

THE ZONTIAN

The Membership Voice of Zonta International
2006-2008 Biennial Issue Four • April 2007



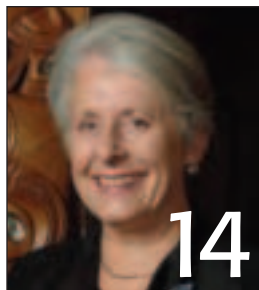
***Economic Security
for Women –
One approach:
Microfinance***

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

THE ZONTIAN

2006-2008 Biennial Issue Four • April 2007

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DID YOU KNOW...

31 May
is Zonta's fiscal year end.

You can now make contributions to the
Zonta International Foundation
ONLINE.

Go to www.zonta.org and click on
Contribute Now.



Olivia Ferry

“As Zontians, we have the rare opportunity to participate in establishing the building blocks that will help women win the war against poverty.”

Zontians are amazing! Around the world we are engaged in amazing things that generate amazing results. The scale and scope of Zonta’s service activities around the world are now reported quarterly by Zonta clubs in terms of the type of service provided, the number of hours spent and the amount of money raised.

During just the first quarter of the biennium, based on a fraction of the clubs around the world reporting, Zontians donated 61,500 local service hours equating to 1.92 hours of service per Zontian, and raised US\$473,991 for local service equating to US\$14.79 per Zontian. These numbers compare favorably to the 2004-2006 benchmark from the Footprint of Service report that recorded Zontians donating 228,000 service hours, and raising US\$3.8 million for local service based on just 24.4% of our clubs reporting.

If your club has not submitted a quarterly return this biennium, please be sure to check the ZI Web site and report your club activities to your District Governor. Reporting not just your service activities but also your advocacy actions and membership information will help Zonta International profile the organization’s activities and track progress towards the achievement of our biennial goals. You will also have data to manage your clubs, areas and districts and help Zonta validate our role as the organization that improves the status of women around the world.

This biennium, we want to listen to our members more. It is part of our bottom-up strategy to guide the future direction of the organization. I would like to thank the clubs that participated in the UN survey on violence against women, the members who completed the member satisfaction survey, the districts that sent photos of public places displaying the Zonta logo, the Zonta leaders who provided inputs into the development of our position paper on Human Trafficking, the members of the International Board and International Committees who worked on special task force duties, and the many others who walked the extra mile to make Zonta a listening and knowledge-sharing organization.

Additionally, I wish to thank our Thai Zontians for graciously accepting the ZI Board’s action rescinding its prior decision to hold the 2010 Convention in Bangkok, on account of the current uncertainty in the political situation in their country. The Board went through a very difficult and painstaking decision-making process, but in the end concluded that given its fiduciary responsibility, it is obligated to consider the potential negative effect this could have on Convention attendance, the financial and long-term ramifications, and the need to make the best decision for Zonta as a whole.

In this issue of *The Zontian* magazine, we focus on women and economic security. I wish to highlight the critical role of education and micro-credit in poverty alleviation, refining the concept of economic security and sustainable development to include experiences in skills training and micro-entrepreneurial education, and integrating considerations pertaining to population, health, finance and economics, social and human development, and peace and security. The interrelation of these factors is fundamental to the development of a new and broader perspective on poverty alleviation rooted in the values of sustainability, which is key to creating a viable future and the deployment of economic and financial resources for the world’s poor.

As Zontians, we have the rare opportunity to participate in establishing the building blocks that will help women win the war against poverty. Let us consolidate our collective efforts towards winning our own small battles on the ground, in our communities, within our national borders, and around the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olivia Ferry', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.



Economic Security for Women – One approach: Microfinance

What does US\$100 mean to you?

For Nigerien Shaudi Illo it means a profitable groundnut oil business. Shaudi is a participant in one of the Mata Masu Dubara (MMD) savings and loan groups funded by Zonta International in the poor West African nation of Niger. A small loan from her MMD group has made it possible for her to support her family and return a profit to her savings group every month.

For Habse Isaka, the US\$100 she borrowed from her MMD group means the ability to purchase a half bag of henna and other ingredients, more than the 2 to 3 cups she could afford before her participation in the group.

For the Zonta Club of Lansing, Michigan, US\$100 is the minimum balance they are required to maintain in a Ghana bank for their account to remain active – an account the Club established two years ago to fund four poverty eradication projects that distribute small loans to impoverished Ghanaian women. The Club initially raised US\$2,130 to launch the first phase of a micro-enterprise project aimed at helping women entrepreneurs in Ghana. Using that money and networking with the Zonta Clubs in Accra, Zontians from Michigan took trips to several communities in the West African nation to first determine where and in what ways their money could have the greatest impact.

Why should microfinance programs care about women?

- Women make up a disproportionate share of the poor.
- Women's access to microfinance not only benefits women but also their families and communities.
- Women's multiple roles require gender-sensitivity and innovation.
- Sustainability and gender equality are compatible goals.

“We were very clear that we didn’t just want to give money to start a business, we really wanted to give the money in the context of overall well-being – so that we address the issues of family stability, security, health, education, and eradication of poverty,” said Gwen Taylor, Zonta Club of Lansing member and project co-founder.

With a clear vision outlined, funds raised and people in Ghana mobilized, the Club was able to offer small loans to one already established urban woman seamstress and three rural agricultural-based business groups, each supporting 15 to 20 poor women.

Naa Dakua Djoletto is the sole supporter of her family – she earns a meager income making dresses in her home. With the small loan of US\$400 the Zonta Club of Lansing extended to Naa, she was able to purchase an industrial sewing machine. With the machine she produces more pieces at a faster rate, but more importantly she has trained 15 other women who now work for her. In addition to skills training, Naa provides the women basic entrepreneurial training and lessons in self-esteem with assistance from a local Community Development Officer assigned by the government of Ghana, which recognized these rural and urban initiatives as being vital poverty eradication models.

Microfinance and Microcredit

Microfinance programs have historically targeted women because women have proven to be more financially responsible with better repayment performance than men.



The Grameen Bank project has been working since 1976 and has been a for-profit, member-owned bank since 1983. The Bank has demonstrated that providing microcredit to the poor can be done in a successful and profitable manner.

The Bank has more than seven million borrowers – 97 percent of whom are women – and has disbursed US\$5.95 billion – 58 percent of borrowers have now crossed the poverty line. The Bank’s loan repayment rate is 99 percent.

“Conventional banks are owned by the rich, generally men. Grameen Bank is owned by poor women,” says Dr. Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank and recipient along with the Bank of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

“Grameen Bank works to raise the status of poor women in their families by giving them ownership of assets. It makes sure that the ownership of the houses built with loans remains with the borrowers, i.e., women. It is a composite objective, coming out of social and economic visions.”

Women entrepreneurs are more likely to be widows, female heads of household, or younger, childless women who are either the sole income earners for their families or sources of much-needed supplemental income. They are more likely than men to invest increased income in the household and family well-being.¹ Research in Ghana has found that women allocate a greater share of their income to basic needs for themselves and their children, despite earning less money than men. And in Jamaica, a study found that the presence of a female decision-maker generally raises the share of household budget on goods for children and the family.²

Women’s expenditures on the health and education of their families enhance the human resource base, thus contributing to national development goals. Women’s businesses also strengthen local economies through their involvement in trade and marketing activities. In West Africa, women control the distribution channels for most foodstuffs, and in the Caribbean they are responsible for nearly all local marketing.³

The income women derive from these businesses can enhance a society’s resilience in the face of economic crises, as was the case in Niger during the most recent food shortage. Many communities relied heavily on the MMD cereal banks as the only source of food available to them. In this way, microfinance services elevate women’s status within their communities. Project participants report increased confidence, assertiveness and status in family and community decisions.

“If the goal is to move as many people out of poverty as possible, the focus should be on the poorest of the poor, because then you can help more people by investing the same amount of money.”

Dr. Muhammad Yunus

Access to credit

There are many potential benefits of women's access to microfinance, however, simply making microfinance services available does not mean they're accessible to women. A World Bank study of microfinance programs in seven Middle Eastern countries revealed an average female participation

"The poor stay poor not because they are lazy, but because they have no access to capital."

**Milton Friedman,
1976 Nobel Prize in
Economic Sciences**

rate of only 36 percent; and figures from the *MicroBanking Bulletin* put average participation rates for women in Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe between 29 and 47 percent.

The reality is that women's access to credit is greatly limited because of inequalities women face at every level. The permission of male village leaders is still needed to start MMD groups in Niger. Men remain key decision-makers in many rural areas around the world. At the national level, women account for just 16 percent of parliamentarians worldwide. And though more than 52 percent of the world's population is female, only 1 percent of the world's land is owned by women. Women also still lag behind in pay and account for the majority of informal, often unpaid laborers.

Even when a woman obtains a small loan, the benefits are not guaranteed. Several studies have shown that the

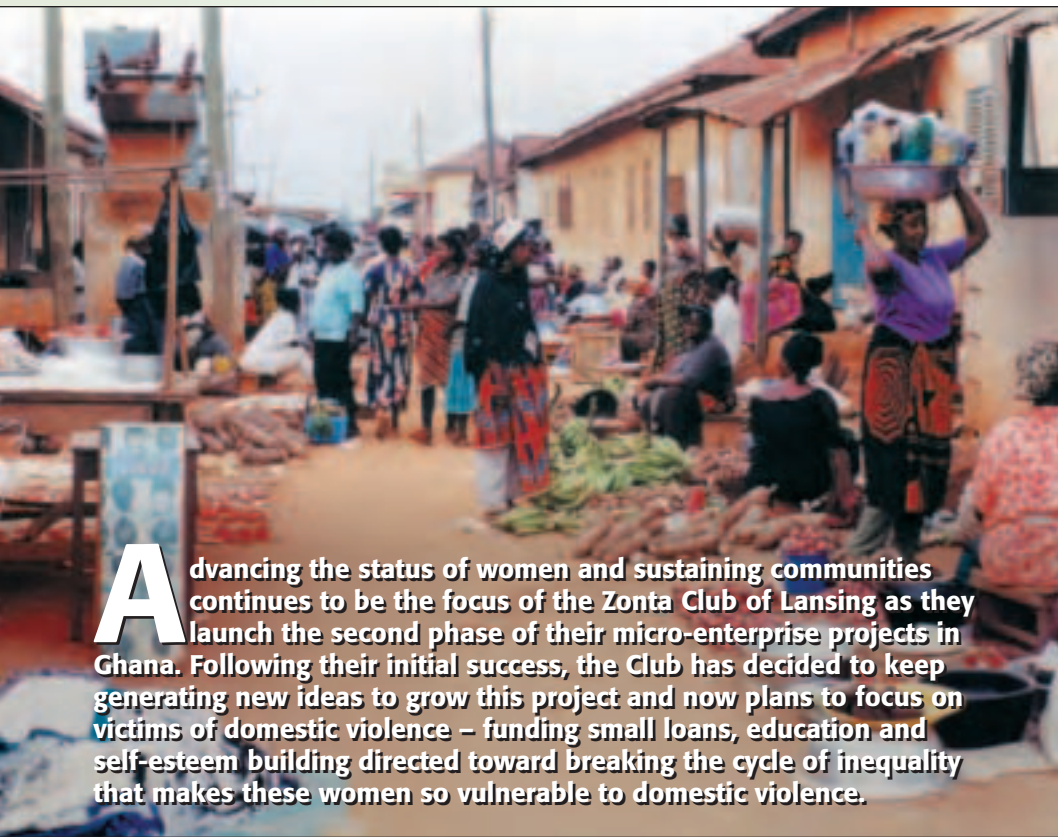
impact of microfinance programs correlates strongly with the person's initial amount of assets owned. Women's lower level of asset ownership works against them in this regard.⁴

Forty-year-old Amina Ango's life is a testament to the cycle of poverty that exists in Niger, where a US\$100 loan can go far, but without a system of established and enforced laws to protect and empower her, it will not and cannot sustain her or her children. Amina had 8 children, but three have died. Several times a day she fetches water about 1 kilometer away. Her two boys go to school, but two of her older daughters have now joined her in daily chores. They are not in school and Amina is not happy about it. Amina once sold cassava to earn an income, but has had to stop. Giving Amina a small loan and expecting her to pull herself and her family out of poverty, send her daughters to school and continue shouldering her family responsibilities is not realistic.

Women micro-entrepreneurs face complex, formidable obstacles that cannot be overcome with a simple money solution alone. Research has shown that women's economic contributions are particularly important to poorer households; as the poverty of a household increases, so does its reliance on women's income to ensure survival. Women have a narrower set of business opportunities than men do because they encounter such barriers as cultural norms, mobility constraints and limits on free time. Such structural inequalities affect their level of education and training, the levels and types of risk they can bear, and market sectors and potential investments open to them.⁵

The Role of Governments, NGOs, Lenders

There are several ways governments, non-government organizations and lenders can help women launch and sustain entrepreneurial activities while balancing the productive, reproductive and community roles assigned to them. First, lenders must take a gendered approach to micro-finance. Because a great percentage of poor women are semiliterate or illiterate it is imperative to make



Advancing the status of women and sustaining communities continues to be the focus of the Zonta Club of Lansing as they launch the second phase of their micro-enterprise projects in Ghana. Following their initial success, the Club has decided to keep generating new ideas to grow this project and now plans to focus on victims of domestic violence – funding small loans, education and self-esteem building directed toward breaking the cycle of inequality that makes these women so vulnerable to domestic violence.

loan applications, lending procedures and repayment plans easily understandable. Further, nontraditional forms of collateral should be accepted, like the mutual guarantee that accompanies the MMD group structure, where women village agents make a formal agreement with group members regarding repayment and are then paid a regular fee to balance the group's finances. When possible, women should be allowed to sign for their own loans, without the permission of husbands or male relatives. Also, the scope of acceptable activities for which women can obtain loans should be broadened to include unregistered businesses, or if a business license is required by law, the loan structure should include assisting the women with acquiring licenses.

Beyond Money

Microfinance services must include a social component that empowers women to be successful, as evidenced by the MMD project in Niger and the Zonta Club of Lansing project in Ghana.

The Zonta Club of Lansing project demonstrates the need for a broad approach to women's economic stability to help women launch and sustain entrepreneurial activities. "What we're trying to sustain is community education," Gwen said. "We're looking to really improve the educational opportunities for young women so they can do more than have marginal success. A business can start up today and be gone tomorrow – but you can't take a person's education away."

In Niger, the MMD groups provide HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment. Poverty and HIV/AIDS are the biggest social issues plaguing the people of Niger. With the women in the MMD groups becoming key cereal bank owners, micro-entrepreneurs and outspoken advocates for AIDS education, they have gained greater visibility and respect in their communities – helping them to achieve a louder voice in decision-making capacities and giving them the confidence to take advantage of markets opened to them through the MMD project.

Oma Anan's MMD group is a story of such success. Oma was the only woman from her village who could afford travel to Nigeria to buy and sell goods before the growth of the MMD project. Now, seven women from her MMD group travel with her to buy and sell animal hides, plates, utensils, and spices in various marketplaces in Niger and Nigeria.

Opening markets to these women will certainly help them earn more, so hopefully they and their families can maintain their current standard of living.

But how do they guard themselves against future financial ruin because of death in the family, natural disaster or political conflict? Who will perform the women's domestic



UNAIDS/L. Alyanak

chores when they are away buying and selling goods? In most cases, their daughters will be forced to leave school to perform these tasks. How will their daughters then gain the education that is crucial to improving their access to health care, lessening their chances of becoming victims of gender-based violence and increasing their chances of overcoming poverty?

These women contemplate financial challenges as all women do, but for the poorest of the poor, the consequences of their decisions are more dire and complex, and therefore require a more urgent and multi-faceted solution from governments, the private sector and NGOs.

Poverty will never be consistently reduced nor will economic growth be achieved without the empowerment of women. Women must gain control over the use of their loans, the nature of their investment activity, and access to markets, social services and business support services. And most importantly women must be granted equitable seats at tables where social welfare legislation, trade agreements and economic reform are decided upon.

"By focusing on women's empowerment, credit for the majority of women borrowers becomes much more than access to money. It is about women achieving economic and political empowerment within their homes, their villages and their countries," said Noleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM. "Ultimately, it is about women changing their lives and the lives of those around them."



For more information, go to www.zonta.org.

ENDNOTES

1. "Supporting Women's Livelihoods – Microfinance that Works for the Majority," United Nations Capital Development Fund, January 2002.
2. Carol E. Levin, Marie T. Ruel, and Saul S. Morris, "Working women in an urban setting: traders, vendors and food security in Accra," World Development November 1999.
3. "Supporting Women's Livelihoods – Microfinance that Works for the Majority," United Nations Capital Development Fund, January 2002.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.



Anne Silvester

“No matter how small the amount given to the Foundation, in the end it accumulates into something larger to fund the needs of women – in education, health, economic security and prevention of violence against women”

Dear Zontians and friends,

We are rapidly approaching the midpoint of the 2006-2008 Biennium. The fundraising goal of US\$3.8 million for this Biennium is a challenge. To date donations total around US\$900,000 – we have some way to go to reach our overall goal!

It is what we really believe in that matters most – advancing the status of women worldwide. Data indicates that women makeup one third (1/3rd) of the labour force but perform two thirds (2/3rd) of the working hours for just one tenth (1/10th) of the income.

The Zonta International service projects, awards and scholarships aim for a better life for women and children and in the future Zonta’s aim is for women to achieve in life a better outcome than the above statistics reveal.

However, to achieve better outcomes in this journey, the financial support given to Zonta’s international service projects, awards and scholarships by Zontians and Zonta Clubs is crucial. Each Zonta Club is encouraged to donate one third (1/3rd) of annual service funds raised to the Zonta International Foundation. Just imagine what Zonta can do if there is 100% financial support from all Zonta Clubs around the world!

We belong to an international service organisation and over the years, Zonta has funded and supported many worthy and needed projects that have added to better lives for women and girls in different parts of the world. No matter how small the amount given to the Foundation, in the end it accumulates into something larger to fund the needs of women – in education, health, economic security and prevention of violence against women.

The Foundation’s International Service Fund has received donations totalling 12 percent of its Biennial Goal of US\$1.5 million. In the 2006-2008 Biennium, four projects are under the umbrella of and funded from the International Service Fund. There are two new projects – one to provide education for girls and women in Bolivia, where 50 percent of rural women are illiterate and Zonta partners this project with CARE International. The other new project relates to economic survival and security for women in rural communities in Sri Lanka, where the 2004 Tsunami wrecked havoc and Zonta’s partner in this project is United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.

The two continuing Zonta international service projects are having successful impacts in their respective communities. One is Phase II, Mata Masu Dubara project (economic security and health) in Niger, a country where 50 percent of people live on US 40 cents a day and Zonta’s partner in this project is CARE International. The other is the continuation of the community-based programs to educate Afghan women and girls. Here Zonta’s partner is the Afghan Institute of Learning.

From time to time we are asked: “How does the Foundation find the projects it funds?” The answer lies in the working relationship of Zonta International and Zonta International Foundation.

Some needy projects come to the attention of the Zonta Leadership by referral, influenced by Zonta International’s consultative status at the United Nations; other needy projects emerge from research, investigative efforts and just plain hard work from the international service selection process directed through the Zonta International President-Elect as to the geographic and program focus of the coming Biennium.

After an initial search for projects and potential partner organisations, some organisations are asked to present proposals for grants for projects in the form of proper business submissions. On the Zonta side, the proposals presented go through a review process and may involve other Zonta leaders and staff. The

final outcome of project research and review results in proposed International Service Projects for the coming Biennium. Proposed projects are presented by the Zonta International President-Elect for consideration and approval by the Board of Directors of Zonta International and then to the Zonta International Foundation, where the funding and approval process progresses through the Development Committee and Finance Committee to final approval by vote of the Board of Directors of the Zonta International Foundation.

At Convention, the International Service Projects are presented as part of the Biennial Goals. After Convention legal contracts for each project are jointly signed by the Presidents of Zonta International and Zonta International Foundation. During the duration of each project the

Foundation applies strict and prudent monitoring guidelines to each the project and is provided with progress reports prior to the release of each agreed portion of funds for each project. Zontians are able to view the progress of the Zonta international service projects on the Zonta Web site. (www.zonta.org)

So here we have it! The success of these International Service Projects comes back to the monies the Foundation receives from Zontians, Zonta Clubs and other donors.

Please give generously to your Foundation and the International Service Fund.

Thank You.



How Can My District Foundation Ambassador Help?

District Foundation Ambassadors are here for *you*, to help you get to know and get involved with the Zonta International Foundation. These knowledgeable, committed Zontians have gone through special training to help them promote the goals of the Zonta International Foundation. Chosen for their dedication to Zonta, their familiarity with members in their District, and their ability to make public presentations and work with volunteers, these dedicated women can come to your Club, Area, or District meetings to give presentations that will motivate club members and help you to understand and take pride in the great work of the Zonta International Foundation. Ambassadors are knowledgeable about projects

and activities of the Foundation. Because Ambassadors receive monthly updates on the various projects that the Zonta International Foundation funds, they can give informative and up-to-date presentations explaining the various Funds and the current projects that they support. Ambassadors can also explain the variety of ways an individual can give to the Foundation, and how the Foundation helps to fulfill the mission of Zonta International. Many Ambassadors promote the Foundation through District newsletters or at special events, so keep an eye out for information from your District Foundation Ambassador – see if she can make a visit to your club. Remember, Foundation Ambassadors are here for you!



See Your Club Name in the Headlines

Article submissions and story ideas from Zonta Club members are vital to ensuring that *The Zontian* magazine represents Zonta's internationalism, diverse membership and professionalism. Share your club's successes with your

fellow Zontians through *The Zontian* magazine and the Zonta International Web site. Go to the Zonta International Web site, click on Zonta Action, and "Share Your Club Story today!" Just follow the three simple steps to submit your story for publication. You can

even include a picture!

In our next issue, we will look at ways Amelia Earhart Month was recognized. Send us your stories.

*Because space in *The Zontian* is limited, it may not be possible to include all submissions. When space prevents inclusion in the magazine, stories will be shared on the Zonta International Web site.



ZISVAW: Preventing Gender-based Violence in Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka, an Update

It is a tragic fact that after a natural disaster such as the devastating tsunami in December 2004, violence against women increases greatly. In the aftermath of the tsunami it was quickly determined that women and girls accounted for the largest number of deaths by far – an early indicator of the difficult road ahead.

While women were the group in most need of assistance in the initial relief efforts, the initial disaster response did not take into account the particular requirements of women and girls. Issues of sanitation, privacy, and safety were largely neglected, leading to an environment in which women are especially vulnerable to sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV).

Relief organizers were soon faced with recognition of the need to specifically respond to the unique ways in which a natural disaster affects women. Early efforts by these workers included improving protective measures for women in camps and shelters and setting up 27 Women’s Centers – safe, accessible spaces for women and girls – in four tsunami affected districts. These achievements helped to lay the groundwork for the Zonta-funded United Nations Population Fund project aimed at preventing



GBV in post-tsunami Sri Lanka.

Over the past nine months, much preparatory work to strengthen the health sector response to sexual and gender-based violence has been initiated. A feasibility study analyzing how best to integrate GBV programs into healthcare services was completed, and as a result, organizers have worked with the Ministry of Health to launch a pilot program for the on-site treatment of victims of sexual and gender-based violence in the Matara hospital. This initiative includes training on GBV issues for every category of healthcare staff, helping them to provide proper care to victims of GBV, including medical treatment and counseling. A screening system has established to

help trained staff identify and support victims of GBV and women at risk. Healthcare workers have the resources to refer women to other systems within their communities, including support groups and other services provided through the Women’s Centers.



Awareness and advocacy efforts are being implemented to educate communities and individuals about GBV.

Challenges have arisen from the escalation of hostilities in the North East region, slowing some activities, however, project partners have adopted flexible strategies to work around the problems.



UN Reform: the Stakes for Women's Economic Security

Jackie Shapiro, Chairman, United Nations Committee

In the last few years, the United Nations has been undertaking a comprehensive review of every aspect of its work to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

A key element of this process was the establishment of a High-Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence whose mandate was to suggest how UN programs on sustainable development, the environment and humanitarian assistance could work more effectively together. Women vigorously protested the absence of gender equality concerns in the original mandate of the Panel. As a result that mandate was soon broadened to include the "gender equality architecture" of the UN and gender mainstreaming as well as to encompass gender equality, human rights and sustainable development as cross-cutting issues for consideration.

The Panel's report, presented at the UN on 9 November 2006, contains many bold ideas, but it will not be discussed by the General Assembly until some time in 2007 and its future is perhaps complicated by the change in the Secretary General.

UN reform, in the context of economic security for women, is an important issue. While the UN has been a leader in the establishment of global norms and standards for women's rights, its programs addressing women-specific

needs are largely marginalized and under-funded.

Economic security in the form of employment is one piece of delivering effective development. UNIFEM has been a leader in working with governments at all levels to develop gender-responsive budgets that help to ensure and to track that money is directed at programs that benefit women. UNIFEM has an Economic Security Programme that works to change laws that discriminate against women workers, to build networks and partnerships

"Our most important constituency are the billions who do not enjoy the prosperity and well-being that many of us take for granted and whose deprivation inspired a global call to action – the Millennium Development Goals. It is for the sake of the poor and the destitute that we need an efficient United Nations, one that is well governed, well funded, and one that will remain a global repository of hope."

Secretary-General's High-Level Panel

that offer more livelihood choices to women, and to ensure that women have access to technology.

A recent publication of UNFPA and the Microcredit Summit Campaign, *"From Microfinance to Macro Change..."* suggests that reproductive health education integrated on a mass scale with microfinance services for the very poor could expand the "potential of microfinance to empower women and offer a dignified route out of poverty..."

As over half of the world's poor are women, and women are more insecure in the working world – unemployed longer and more frequently, and employed at lower wages – women have a tremendous stake in UN reform that strengthens the women's component of its structure and in development initiatives that focus on targeting and supporting women at the ground level.

Gender: A key to effective development

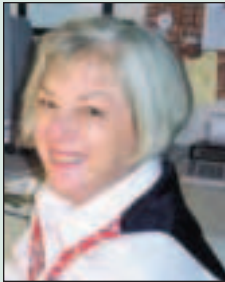
We consider gender equality to be central to the delivery of effective development outcomes, and the Secretary-General tasked us with a specific mandate to suggest radical changes to improve performance. We therefore propose a step change in the UN's delivery of gender equality and women's empowerment, by:

- Consolidating the three existing UN entities into an enhanced and independent gender entity, headed by an Executive Director with the rank of Under Secretary-General, appointed through a meritocratic competition demonstrably open to those outside the UN.

- The gender entity would have a strengthened normative and advocacy role combined with a targeted programming role.
- The gender entity must be fully and ambitiously funded.
- Gender equality would be a component of all UN One Country Programmes.
- The commitment to gender equality is and should remain the mandate of the entire UN system.

Excerpt from *Delivering as One, Report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel*

Frequently Asked Questions about Membership



Glenne Harding
Chairman
OMC Committee

We want our club to be larger; where do we start?

The first question you must ask yourself is “why are we not growing?”

Is it because you are not recruiting? On average clubs recruit 10% of their membership each year. If your percentage is less than that, you can start by increasing your recruiting efforts.

Is it because you are not retaining your members? The Zonta average attrition rate is 13% per year. Our goal is to lose no more than 10%. If your club’s attrition is over 10%, ask yourself why? Use a club survey or just talk to members about what they like and dislike about your club. Are your meetings dull? Find exciting speakers who have something interesting to say

on topics related to the status of women in your local area. Is the business meeting too long? Have an agenda with times and control the meeting so it doesn’t “wander.” Whatever you learn, takes steps to improve your club so people want to stay involved.

Can we get some practical information?

Yes. The Zonta International Web site (www.zonta.org) has tools for your use. Log in, look under Member Resources, Tools for Clubs, Membership Recruitment and Retention. You will find a club self-audit, a membership planning tool, sample recruiting materials, retention ideas and success stories. There’s also a place to share your story!

The “Membership Matters” newsletter was distributed in January. If you haven’t seen it, use the link from Tools for Clubs to go to the OMC (Organization, Membership and Classification) Committee page and download it.

Are there other places to get help?

Yes. There are many Zonta leaders who are willing, able, in fact, **eager** to help you. Have you talked to your Area Director? Your Lt. Governor or District Membership Chairman? Your Governor? Centurions in your District?

The members of the OMC Committee are assigned geographically to assist Districts. Please use the assignment list below and ask for their help. Their contact information is in “Membership Matters.”

- Districts 1-12 and 15
Tebbie Clift
- Districts 13-14, 20-21 and 27-30
Marie-Helene Mallet
- Districts 16 and 23-24
Maxelyn Tudman
- Districts 17, 25-26, and 31-32
Emiko Ohga
- Districts 18 and 19
Annette Binder.

Or get in touch with me.
With a little effort, you *can* succeed!

A Variety of Recruitment Strategies Pays Off

Liz Ategou, Coordinator, Membership Development and Communications

Lisa Winter, an accountant, read about Zonta in a local newspaper in March 2006. Intrigued by the idea of an international service organization whose mission is to advance the status of women, Lisa visited the Zonta International Web site – She was compelled to complete the prospective member questionnaire, which was forwarded to the then-District Governor, Sandra Cronk. Sandra reviewed Lisa’s questionnaire and sent it to Club President, Joan Kohler. Joan and other club members contacted Lisa, and by June she had joined the Club.

The Zonta Club of Tonawandas, New York, USA has added five new members in the last year through a

variety of strategies, giving the club a well-deserved boost of energy for their recruitment efforts.

Reaching out to friends and family brought two new members for the ZC of Tonawandas, Debi Jaeger, a property manager, was introduced to Zonta by a family member, and Evelyn Zupo, a banker, was introduced to the club by a friend.

Taking the initiative and approaching a new business owner in the community resulted in another success for the Tonowandas Zontians. Club members approached Tracey Miles, the owner of a chocolate shop catering to local businesses, during the grand opening of her store.

Delores Saber, a “fixture” in the local community was approached by Zontians to join when her classification opened up within the club.

“Looking over the list of former members to see if their circumstances have changed and they would like to return, is also something that could be done quickly and perhaps bring back a member or two for some clubs,” noted club member Helen Byrnes.

The Zontians of the Tonawandas are proud of their recruitment efforts, especially considering how these new members contribute to the professional diversity of the Club, but they recognize that a focus on membership needs to be ongoing and proactive.

Focus on Violence Against Women

Filipino Zontians

Zontians in the Philippines (District 17) celebrated Zonta International's 87th anniversary on 8 November 2006 with the launch of a district-wide service and advocacy goal to raise awareness of, and to reduce and prevent violence against women.



In preparation for the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign that started at the end of November, District 17 Governor Virma Vergel de Dios hosted a day-long program to discuss Philippine laws that address violence against women (VAW) and how those can be applied at the local level. Carmencita Henson, District 17 ZISVAW Subcommittee Coordinator, introduced *Ako at Aking Karaptan*, a publication she spearheaded that illuminates the far-reaching and complex topic of gender-based violence.

Filipino Zonta Clubs followed the district lead and initiated several community projects. The Zonta Club of Pateros-Taguig conducted a survey that revealed the great needs in their community in regards to women's health and gender violence. The study found that gender violence is not often discussed or addressed by authorities to the detriment of the women victims. There is, in fact, concrete evidence that the deprivation of their rights has resulted in their low self-esteem and the stunting of personality development.

In response to this, the Club collaborated with the local government to open a half-way house where women

and children victims of violence can be safe while their cases are investigated by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). A Memorandum of Agreement to maintain these services was signed by the Club and the Local Government of Pateros, including the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the DSWD.

This collaborative effort between the Zonta Club of Pateros-Taguig and the local government is a major achievement for service and advocacy. The club has been successful in raising funds with the help of generous donors. These funds will be allocated for the improvement of the halfway house, the reproduction of reading materials, and the conduct of monthly seminars in the communities served by the Club.

Zonta Club of St Louis

In St. Louis, Missouri, USA, seven women of South Asian descent, including Zontian Dr. Jothika Manepalli, came together out of concern for the plight of victims of domestic violence (DV) in their community and the desire to provide a coordinated community response. They began informally with community outreach and education, providing some basic direct services in order to cultivate contacts and allies among key members of the South Asian community. In April 2002, after nearly a year of research and planning, SAWERAA, the South Asian Women's Empowerment Regional Association, was born.

A baseline survey (2002) confirmed SAWERAA's assessment that a significant level of DV occurs in the community. It noted that, despite widespread awareness of individual acts of DV, South Asians, as a community, deny that it happens. SAWERAA adopted an empowerment model as the basis for its services and programs and established a telephone helpline in March 2003.

SAWERAA's Empowerment Model

As part of the empowerment model, SAWERAA provides information and conducts outreach through community presentations. With a grant from the Zonta Club of St. Louis in 2006, SAWERAA was able to purchase a laptop computer, an LCD projector and a screen that vastly improved the quality of their presentations.

Presentations have been made to well over 700 people within the South Asian community, as well as to educators, social service professionals, and physicians in the mainstream community.

SAWERAA's helpline is operated 100% by volunteers. In five years over 400 helpline calls have provided crisis intervention counseling, legal assistance, and information.

"I was hesitant to approach mainstream agencies for help. I was not sure how to seek help from mainstream social service system, even if I wanted to and, due to my cultural beliefs, I felt compelled to uphold family dignity and privacy, regardless of the cost to me. Also I was afraid that non-Indian service providers might expect me to take actions that are not compatible with my upbringing."

—SAWERAA client

South Asian immigrants, comprised mostly of highly educated and skilled individuals, are perceived by the mainstream and themselves as a "model minority" community. Because they are generally so high-achieving, the community believes erroneously that domestic violence only occurs among less educated, lower social and economic classes both here and in their home countries. They also believe that immigration to the US has led to a more egalitarian family structure, thereby eliminating domestic violence from their ranks. These misimpressions are being addressed by SAWERAA.

Zonta International Honorary Member Selected as Judge in Cambodian War Crimes Tribunal



Dame Silvia Cartwright

Dame Silvia Cartwright, a Zonta International Honorary member since 2001 and Keynote Speaker at the Zonta International Convention in Melbourne in 2006, is serving as one of only two international judges in the Trial Chamber of the Tribunal for former members of the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia. The three-year tribunal is set to start in mid-2007.

“This tribunal is very important for the Cambodian people who suffered so much during the Khmer Rouge period,” Ny Chakrya, a ranking member of the Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association, a Phnom Penh-based non-governmental group, told the Inter Press Service News Agency. “They want to see a fair and transparent tribunal.” As many as two million people died of starvation, overwork and execution between 1975 and 1979 as the communist Khmer Rouge drove Cambodia's entire population onto vast collective farms in their bid to create an agrarian utopia.

Dame Silvia, whose term as Governor-General of New Zealand ended in August 2006, was not ready for retirement. She chose instead to return to her profession as a lawyer and judge when she applied for the Cambodia War Crimes Tribunal position after the United Nations call for interest from judges.

“I can't go back to being a judge here in New Zealand, so this is my one great opportunity to undertake

some more legal and judicial work in a most unique environment.”

The Tribunal will be drawing on the experience of other war crimes tribunals, but will be guided by Cambodian law, she said. This would take Dame Silvia out of her comfort zone.

“It's going to be quite a challenging experience,” she said. “Here in New Zealand it's challenging enough to work under law that I know well.”

Zontian and past Amelia Earhart Fellow Appointed President of German University

Monika Auweter-Kurtz was named the President of the University of Hamburg, Germany in November 2006. Just prior to this, Ms. Auweter-Kurtz received the Federal Service Cross First Class from the outgoing university President Horst Köhler. This award honors her achievements in the area of aeronautics and space technology research and her efforts to promote women in science. Ms. Auweter-Kurtz is the first female president of one of Germany's largest universities.



Monika Auweter-Kurtz

Currently a member of the Zonta Club of Stuttgart, Ms. Auweter-Kurtz was an Amelia Earhart Fellow from 1979-80 and 1980-81. She has served on the International Amelia Earhart Subcommittee since 1990.



Dr. Claire Tomlin

Former Amelia Earhart Fellow Receives MacArthur Genius Award

Dr. Claire Tomlin, an Amelia Earhart fellow from 1996-1997 and 1997-1998, has been awarded the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship – more commonly known as the “Genius Award.” This award is an unrestricted grant intended to allow recipients to pursue their own intellectual and professional inclinations, and is awarded based on a candidate's “exceptional creativity, promise for important future advances based on a track record of significant accomplishment, and potential for the fellowship to facilitate subsequent creative work.”

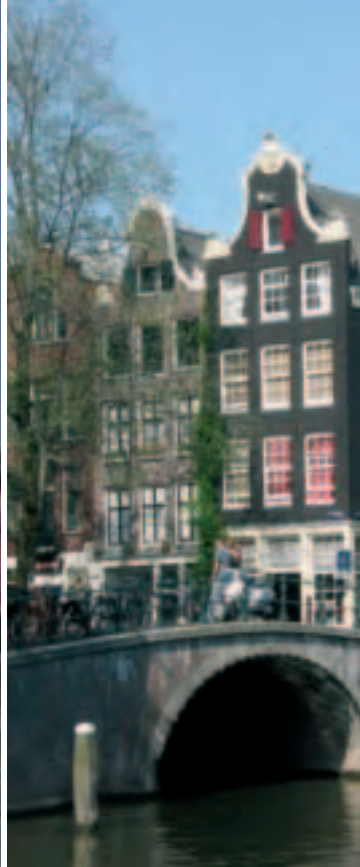
Dr. Tomlin is an aviation engineer with appointments as associate professor in the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics at Stanford University, and associate professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of California, Berkeley.

Welcome to Rotterdam 2008: enjoy the Architecture



ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
ROTTERDAM 2008

The Netherlands is a paradise for Zontians coming to the 59th Zonta Convention 2008 in Rotterdam. Foreigners associate the Netherlands primarily with charming historic inner cities and stately canal side houses. Yet it is also an international trendsetter in modern architecture and urban construction. This means that lovers of architecture among the attendees of the Zonta Rotterdam Convention 2008 have lots of options in the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, Delft, Gouda and Haarlem they will find the famous small-scale Dutch inner cities with canals, bridges and historic structures from the 16th and 17th centuries.



The centre of Dutch modern architecture is Rotterdam. Although Rotterdam is the economic hub of the Netherlands, thanks to its position as third largest port in the world, contemporary architecture determines the image and identity of Rotterdam. Rotterdam is a young, modern, open city characterized by its buildings and city planning. The architecture not only enhances the quality of the developed environment, but also adds a cultural dimension to the city. During the second world war Rotterdam lost its complete historical city centre. Brimming with ambition, the citizens of Rotterdam set to work rebuilding their city to recover from their fundamental physical and psychological loss. The city has since developed dynamically into a Mecca for lovers of modern architecture, and spectacu-

lar buildings and bridges have been built. Rotterdam is constantly under (re)construction, as it will be during the Convention in 2008. The city is always in motion, very dynamic, busy as a bee.

In Rotterdam, many famous architects from different countries have designed and created the buildings. Ambitious architects get full cooperation from the Rotterdam City Council to create (high rise) buildings in the city centre or on the banks of the river Maas. Architects like Renzo Piano, Norman Foster, Will Alsop, Skidmore, Joan Busquets and Dutch architects like Rem Koolhaas, Jo Coenen, MVRDV, Adriaan Geuze from West 8, Francine Houben from Mecanoo all accepted the challenge and created remarkable buildings in Rotterdam. In

1996 the Dutch architect Ben van Berkel designed the Erasmus Bridge in Rotterdam: architectural infrastructure as a distinctive landmark within the surrounding skyline.

All Rotterdam-going Zontians should bring their cameras in 2008, and, if possible, book up the tours and the pre- and post convention excursions in Holland.

Architecture is art, culture, creation, dimension, design, imagination and fascination; nurturing the eye and the soul.

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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 and expertise you will share with us and with those you serve!

Potenza
District 28, Area 3

Martina Franca
District 28, Area 3

As of 1 March 2007, Zonta International has 1,234 clubs in 68 countries and geographic areas.