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# Zonta News

Build a Better World for Women and Girls



Dear Megan,

Welcome to the 2024-2026 Biennium! Last month, I had a wonderful time meeting Zontians from across the world in Brisbane, Australia, and ushering in a new Zonta chapter. As your new president, I am deeply honored by the opportunity to serve our global community. I am enthusiastic about the possibilities that lie ahead and am eager to work with everyone to achieve our goals over the next two years.

The challenges that women and girls face globally are extensive and complex. They reflect deeply ingrained societal norms, systemic inequalities and discriminatory practices. But together, we have the power to build a better world in which women's rights are seen as human rights. As per the [Biennial Goals](#) and [Strategic Plan](#), it is vital that we realize a sustainable, equitable future for generations to come through four main goals:



As we look ahead to the opportunities of this biennium, let us remember to find joy, spread happiness and embrace the connections we will create as we build a better world for women and girls. I extend a warm welcome to everyone for the new biennium and express my gratitude for your ongoing support and commitment.

Warm regards,



Salla Tuominen  
President 2024-2026  
Zonta International and Zonta Foundation for Women

## Meet the 2024-2026 International Board!

The 2024-2026 Zonta International and Zonta Foundation for Women Boards express their warmest welcome to the new biennium!



**Salla Tuominen**  
President



**Fernanda Gallo-Freschi**  
President-Elect



**Sandra Venn-Brown**  
Vice President



**Souella Cumming**  
Treasurer/Secretary



**Margaret Akofio-Sowah**  
Director



**Lia Bautista**  
Director



**Christine Dersch**  
Director



**Unna Huh**  
Director



**Phillippa Jacobs-Lory**  
Director



**Ela Pandya**  
Director



**Vivienne Shen**  
Director

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## New international service projects, new opportunities

This biennium, we embark on three international service projects, opening up exciting opportunities to make a meaningful impact on climate change, child marriage and creating a virtual safe space for women and girls on a global scale. Learn more about the new projects that were voted upon and approved at the 2024 Brisbane Convention below.

## Global Programme to End Child Marriage: Phase III

Zonta International's signature project, the Global Programme to End Child Marriage will continue our partnership with UNICEF USA and UNFPA to boost its actions to accelerate the decline in child marriage globally and respond to the combined effects of the polycrisis and the pushback against gender equality for adolescent girls. The program's priority is engaging adolescent girls as key agents of change in the following 12 countries, which account for almost half of the world's child marriages: Bangladesh; Burkina Faso; Ethiopia; Ghana; India; Mozambique; Nepal; Niger; Sierra Leone; Uganda; Yemen and Zambia.



Read more about the project | [PDF](#)

## Climate Empower: Community Empowerment and Innovation for Gender-Transformative Climate Action

Partnering with UNFPA, this project is dedicated to preventing climate-induced gender-based violence (GBV) and other harmful practices through innovative approaches and community-driven interventions in Madagascar, Mozambique and South Sudan – some of the countries most vulnerable to climate change globally.



Read more about the project | [PDF](#)

## Laaha: A Virtual Safe Space for Women and Girls

Laaha, the first-ever digital web-based platform created by UNICEF with women and girls from crisis-affected regions, has two primary objectives:

1. Increase knowledge on GBV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) by providing quality and accurate information to girls and women about menstrual health and hygiene, healthy relationships, how to stay safe and know one's rights, financial literacy, female anatomy and services for women and girls facing violence. In time, this digital space will replicate the sense of a safe social network that physical safe spaces provide.
2. Reduce isolation by building safe spheres of support for adolescent girls. This is achieved through a peer-to-peer connection in a user forum that is carefully moderated to ensure a safe and respectful environment.



Currently, Laaha is deployed in Afghanistan, Ecuador, Iraq, Lebanon, Ukraine and Venezuela, with plans to expand to Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Moldova, Myanmar and Turkey in 2024.

Read more about the project | [PDF](#)

## Build a better world for women and girls with the Biennial Goals

Zontians are empowered to address the extensive and profound challenges confronting women and girls worldwide through four key goals:



1.

### Credible and Visible Voice

Zonta acts as a credible and visible voice on gender equity, driving change for gender equality. By focusing on increasing Zonta International's credibility and visibility we move closer to achieving Zonta's mission. While many actions need to be taken, we will focus on:

- Violence Against Women
- Climate Justice
- Women in Decision-Making
- Education Equality



## 2.

### Club Success



By focusing on club success we maintain a strong membership base to support the work we do to build a better world for women and girls. Some of the actions taken include nurturing the Zonta Spirit to foster a culture of mutual understanding and respect, preparing a new membership strategy, launching a new annual Share Your Story Festival to bring members together and more!

## 3.

### Leadership and Sustainability



Zonta manages its resources, including both time and money, to meet Zonta's vision and ensure Zonta's long-term viability and success. Governance, leadership and internal structures are addressed to enable the effective achievement of Zonta's mission. Sustainability is crucial for any actions in building an equal, responsible, green and clean future where the human rights of women and girls are recognized and implemented.

## 4.

### Engagement of Audiences and Allies



In order to further Zonta's mission and voice, Zonta develops collaborations with like-minded organizations. Some of the actions taken include increasing communication between Zonta and its partners and collaborators, expanding partnership opportunities and more.

Read the full goals at [2024-2026 Biennial Goals](#).

## Zontians in Action

Zonta members are taking action to create a better world for women and girls! Read the stories below highlighting how Zonta clubs are empowering their communities to strive for gender equity.

### Zonta Club of Kathmandu unlocks opportunities with bicycle donations

The Zonta Club of Kathmandu, Nepal, generously donated 40 bicycles to 40 girls, representing a significant step toward breaking down barriers to education and mobility. The donation is more than just a mode of transportation; it symbolizes access to education and a brighter future for these girls who were previously hindered by mobility constraints. Club President Ava Shah emphasized the transformative power of education, highlighting its potential impact on the girls and their families and communities.



### Zonta Club of Kankakee rallies support and awareness for survivors of sexual assault

In honor of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Zonta Club of Kankakee, IL, USA, partnered with Clove Alliance, a local sexual assault center, to host a rally on their courthouse lawn, demonstrating unwavering support for survivors of sexual assault.



The organizations invited speakers, performed a beautiful poem and marched alongside the courthouse to bring awareness to gender-based violence.

## Share Your Story

Tell us how you are changing the world through service and advocacy by clicking on the button above to [share your story](#)!

## Meet our Remarkable Women!

Meet May's Remarkable Woman:

Meet July's Remarkable Woman:



**Anna** is the chief executive of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). She has also worked with the UN, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other international development NGOs.

**Zahra** is a lawyer, journalist and activist for human rights, interfaith dialogue, and peacebuilding. She is also the program manager for the UN Conference of Parties' Young Negotiators Academy, which trains young people to lead negotiations.

[Watch](#) | [Hear](#) | [Learn more](#)

Hear her story on 25 July | [Bio](#)

## Celebrating our Zonta clubs around the world!

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WELCOME TO OUR  
NEW ZONTA CLUBS



**Congratulations** to our club anniversaries this month:

**Zonta Club of Akureyri**  
Iceland, District 13  
**75th anniversary**

**Zonta Club of Auckland North Shore**  
New Zealand, District 16  
**45th anniversary**

**Zonta Club of Mana**  
New Zealand, District 16  
**45th anniversary**

**Zonta Club of Sydney Hills Inc**  
Australia, District 24  
**45th anniversary**

Join Zonta International in welcoming our newest club:

**Zonta e-Club of Yokohama Sakura**  
District 26, Japan

We look forward to seeing how the new club will embrace Zonta's mission and values in building a better world for women and girls.

We applaud your efforts in advocating for the women and girls in your community and beyond. To see which other clubs are celebrating a milestone anniversary in July, visit [Zonta News](#).

## Celebrating Zonta International Headquarters!

This month, we celebrate the work anniversary of one staff member at Zonta International Headquarters!



**Congratulations to Ellen Au**  
Communications Senior Associate  
3 years



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

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