

President's Report

Dear members

The commencement of a new financial year marks an active time for Zonta International with the biennial conference concluding in Orlando on 1st July. The daily conference reports that members should have received via email have highlighted the main speakers and topics, and provided varied photos and news. We will be keen to hear from Narelle Fraser, her first-hand report from the convention.

It was particularly pleasing to see that the Zonta Club of Brisbane Metro received fifth place in the Club Awards for the Zonta Says NO walk. The 2014-2016 Biennial goals are about living Zonta's mission with Conviction, Commitment and Courage. The focus of the International Service and ZISVAW Projects (see p.2) is on preventing root causes through education and include, amongst others projects, ongoing support for the Liberian Fistula project, an HIV-free generation in Rwanda, and Voices against Violence in 12 countries. Zonta International membership continues to grow and now numbers over 30,540 within 67 countries. I think it is important that our club draws on the interest and energy from the wider Zonta community to continue to vitalize and inspire around Zontal goals and projects.

The financial year commencement is also a time for us all to reflect on how to optimize club funds to allow support of worthwhile projects to continue. The recent donation of just over \$4000 to support Chisholm Refuge provide rugs and furnishing for the winter comfort for women escaping domestic violence is one such worthy cause. While the club balances are healthy, the next few months will require reflection on fundraising activity to sustain and expand in face of possible falling returns from regular activities. At this stage it appears that the October dinner meeting will be the most suitable to allow a special planning meeting which hopefully the majority of members can attend.

The Fashion Showcase planning continues to escalate and over the next few months. There will be opportunities for members to assist in diverse ways, but particularly supporting Maggie Williams in the excellent work she does organizing the parade of models.

Lastly, congratulations to Anne Vinning and her band of workers who completed around 50 breast cushions recently for Princess Alexandra Hospital. They have been advised the hospital will need a regular donation of 20 per month for ongoing demand.

I look forward to seeing you at the 14th July dinner meeting.

Maree



The yellow rose,
Zonta's symbol

Inside

- ZISVAW
- United Nations World Population Day, Focus on Youth and
- Case study

Date Claimers

July 14th, 7pm USC Dinner Meeting

Email apologies to **Lyn Hill** on
lynette.hill@bigpond.com

by **9am on Friday, 11th July**.
Please let Lyn know **before-hand** if you:

- are bringing a guest
- have special dietary needs
- are returning after an absence

Wednesday, July 30th 6pm Board Meeting Ashgrove Library

The most powerful thing you can do to change the world, is to change your own beliefs about the nature of life, people, reality, to something more positive – and act accordingly.

*Shakti Gawain
(cited A Guide for the Advanced Soul, S Hayward)*

The deadline for recording your intended absence from the dinner meeting is **9am on the Friday** before. Failure to notify Lyn in time will mean you will still have to pay the cost of the dinner (\$43), since the Club will be charged for it regardless.

ZI Strategies to End Violence Against Women Program (ZISVAW)

Globally, gender-based violence is the most pervasive and least recognized human rights violation. Rooted in inequality, it affects women of every race, class, culture, ethnicity, age and country. Zonta International strives to promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls and reduce the incidence of violence through the Zonta International Strategies to End Violence Against Women (ZISVAW) Program by:

- Supporting prevention and advocacy strategies locally and internationally.
- Awarding grants to United Nations agencies or recognized NGOs for projects that seek to change personal and/or political knowledge, attitudes and behavior contributing to gender-based violence.
- Increasing awareness and actions related to preventing violence against women by encouraging Zonta club involvement in local and national advocacy initiatives and service projects (www.zonta.org/WhatWeDo/InternationalPrograms/ZISVAWProgram.aspx)

UN World Population Day

The theme for the 2014 World Population Day on 11 July, is *Investing in Young People*

"On this World Population Day, I call on all with influence to prioritize youth in development plans, strengthen partnerships with youth-led organizations, and involve young people in all decisions that affect them. By empowering today's youth, we will lay the groundwork for a more sustainable future for generations to come"

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
Message for World Population Day
11 July 2014

The following information about World Population Day has been copied from the United National Events page.

As the world population edged to 7 billion people in 2011 (up from 2.5 billion in 1950), it has had profound implications for development. A world of 7 billion is both a challenge and an opportunity with implications on sustainability, urbanization, access to health services and youth empowerment.

In 1989, in its decision 89/46, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme recommended that, in order to focus attention on the urgency and importance of population issues in the context of overall development plans and programmes and the need to find solutions for these issues, 11 July should be observed by the international community as World Population Day.

Today's 1.8 billion young people are shaping social and economic realities, challenging norms and values, and building the foundation of the world's future. Yet too many young people continue to grapple with poverty, inequality and human rights violations that prevent them from reaching their personal and collective potential.

On 2014 World Population Day, we call for investments in support of the largest-ever generation of youth (www.un.org/en/events/populationday).

Of extreme importance for girls and young women especially, is the need to protect them from early marriage and child-birth which has a devastating impact on their lives. Girls and young women are more likely to die during childbirth and to suffer obstetric complications. More generally, early marriage usually truncates their education, permanently limiting their ability for independence and the ability to provide adequately for their families.

Whilst it is clear that much needs to be done for females in Sri Lanka, the following case study demonstrates the positive impact of programs targeted at young people.

Investing in youth pays dividends, evidence from Sri Lanka shows

(<http://unfpa.org/public/home/news/pid/17692>)

Since the 1970s, UNFPA has worked with partners, including policymakers, in Sri Lanka to improve the quality of maternal and newborn care, increase access to sexual and reproductive health services, and promote education and programmes for youth.

“Sustained and increased investments in sexual and reproductive health services [have] tremendous benefits to women, families and societies,” the report indicates. These services have helped bring about one of the lowest maternal mortality rates in South Asia, with 38.6 deaths per 100,000 live births, according to the publication.

Such interventions do not simply save lives – they also contribute to families’ overall well-being, which can lead to a host of other benefits.

“In addition to improved health, sexual and reproductive health services contribute to economic growth, societal and gender equity, and democratic governance,” the report says.

The country has also benefitted from increased investments in education, with a “significant increase in [the] number of teachers in government schools” taking place between 2007 and 2012.

The enrolment rates in primary and junior secondary school have reached 95 per cent and 93 per cent respectively, the report says.

Investments in education

“Life was not easy,” Sivagnanaselvan Dinesh told UNFPA. “We often sacrificed luxuries in food and clothing to stay afloat.” Mr. Dinesh, who grew up in war-affected Jaffna, was interviewed as part of “[Generation Youth: Yielding the Returns on Investments](#),” a publication showcasing the stories of young leaders in the country.

“Despite our hardships, I was always determined to turn things around. The key to my success lay in... quality education,” he said.

Mr. Dinesh is now a medical student, and he looks forward to giving back to his community when completes his training.

Work remains

Still, much work remains to be done.

While health and family planning programmes are available around the country through a decentralized field health system, resources are often scarcer in districts that were affected by conflict and in poor, rural areas.

Female empowerment – including economic empowerment – also remains a priority.

“It has been estimated that raising female employment levels to that of male levels could have a direct impact on GDP... However, the latest available data and indicators reflect that gender equality in Sri Lanka is not as satisfactory as its achievements in other human development indicators,” according to the report.

Ultimately, the future of the country, and the world, rests on the fate of young people.

“Youth are not demanding support,” said Ahmad Alhendawi, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Youth, who attended the launch of the report. “They are asking for investments.”