community has not fully implemented the commitments on financing for gender equality. Despite a growing

body of evidence demonstrating that investing in women and girls has a cumulative effect on poverty reduction, productivity efficiency and sustained economic growth, adequate resources have not been systematically allocated. He said that increasing resources for gender equality is crucial to achieving all development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Public Finance

The single largest source of financing for gender equality and women's empowerment in most countries is government budgets. It is through government budgets that promises are translated into practical policies and programs. Findings show that expenditure patterns and the way governments raise revenue have different impacts on women and girls, due to socially determined roles that women and men play in society, often leaving women in an unequal position in relation to the men in their community.

Despite evidence of the importance of gender equality for economic progress, public sector expenditures have not thoroughly addressed gender concerns. However, efforts are being made in many countries to integrate gender perspectives into national budgets so that they can better align policy commitments on gender equality with resource allocations.

At the 52nd Session, Caren Grown, Economist-in-Residence in the Department of Economics at American

WHY FUNDING IS NEEDED

Despite the commitments to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, the situation of women in many countries remains bleak:

- Violence against women is a major cause of death and disability for women of reproductive age. It is estimated that worldwide, one in five women becomes a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime.¹
- Young women are 1.6 times more likely to be living with HIV than young men – making up over 60 percent of 15–24 year olds living with HIV.²
- Today 980 million people live on less than one dollar a day – a majority of the world's absolute poor are female.³
- Every minute a woman dies in childbirth and for every woman who dies, 20 more experience serious complications. According to the World Health Organization, the estimated number of maternal deaths in 2000 for the world was 529,000. In terms of maternal mortality ratios (MMR), the world figure is estimated to be 400 per 100,000 live births. By region, the MMR was highest in Africa (830), followed by Asia (330), Oceania (240), Latin America and the Caribbean (190), and the developed countries (20).⁴

¹ Garcia-Moreno et al (2005). WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence Against Women.

² United Nations. In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women Report of the Secretary General, 2006.

³ *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007*, pg 6.

⁴ Maternal Mortality in 2000: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization, Geneva 2004.



Curt Canemark/The World Bank

“Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) is about ensuring that government budgets and the policies and programs that underlie them address the needs and interests of individuals that belong to different social groups. Thus, GRB looks at biases that can arise because a person is male or female, but at the same time considers disadvantage suffered as a result of ethnicity, caste, class or poverty status, location and age. GRB is not about separate budgets for women or men nor about budgets divided equally. It is about determining where the needs of men and women are the same, and where they differ. Where the needs are different, allocations should be different.”

Debbie Budlender
Community Agency for Social Equality

University in Washington, DC, noted that Governments have done a good job “incorporating the rhetoric of gender equality in budgets,” but have made no real moves to integrate concrete gender development goals into the plans they themselves have set. She called for, among other things, increased efforts to mobilize international resources and domestic resources in ways that are gender-aware.

Grown also noted that all countries must consider putting in place a process to estimate costs related to gender financing and link them to concrete planning and budgetary exercises. That requires the political will to allocate the money and achieve results. “If we have the numbers, it gives us a starting point,” she said.

Gender-responsive Budgeting

Gender-responsive budgeting has been identified as a finance strategy in a range of international commitments on gender equality. It has also been identified as a critical element of fully implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals – specifically MDG3 on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Gender-responsive budgets involve two interconnected types of activities:

- An examination of budget programs and policies for their different impacts on men and women, boys and girls; and

- Decision-making that changes budgets and policies so that gender equality is promoted.

These assessments and decisions should take place throughout the budget cycle. They should cover both revenues and expenditures, include a range of stakeholders, and be fully integrated into budget and policy procedures and decision-making.

There are different ways of assessing gender-responsive budgeting, but a central issue is that it can foster government accountability for financing gender equality commitments. Gender-responsive budgets were developed as a way to insert women’s voices into the discussions of taxation and spending, as well as to underscore that budgets are not gender neutral.

At the 52nd Session, Mireille Brunings-Stolz, Head of the Annual Reports Division of the Central Bank of Suriname, said that despite efforts worldwide to introduce gender-responsive budgeting as a structural way to achieve sustainable development and democracy, women have gained little ground. Government budgets soon resume their old “neutral” character, assuming that men and women can act the same as economic agents and benefit equally from the provision of public goods; however, this is not the case. If not adequately covered financially, the reproductive

functions and tasks for women lead to unequal distribution of income between men and women. Government action is, therefore, required to ensure equal opportunity for men and women.

Macroeconomics

Macroeconomic policies also have important implications for financing for gender equality. The removal of tariffs and other trade barriers has an impact on prices of goods and services consumed by households. Decreases





Curt Canemark and Yosef Hadar/The World Bank

in government revenues can lead to cuts in social spending with a direct impact on household budgets, and a disproportionate impact on women.

Evidence shows that macro-economic policies that are based on high levels of both tax revenue and public expenditure are more favorable to gender equality and the empowerment of women, while restrictive macroeconomic policy rules leave less room for governments to pursue a wide range of policies. A more balanced approach that is context-specific, rather than “one size fits all,” and that aims to bring together economic and social stability, would free up resources for financing gender equality objectives.

Microfinance

Governments and other stakeholders have specified that working with women to deliver financial services and credit through microfinance offers immediate resources for meeting women’s needs. However, after three decades of experience with microfinance, a number of issues have been raised around its potential for the empowerment of women and sustained poverty alleviation, including:

- There is a need to provide greater access to the vast majority of women not yet being reached.
- Microfinance increases women’s indebtedness by targeting women who already have a few assets and may contribute to making their overall net-worth negative.
- Microfinance puts the debt and poverty burden almost exclusively on women, as women are recognized as reliable credit takers.

Credit programs need to be carefully designed to benefit women. Programs are not empowering for women if they reinforce gender stereotypes within households and communities or increase their work burdens. Situations where women have limited control over their income, or where their contributions to the household income substitute for those of male household members, can be disempowering.

Funding the Women’s Movement

Achievements in the areas of gender equality and women’s rights could not have been possible without the presence of women’s movements and organizations working at all levels. The agenda of women’s rights and gender equality requires strong commitments from all stakeholders,

given the need for a comprehensive approach to address the complex and interwoven nature of women’s rights violations and issues, such as violence against women, HIV/AIDS, maternal and infant mortality, illiteracy, and discrimination. Substantial investments are needed to build up the capacity of women’s organizations, as well as ensure their long-term sustainability.

Conclusion

Leaders at the 2005 World Summit acknowledged that “progress for women is progress for all.” Increasing resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women would contribute to the achievement of all other development goals. While commitments are being made toward gender equality and the empowerment of women, funding is lagging and desperately needed. ¹⁶

Sources for this article include:

UN Commission on the Status of Women, www.un.org/womewatch/daw/csw

Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, Report of the Expert Group Meeting, 4-7 September 2007

Report of the UN Secretary-General on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, January 2008



MORE ON FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN – WHY THE ZONTA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION MATTERS

Progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals has not been as great as it needs to be. One significant reason for this is a lack of serious funding for the goal of gender equality. As the United Nations debates better ways to finance the development of nations, the international community is failing to devote adequate resources to realizing gender equality, a key to achieving international development goals.

A recent study found that less than one per cent of official development assistance is being spent on gender programs. Three women-specific agencies at the United Nations – the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and UNIFEM – are gravely underfunded. The budget last year for UNIFEM was US\$57 million – to implement the entire Beijing Platform for Action in countries around the world – as compared to the budgets of UNICEF and UNDP that

are in the range of US\$2 billion to US\$3 billion.¹ Much more needs to be done to channel funds towards women's issues in a focused way.

While government funding is by far the largest portion of funding, women's funds and organizations like Zonta play a vital role. In the 2006-2008 Biennium, the Zonta International Foundation will provide US\$2.2 million in funding for Zonta programs focused on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women. This funding is made possible only through the generous contributions of our Zonta clubs and thousands of individuals committed to making the world a better place for women.

What more can we do?

We can:

- Encourage and advocate for enhanced support for women's organizations, because they are essential to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and promoting and protecting women's rights.

- Encourage our own governments and government agencies to look at how they support gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- As individuals and as Zonta Clubs, make sure we are meeting our responsibilities to our own Foundation.
- Ask our family, friends, and professional colleagues to participate. 

¹ Kerr, Joanna, *The Second FundherReport: Financial Sustainability for Women's Movements Worldwide*, Association for Women's Rights in Development, June 2007.



For more information on the Zonta International Foundation and how you can make a difference, go to www.zonta.org. To make a contribution, use the envelope enclosed in this magazine, or go to www.zonta.org, Contribute Now.

FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued from page 4

If you want to learn more about these wonderful programs, visit the Zonta International Web site, read *The Zontian*, or ask your District Foundation Ambassador to visit your club to share this exciting information with you and your fellow Zontians.

As in the past, members of the Foundation Board will be reporting to Zonta membership at the 2008 Convention. We look forward to seeing all of you in Rotterdam. Please visit us at the Foundation Booth so we can thank you personally.

With sincere appreciation,

Betty Jane Bourdon

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM



In the 2006-2008 Biennium, contributions to the Zonta International Foundation International Service Fund provide support to four International Service Projects. Here are brief updates on two of these projects; see The Zontian, Issue 7, January 2008, for updates on the CARE International Mata Masu Dubara project in Niger and the Afghan Institute of Learning project in Afghanistan.

CARE International Education and Leadership for Girls and Young Women in Bolivia

Poverty forces many indigenous girls and women to leave their rural communities to seek better opportunities in Bolivia's capital, La Paz. Arriving in the city without identification documents, money or family, young women are extremely vulnerable to exploitation.



CARE's Education and Leadership for Girls and Young Women is helping working young women and girls in La Paz address the social and economic barriers they face in their everyday lives. It is not only empowering women with essential literacy and math skills, but is also enabling them to take control of their futures by teaching them to exercise their human, legal and reproductive rights. The project offers vocational training to help girls and women obtain safer, higher-paying employment and improve their quality of life.

Between April and September 2007, CARE reached 428 girls and women (315 under the age of 18), who are students at six night schools around La Paz. More than half of these students are indigenous; the majority are employed, many as domestic workers. Education materials focused

on literacy and math skills and, taking into account the social, economic and educational realities facing female students, were developed and distributed to 700 students at the six schools in January 2008. In addition, 80 teachers attended a three-day workshop designed to raise awareness of the specific education needs of working young women and girls.

CARE played an active role in organizing events to support the Global Campaign for Education in Bolivia, including advocating for children's rights to education and creating and distributing 1,000 posters around the city to raise awareness about the importance of equitable access to school. To commemorate the UN World Day Against Child Labor, CARE distributed brochures in the six schools on children's rights and child labor laws. Project staff conducted interactive discussion sessions with 450 students in which participants talked about what they had learned from the brochures and discussed how child labor had affected their own lives. CARE also distributed information to parents, teachers and education authorities.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization Support for Revival of Rural Community-Based Self-Help Initiatives in Sri Lanka

This project was designed to provide hands-on assistance to the women and women's groups affected by the 2004 Tsunami and by the war in the North and East Regions of Sri Lanka. The goal is to revive their socio-economic livelihoods by increasing the agricultural productivity and promoting community-based entrepreneurship to create opportunities for income-generation and employment among

the women. The focus is on two major districts of the East Region, Batticaloa and Trincomalee, where the impact of both hardships on women has been most prominent.

Implementation of this project was initially delayed due to the changing security situation in the area, security rules of UN operations in the Eastern Region and related mobility problems, and consequent difficulties with the establishment of project offices. Two project vehicles have been purchased and a contract prepared for space accommodating the project activities.



The Tsunami disaster that occurred on 26 December 2004 caused severe damage to the socio-economic activities in Sri Lanka, affecting the coastal belts in the Southern, Northern and Eastern Regions. Women suffered significant loss of income sources and increased difficulty in sustaining their families. Four years later, many women still live in relief camps and in schools, and have not been able to return to the normalcy of life. Women still need access to various financial resources and technical assistance for their productive activities.

Arrangements have been made to enable local staff to move around without restriction by UN security measures. The organization of awareness building activities, and community meetings and preparations for the first skill development training are underway. ☐



For more information, visit the Zonta International Web site at www.zonta.org.

MAKING MONEY WORK FOR WOMEN

By Jackie Shapiro, Chairman, Zonta International United Nations Committee

The report of the Expert Group Meeting on “Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women,” organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women in Norway in September 2007, provided NGOs attending this year’s Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) with a challenging framework for interaction.

There have been many international commitments over the years to the necessity of providing adequate resources specifically focused on women’s empowerment and achieving gender equality. However, the reality is that women are still the majority of the world’s absolute poor and those without access to education. Disparities in equal salaries for equal work, continued high maternal mortality, HIV infection rates in young women and the pandemic of violence against women are just some evidence that resources and political will have not measured up to the commitments made.

The Expert Group report identified a number of global factors that often have a negative impact on financing for gender equality, including: trade liberalization, international private capital flows, economic growth patterns that increase inequalities between and within countries and the privatization of public services and enterprises as well as migration, international security issues and

increasing religious fundamentalism. These issues were discussed at CSW.

The Expert Group Report is a guide to looking at national and global issues for gender financing along four themes: 1) Macroeconomic policies and the Monterrey Consensus, 2) Public finance and gender responsive budgeting, 3) Bilateral and multilateral aid, and 4) Funding for the Women’s Movement.

Among the recommendations of the Expert Group report is the need for gender equality advocates to be involved in the Financing for Development followup meetings taking place later this year. These meetings need to establish coherence between economic and social policies, including gender equality concerns – a focus that has largely been missing to date.

In most countries, governments are the largest single source of financing for gender equality and women’s empowerment and the translation of governments’ promises into actual policies and programs is critical. How governments spend and raise money often has a very different impact on women and men. It is, therefore, suggested that governments develop methods for incorporating a gender perspective into their public financial management systems building on the concrete experiences of what works. This would include costing unpaid labor and investing in water provision and child care facilities so that women’s

productive contributions through their investment of time and efforts are recognized.

The Expert Group Report emphasizes that gender equality and women’s empowerment are critical cornerstones of development effectiveness and core to the achievement of all development goals. Civil society must therefore play a critical role in holding governments accountable for their commitments.

The Expert Group Report states emphatically that strong and effective women’s organizations, working at all levels, are key to the advancement of women’s rights and gender equality. Funding women’s groups can contribute to strengthening civil society.

Finally, the UN must play a critical role in supporting countries to fully implement their commitments to financing gender equality and empowering women. To do that most effectively requires the strengthening of the UN gender equality architecture to provide a stronger operational mandate, more vigorous presence at the country level and the meaningful involvement of NGO gender equality advocates, especially women’s organizations. ¹⁶

*The full report of the Expert Group meeting and the Secretary-General’s Report on “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women,” can be found on the Web site of the Division for the Advancement of Women, www.un.org/womenwatch/daw.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued from page 3

and assurances were given. But the best assurance came on Wednesday, when, overlooking a panoramic view of the city from ABN AMRO’s headquarters, the sponsorship of the ABN AMRO gala concert featuring the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra was officially signed by the bank’s and Zonta’s officials, witnessed no less by more than a dozen accomplished and influential women in Rotterdam’s city council and the private sector. More than four years ago when the ZI Board decided to bring the 59th Zonta International Convention to

Rotterdam, Zonta’s work towards gender equality and women empowerment was virtually unknown in Rotterdam. Today, through the Convention Committee’s ingenuity, energy, perseverance and commitment, the Zonta name has a familiar ring, Zonta’s work is highly praised and the Zonta Convention is greatly anticipated – an assurance that when you step on Rotterdam soil in June, you will be hospitably welcomed by a city commemorating the triumphs of women in a predominantly masculine environment, and celebrating with Zontians our

Convention’s theme of *Global Empowerment through Local Action*.

See you in Rotterdam!!!

Very many thanks for your support of the 2006-2008 Biennium, which has allowed us to move forward in our goal of advancing the status of women worldwide through service and advocacy.

Cheers!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jackie Shapiro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.



PARTING THOUGHTS...

By *Glenn Harding, Chairman, Zonta International OMC Committee*



This is my last article for *The Zontian* as Chairman of the Organization, Membership and Classification Committee. It's been a wonderful experience to interact with so many of you during the last four years as we have worked together to keep Zonta growing. I'd like to use this final column to recap some things we've learned and should remember as we continue our quest for growth.

- Growth is a journey, not an event. Activities and programs that support growth must be on-going, month after month, year after year, biennium after biennium.
- Club membership should be 25 or more to ensure a thriving club with sufficient resources to accomplish its goals. Declining membership must be addressed quickly.

- Clubs should recruit at least 10% new members each year and should lose no more than 10% of members each year. Recruit more prospects and have more recruiting events to meet recruiting goals. Survey members and make changes to improve the club and member retention.
- Our classification system includes a range of occupations; use a wide variety.
- Attracting young women in the early stages of their professional careers and mentoring them as they mature into senior positions is a pleasure.
- Zonta service projects have rewards well beyond additional members. The opportunities for expanded service speak to our mission in a very real way.
- Members join because of their

identification with our mission; they remain members because of their experience of fellowship and networking. Projects that emphasize service and advocacy for women while involving members working together create an atmosphere for retention and growth.

- Membership tools are available in the "Member Resources" section of the Zonta International Web site. They have been contributed by clubs and leaders with experience and success in growing membership. Districts can also provide assistance.

Goals, tools and processes are necessary, but not sufficient, for growth. When they are applied with Zonta Zeal – a "will to win" – together, we can. ☐

ZONTA INTERNATIONAL FINANCES

By *Darlene Kurtz, Chairman, Zonta International Finance Committee*

As the 2006-2008 Biennium comes to an end, on behalf of the Finance Committee, I would like to tell the members of Zonta International some of our accomplishments and some of our goals for the next biennium.

Before I begin, I want to stress to members how important it is for your club to pay your dues on time and to ensure that the club roster is attached. The organization spends time and resources determining the proper allocation of dues. This staff time could be better spent serving our members in other capacities. Remember new members are not Zontians until dues are received and posted to their account at Headquarters.

Accomplishments:

- The Board approved implementation of an Audit Committee. This Committee will consist of the Zonta International Treasurer, the International Finance Committee Chairman and a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who is independent of the Board. This

allows another layer between staff and auditors, which is a best practice recommended for non-profit organizations.

- The Board approved increasing our operating reserve from one year to one and one-half years. This will allow our organization to fulfill our increased contractual liabilities and meet routine operating needs in case of a catastrophic event.
- This committee performed an internal control audit to ensure that the organization is in compliance with the newly enacted internal control auditing standards.
- This committee implemented a more hands-on method of preparing the 2008-2010 Biennium budget. We requested each department (President-Elect, Headquarters, and program committee chairmen) to give us their requests. The Finance Committee reviewed the requests and prepared a balanced budget that was approved by the Board.

These changes will ensure our members that the Finance Committee and the International Board are taking their fiduciary responsibility very seriously. Non-profit boards should keep that responsibility in the forefront of their agenda.

Goals:

President-Elect Sten consulted with members of the Finance Committee regarding her goals and objectives for the 2008-2010 Biennium. The goals of **S**implicity, **T**ransparency, **A**ccountability and fiduciary **R**esponsibility will be implemented in the next biennium. We are excited to say the incoming Governors have embraced these goals, even using them to name the governors class of 2008-2010 the "STARZ."

It has been our pleasure to serve President Olivia Ferry, the International Board and most importantly the Members of Zonta International. If you have any questions, feel free to contact any member of the Finance Committee. ☐

FINANCING FOR GENDER EQUALITY



Norwegian Clubs help girls in Belarus

In 2001, Norwegian Zontians (District 13) passed a proposal to begin helping disadvantaged girls from the Tsjernobyl area in Belarus. The proposal was to provide 20,000 Nkr per year for four years to pay for boarding school at Belarus Folk Highschool, living expenses, and excursions for four girls every year. The Belarus Folk Highschool is vital for future studies at universities or colleges.

The girls who receive scholarships come from underprivileged districts around Tsjernobyl. If families have any possibility of providing an education for their children, boys are given preference. Without support, these girls would not have had any education. Since the program began, all participants have continued or fulfilled their education at a university, teachers' training college, or other institution.

Norwegian Zontians decided to continue the project and increased the annual sum to 25,000 Nkr, so that five girls can be given this opportunity every year. The project gives hope for

a prosperous future for many girls – a project in the real Zonta spirit!

Unique Boutique raises funds for scholarship programs

The Zonta Club of Marietta and Environs (Ohio, USA) sponsored a *Unique Boutique*, where gently used clothing was sold to area residents, with proceeds benefiting local scholarship programs. The Zonta club scholarships are awarded annually in May, with as many as four awards for as much as US\$500 each. The scholarship fund was created to help women who are overcoming barriers in pursuing their college degree at Washington State Community College.

Zonta East Auckland Award Inspires Young Aviators

In recognition of Amelia Earhart day, the Zonta Club of East Auckland, New Zealand, created a new award for 15 to 19 year old girls who aspire to a career in aviation, with the winner receiving an introductory flying lesson. Applicants are asked to write a brief essay on why

they should win the award.

This year, Katherine Stevens, an 18 year old in her final year at Macleans College, was selected to receive the award. Katherine has been interested in airplanes and flight since she was young. Her plans for the future are to undertake training in aeronautics. She has been offered a place in the Air New Zealand aeronautical engineering training programme for next year.

This unique annual award was designed to inspire young women like Katherine to pursue their dreams and encourage other young women to consider careers in engineering and aeronautic sciences. 

DO YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR CLUB'S NEWS HERE?

Zonta Club members are encouraged to submit articles by logging onto www.zonta.org and clicking "Zonta Action." To increase the likelihood of seeing your article published, consider the submission guidelines on our Web site. 

Josephine G. Cooke (1931-2008) – Zonta International President 1996-1998



"Women's rights are human rights. We, the members of Zonta International, understand that now that we have broken the silence, we must break the cycle."

Past International President (1996-1998) Josephine G. "Josie" Cooke's words are as inspiring today as when she spoke them at a 1998 conference. Josie died 4 March 2008 at the age of 76.

Diagnosed with sickle-cell anemia at the age of 19, Josie was told her life expectancy was 30 years, but with her characteristic tenacity and optimism, she pursued an education and a full family and professional life, despite an illness that was often painful and debilitating. She was a lover of music and an accomplished singer, sharing her joy even in the face of many personal challenges.

A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (USA), Josie began her career teaching functionally illiterate adults. In 1967, after moving to southern California, she began a second career in the mortgage banking industry. In 1990, Josie and a partner

organized C & L Mortgage Services, Inc., providing consultative training and regulatory compliance audit services to mortgage lenders.

During her service as Zonta International President, Josie opened the country of South Africa. She was instrumental in the formalization of the Zonta International Strategies to Prevent Violence Against Women (ZISVAW) program to reduce the incidence of violence against women and girls by supporting prevention and advocacy strategies.

Besides her deep commitment to Zonta activities over 32 years of membership, Josie was actively involved in her church, her community and other industry organizations. In addition, she was an activist and Board member of the Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California.

"Josie was a positive bright light, a determined woman, an extraordinarily wise lady, and a great inspiration to me and to many," said Zonta International Executive Director Janet Halstead.

Josie's daughter, Tracey Harris, is a member of the Zonta Club of Los Angeles. Josie's family has requested any memorial contributions to the Zonta International Foundation be directed to the ZISVAW Fund. 



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

Zonta Clubs around the world participated in *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence*, an annual international campaign begun in 1991. Since its inception, campaign participants have been instrumental in bringing issues of violence against women to the forefront of local, national, regional and global arenas, and this year was no exception. From 25 November to 10 December, Zontians worldwide worked to highlight the connections between women, violence, and human rights, and call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

The **Zonta Club of Greater Reno** (Nevada, USA) distributed bookmarks tied with white ribbons to generate



Members of the Zonta Club of Greater Reno distribute bookmarks to generate awareness about gender violence.

awareness about the issue of domestic violence in the United States and throughout the world. To help educate the community about the horrific crime of human trafficking, the **Zonta Club of Melbourne** (Florida, USA) joined forces with the Women's Center of Brevard County and contracted with a local theatre to screen *Trade*, a recent independent film that addresses the topic. The **Zonta Club of New Rochelle** (New York, USA) recently premiered a new monthly radio show to increase awareness about gender



Zonta Club of New Rochelle president Roxanne Neilson premieres monthly radio show.

violence. On 5 December, the show explored the specific issue of Domestic Violence. At the **Zonta Club of Bonita Springs'** (Florida, USA) 10th annual Woman of the Year luncheon, each of the 250 guests received a purple awareness pin with a card explaining the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence and asking for their support and help in increasing awareness of the impact

of violence against women, including engaging men and boys in prevention and other eradication efforts. In response to the **Zonta Club of Everett's** (Washington, USA) request, Washington Governor Christine Gregoire proclaimed 25 November 2007 the Day for Eliminating Violence Against Women in Washington State. Members of all the Zonta Clubs in Washington were invited to attend the signing.

It is not too early to begin thinking of ideas for your club's participation in the 2008 campaign. And in the meantime, an easy way to take action against gender violence is to visit <http://www.saynotoviolence.org/> and add your name to the number of people speaking out against this human rights violation. The simple act of adding your name helps provide funding for UNIFEM's campaign against gender violence. 



Members of the Zonta Club of Everett join Washington, USA, Governor Christine Gregoire as she signs proclamation to eliminate violence against women.



ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
ROTTERDAM 2008

Join us!



PHOTO'S: JAN KLERKS

This 59th Convention in Rotterdam/The Netherlands is a very special, unforgettable, fascinating, exciting event in the most interesting small country of Europe! Small but beautiful and great in actions! Don't miss it: Please go to www.zonta2008.com and

download the Call to Convention to find the extensive and very interesting programme. What you see is what you really get. Go to the menu and click on "Registration & Hotels". It is so easy to do your registration digitally. Of course you can also send it by

fax or by conventional mail. Anyhow, we are expecting you! Join the lucky group of registered Zontians.

See you in Rotterdam!



Zonta International
Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

www.zonta2008.com



Zonta International

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Every Zonta Club has a Vote at Convention!

At the 2008 Convention in Rotterdam (27 June -2 July), your Zonta Club delegate will vote on the following vital matters and more:

- Election of Zonta International officers, directors and international nominating committee
- 2008-2010 Biennial goals (including the International Service and ZISVAW projects)
- Bylaws amendments
- Resolutions

Who will voice your Zonta Club's opinion on these issues at Convention? You must elect your club voting delegate(s) and then register the delegate(s) with Zonta International Headquarters by **22 May** (if submitted online).

Zonta Clubs are able to complete this process online (submit by **22 May**) or download paper forms from the Zonta International Web site (mail by **24 April**; fax by **7 May**). For all the details, Zonta Club presidents should log onto www.zonta.org.

If your Zonta Club will not be represented in person at Convention, your Club President can request another club carry your club's proxy vote. This must be arranged in advance with the proxy-carrying club, and then registered with Zonta International Headquarters by **22 May** (if submitted online).

WELCOME NEW ZONTA CLUBS

The Zonta International "family" around the world extends a warm welcome to our new Zonta Clubs. We rejoice in the experience you will share with us and with those you serve!

Cadillac, USA
District 15, Area 1

Oamaru, New Zealand
District 16, Area 5

Schwetzingen, Germany
District 30, Area 2

As of February 2008, Zonta International has 1,232 clubs in 66 countries and geographic areas.

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to the following Zonta Clubs celebrating their 25th and 50th charter anniversaries:

50 years
Bergen I, Norway
Bonn, Germany

25 years
Klagenfurt Area, Austria
Mariehamn, Finland
Montpellier, France
Daejeon, South Korea



Zonta Clubs

Members of Zonta International