



#BirlikteBaşaracağız

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF TURKEY

(2018-2020)





Herewith we are presenting you our last term detailed report.

Report is consisted of our local and international level activities related with our goals:

- *Education
- *Economic empowerment of women
- *Eliminating violence against women
- *Health
- *Sustainable environment

For your kind attention.

With my sincere regards,

Nur Velidedeoğlu Kavuncu
SI Turkish Union President
2018-2020



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

WHO ARE SOROPTIMISTS?

After the founding of the first Soroptimist Club in Oakland, California, in 1921, the prominent French cosmetic surgeon Dr Suzanne Noël initiated the first Soroptimist International Club in Paris in 1924. She inspired the founding of the first Club in continental Europe as well as many others after that. Dr Noël set an unrivalled record by establishing a dozen clubs around the world, thus widely disseminating the concept of Soroptimism. It was therefore fitting that Suzanne Noël was elected the first President of the European Federation of Soroptimist International in 1930.

Since then, the European Federation, i.e. Soroptimist International of Europe now consists of nearly 31,400 members, present in 44 countries.

GLOBAL VOICE FOR WOMEN

Soroptimists are professional women who are engaged in their communities and who work actively on improving the lives of women and girls in these communities. Soroptimists have a global vision of the world and of women's issues. We are in touch with the challenge's women face in their local communities on a daily basis and have a deep understanding of their living conditions and their rights.

As Soroptimists, we conceptualize and implement projects to better the lives of women and girls and are ideally positioned to respond to challenges that are global in scope but need to be implemented in accordance with local realities.

We have been advocating for women's and girls' rights at the local, national, and international levels since 1921. We have acted as a 'global voice for women' in different international fora and in the communities we live in.

There are more than 72,000 Soroptimists around the world and nearly 31,000 across Europe, the Middle East and Caribbean witnessing daily the changes in our societies and working proudly to improve the lives of women and girls. SIFAF Soroptimist International Africa Federation is established in 2020 with African countries from within European Federation.

VISION

Women and girls will achieve their individual and collective potential, realize aspirations and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide.



MISSION

Soroptimists transform the lives and status of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities.

PRINCIPLES

The principles of Soroptimism are to strive for:

- The advancement of the status of women
- High ethical standards
- Human rights for all
- Equality, development and peace
- The advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace

Our organization, Soroptimist International of Europe, holds special consultative status at the United Nations' ECOSOC and has participatory status at the Council of Europe and the European Women's Lobby. Soroptimist International of Europe exchanges with these institutions and provides them with evidence-based information for the formulation of policies that advance women's issues.

Each year, Soroptimists design, fundraise for, and implement thousands of projects that benefit women and girls in their communities. To the extent that women's needs across the world vary, Soroptimist projects vary as well. That said, all Soroptimist projects share three characteristics:

- They address a local need
- They are conceptualized and implemented locally
- Their main purpose is to bring concrete improvement to the lives of women and girls

Soroptimists work in five key areas of importance to women and girls:

- **EDUCATION**

Building and refurbishing of schools, provision of school supplies, curriculum development, scholarships and mentoring, continuing education for migrant women, legal literacy training for women, lobbying for equality in education.

- **ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

Vocational training, business skills training, farming skills training, microcredit loans, childcare for job seekers, improved access to resources, lobbying for equality in employment.



- **ELIMINATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

Building of shelters, building of protected courtrooms, counselling services, aid to victims of violence, anti-trafficking initiatives, lobbying for the elimination of violence against women...

- **HEALTH**

Building and refurbishment of hospitals, provision of medical supplies, nurse/midwife training, tests/screenings, education on reproductive health and rights, lobbying for improved health care...

- **SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT**

Building and refurbishment of sanitary facilities, sustainable farming initiatives, waste management, greening initiatives, lobbying for environmental sustainability.

ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE

SI is made up five Federations ;

Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA)

Soroptimist International of Europe (SIE)

Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI)

Soroptimist International of South West Pacific (SISWP)

Soroptimist International of Africa (SIFAF)

The SI HQ office is based in Cambridge, UK.

Find out more

Visit the websites to find out more:

Soroptimist International (SI) – www.soroptimistinternational.org

Soroptimist International of Europe (SIE) – www.soroptimisteurope.org

Soroptimist International of Turkey (TSKF) – www.soroptimistturkiye.org



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF TURKEY (TÜRKİYE SOROPTİMİST KULÜPLERİ FEDERASYONU)

As a representative of Soroptimist International of Europe, SI Turkish Union has carried out the global mission of Soroptimist International in Turkey since 1948.

The Union is a public spirited association with over 1000 members in 35 clubs located in 14 cities of Turkey. In 1948, the first Soroptimist club in Turkey was founded in Istanbul by the novelist Müfide Ferit Tek. The Union was established by merging the Istanbul and Ankara clubs in 1953.

SI Turkey focuses on following objectives as identified before:

- Education
- Economic Empowerment
- Eliminating Violence Against Women
- Health
- Sustainable Environment

COMMUNITY TRAINING CENTERS

The Turkish Union has five Community Training Centers in different cities: Gültepe (Istanbul), Atatürk (Ankara), Başkent (Ankara), Ege (İzmir), Balat (Istanbul).

The Soroptimist Community Training Centers are symbols of friendship, solidarity, and cooperation. These centers are an integral part in the campaign against illiteracy.

Soroptimists are constantly in search of areas that will enable us to use the center son a grater scale. These centers offer income generating courses to young women and mothers. The courses offered include: Reading and Writing, Sewing, Home-Economics, Carpet Weaving, Accounting, Foreign Languages, Childcare, Computer Literacy and Health Care.



BALAT CULTURE HOUSE



Fener Balat, a district which is one of the most important touchstones of our cultural heritage, an area that is protected by UNESCO and EU Project due to its historical and touristic structure, attracts attention of many people and several institutions with its architectural and social texture. The district where Turkish, Greek, Armenian and Jewish people live together

in harmony, carries the breeze of history reflecting the serenity and experience of the centuries gone by on the one hand and the dynamism of our age on the other, has an ever changing face. One such novelties that came along with this change is the “TSKF Balat Culture House” that was opened up on 17th June 2010.

Balat Culture House, which is made up of two adjacent buildings and a small backyard is designed to serve different functions simultaneously. At the ground level, a professional kitchen has been built as a part of the foundational project regarding the building In this kitchen the food to be served in the cafe in the second floor is prepared and it is also possible to run a cooking course with 20 participants. The entrance level of one of the buildings and the backyard garden serves as a cafe. This space is used by Soroptimists as a meeting ground and the visitors to the district can have a cup of coffee or have lunch in this historical building enjoying its beauty.

The entrance level of the other building is used as managerial section. In the upper level of the building which has the cafe, there is an art gallery. We aim at hosting an exhibition here every month. The upper level of the managerial section is organized as a meeting and education area. In this section, the Soroptimist Clubs organize gatherings and trainings for the women and children of the district are provided.

The building is designed with a double-use. The first use is to provide trainings and services in line with the aims of the Soroptimist clubs, the second use is to do with raising funds to cover the costs of this services and the building and allow the cooking course participants to earn some money using the skills they gained at the course. After this comprehensive project is applied reaches its full force, Soroptimist members will try to make a difference in the cultural, social and economic areas by building a bridge.

In 2018-2019 the soup days were organized in every week for Balat’s women and children and gave some information to them about healthy nutrition by Soroptimist clubs. A joint painting exhibitions, in which the members of Turkish Soroptimist clubs who paint exhibited their work took place in Balat Culture House.

From Starting 2016 we invited our clubs outside İstanbul to organize “Kitchen Workshop “together, for example in 2019 with Club Seyhan, TSKF organized special day; with the cooperation of a famous cook our “Balat women kitchen team “prepared special meals and soroptimists members and non soroptimists from İstanbul and Adana enjoyed the meal. In conclusion; these women are gaining



income and experience and they are becoming confident, by inviting other clubs, Soroptimists achieve more participants, synergy. Cafe Vodina, being a commercial enterprise enables us to serve these products (local meals, jam, etc. produced by these women) to all the visitors. All activities are shared via facebook and website.

Balat Culture House organize some courses to women and girls. These courses are Reading and Writing, Sewing, Amigurumi, Childcare and Health Care etc.

Within the 16 days of actions between 25th November (International day for the elimination violence against women) and 10th December, the Balat Culture house was lighted up orange color in order to take attention to violence against women and some activities were happened in the scope of this project.

<http://www.balatculturevi.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/balat.balatculturevi>

SPARK (COACHING FOR SCHOLARS)

(TURKISH UNION)

The coaching program was implemented to scholars by organizing of Soroptimist Turkish Union. To enable the scholarship students to become aware of their types of behavior in the process of preparation for business life by seeing their strengths and identifying their vision.

Turkish Union with 35 clubs, during the period 2018-2019 provide scholarships to 400 university students. SI Turkey Federation did not want to stay in the scholarship system only by giving scholarships, we also wanted to touch the lives of the young people with whom we gave scholarships. It aims to raise awareness of these students who are already successful in their education lives and aims to open their horizons before business future life. As the Turkish Union, we know granting a scholarship is a "Future Project". Knowing that half of the society is women and that these women are raising future generations, we say that everything starts with the education of women. We have implemented this project in Istanbul which we have chosen as the pilot region with our senior students who are in the decision stage of their lives.

First of all, the students who participated in this project met with the other scholarship students from clubs in Turkey and developed friendships to support each other in their future lives. They realized they were part of a whole. They were proud to be a soroptimist scholar. Apart from club members who support and act as role models, they met other soroptimists in Turkey.

During the project, they learnt the group work by two workshops that are made both at the beginning and at the end of the project. Some of them saw Istanbul and the sea for the first time in their lives. They were accompanied by group coaches in these group works. Through the prepared program, they saw themselves in their relationships, gained awareness of their attitude, actions, and behaviors towards everything they were in the universe and discovered the spirit of unity.

In four individual sessions, our students who traveled inside themselves have connected with their inner leaders, saw their strengths, had the opportunity to determine their vision of life. In other words, we touched the lives and souls of the young people who will be thrown into the society and



they discovered this by themselves. At the end of the project, they were given certificates for the work program they participated in, which we thought would be their reference in their future business life, and they added such an important program to their CV.

This project is planned as three terms; one in March 2019 and two in October 2019 and three March 2020. We reached 100 scholarship students in total.







SAGE

(ETİLER SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

SAGE in Work (SAGEW) is a project that aims to raise awareness about gender equality in working life. This project was executed in Istanbul with European Union grants by Etiler Soroptimist Club. Overall objective of SAGEW is to have a better understanding about gender equality concept in working life and contribute to the efforts to diminish economic participation part of gender gap in Turkey. Specific objectives are raising awareness among young women by building better understanding about work, money, time and power domains of gender equality; train young people about these four core domains of economic participation ; empowering young women by mentoring activities to enable them to become permanent and powerful actors of economic life, and turning at least 10 women into gender equality ambassadors. In order to realize these objectives we planned and executed

- (1) ChangEquality Activities to raise gender equality awareness among male and female university students.
- (2) ChangEquality Ambassadors' Program to ensure the sustainability of the project.
- (3) SAGEW Mentoring Program to empower women to cope with gender-based difficulties they may face in working life.
- (4) Woman Bridging Glass Cliff: International Conference on Gender Equality in Working Life (November 15, 2019) to form a platform for networking and experience sharing.

Main Results of the project are as follows:

- (1) We produced a special board game called ChangEquality at Work as a training tool to raise gender equality awareness in working life.
- (2) We reached 400 students in 11 universities.
- (3) We trained 80 women to equip them with different aspects of gender equality and selected 10 ambassadors to organize further university activities.
- (4) We executed a Mentoring Program with 25 mentors and 25 mentees.
- (5) We organized a conference with national and international participants, 22 speakers and 250 participants.

We also planned and executed various visibility actions via our web site and social media accounts with posts and short videos. We produced and distributed various printed materials and hanged posters. We realized press conference to spread our key messages with wide press coverage. We reached approximately 25000 people with these visibility activities.







POWERFUL CHILDREN POWERFUL FUTURE

(İZMİR SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

Izmir Club of Turkish Union started this project to raise awareness on Social Gender Equality, Women's Rights, Violence. Against Women, Communication Within Family and Women's Health and Hygiene, by organising seminars at schools. The targets were students, especially girls and also mothers of students. Most of these parents had immigrated to Izmir from villages and lived in disadvantaged areas.

Izmir Women Organisations Union signed a protocol with the Directorate of National Education of the Izmir Governorship to launch a project named "Powerful Children, Powerful Future" in 2019. The executors of the project would be NGO's. İzmir Soroptimist Club obtained the right to give education at schools by participating in this project. The schools and subjects were determined at meetings at the Izmir Governorship. Izmir Girls' High School and Sehit Fethibey Junior High School are chosen as pilot schools in former years. Two specialists, who are members of our Club, educated the people who would give lectures.

This project was initiated by a lecture on "Women's Rights and Violence" at Izmir Girls' School on Feb. 12, 2019. We executed the project until April 9, 2019. Nine sessions of training were provided for two schools. Most of the seminars were given by club members who were specialists.

The subjects of the speeches are :

- Women's Rights and Preventing Violence Against Women
- Women's Health and Hygiene
- Breast Cancer
- Social Gender Equality
- Communication Within Family

Some of the most important information they obtained are :

- Getting help in case of violence,
- Acquiring free mamograms,
- Awareness and hygiene of their bodies,
- Resolving disputes within families

Participation of the students and parents were good. Especially, the sessions on Communication Within Families were very interactive. At the end of each session, questionnaires were distributed by the Izmir Governorship. According to the results of this survey, this training was evaluated as very beneficial.



**DON'T STAY SILENCE AGAINST VIOLENCE****(TURKISH UNION)**

From 25th November – “International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women” to 10th December – “Human Rights Day”, Turkish Union focused on physical, sexual and physiological violence against women and girls. Depending on the data gained from “Stop Murder of Women” Platform, in 2017 there had been 409 women murdered, 387 children sexually harassed, 332 women violence in Turkey. Depending on the “Global Sexual Disparity”, Turkey has been reported at the 130th country out of 145. Women still stay at the most disadvantageous part. Within 16-Day Activism Program, Turkish Union launched an information campaign with the slogan of “Don’t Stay Silence Against Violence” at national level and attended by all clubs of Union. The aim is to raise awareness on violence against women and girls and their rights on the community for the prevention and elimination of violence. Billboard posters and banners that are included emergency lines of right contacts (i.e desk of government) were created and designed under the leadership of Turkish Union to draw attention to the violence against women and girls, to raise awareness on society. These posters were placed in many regions of Istanbul and in other cities were hung in public area like bus, train, metro stations for 16 days. Banners were hung in shopping malls, buses, pharmacies, cafes, education areas and etc. shortly, women and young people in all places that they can see them in their daily lives. These posters and visuals were used in all activities to raise awareness of community about violence against women and girls during 16 days activism program. These telephone numbers have the features that are suitable to Soroptimist’s vision and mission. They provide psychological support to the women and girls who have been exposed to violence during litigation progress and after than they help them to find jobs and to gain economical freedom. During 16 days activism, the theme application on Facebook was designed for Turkish Soroptimists to use. To attract attention to the violence against women and children in social media, all Soroptimists in Turkey has applied "don't stay silence against violence" theme in the frame of the cover photographs.

şiddete sessiz kalma...

ALO

(212) 656 96 96
(549) 656 96 96
Aile İçi Şiddet Acil Yardım Hattı

25 Kasım -10 Aralık Kadına Yönelik Şiddete Karşı Uluslararası Mücadele Günleri
#BirlikteBaşaracağız

TÜRKİYE SOROPTİMİST KULÜPLERİ FEDERASYONU
ATAKÖY • BOĞAZİÇİ • ETLER • İSTANBUL • LEVENT • MARMARA • MODA • PENDİK • ŞİŞLİ SOROPTİMİST KULÜPLERİ İŞ VE MESLEK KADINLARI DERNEKLERİ







SEE US

(TURKISH UNION)

The project of "See us" are planned in order to take attention to the problem "early marriage of girls" is a social awareness project in Turkey. The goals are to attract attention to the abuse suffered by the girls with this project, creating awareness and sensitivity in the community and in lawmakers and informing families about it. With the more consciousness created, it is the ultimate goal of the project to reduce/to end the abuse experienced by children.

According to the UNICEF report that is published in June 2016, 15 million girls are married every year in the world as child brides. In 2030, the number of children brides in the world is estimated to be around 950 million. When we look at Turkey, according to TÜİK 2016 datas, 111.241 people that's ages are between 16-19 years old were married.

While the number of early marriage men is 11.008 in this figure, the number of girls are 100.233 that is attractive data. This suggests that the rate of early marriage among girls is an 9-times more compared to men. According to TÜİK data; In 2016, the number of children officially married was 28.956.

Turkish Union investigates the forced marriage of the people that are under 18 years old in three main aspects.

The first aspect is psychology

It has been reported that the rates of diagnosing mental illness and seeking psychiatric support for women who are bride at childhood are more frequent than the those married at an adult age (Le Strat et al. 2011). In a study conducted in our country, 14.6% of early married girls are exposure to physical violence / abuse by the husbands 27.1% of them are subjected to emotional violence / abuse by people.

Psychological evaluation revealed that 45.8% of the cases are diagnosed with at least one psychological disorder and 16.7% of them are comorbid (two and more). The most common diagnoses are major depressive disorder (MDD) and adjustment disorder. Post-traumatic stress disorder and postpartum depression are the other diagnostic groups. In addition to this, 29.2% of these patients have had suicidal ideation after marriage and 20.8% have had suicide attempts. The right to speak about her own life take away by her husband and/or husband's family with her marriage. These women can not be decisive about their children and their future.

The second aspect is legal.

When looking at the legal aspects; the regulations were prepared by the government in 2016 related with marriage with younger than 18 years old to eliminate the problems in the community and the government announced that this intervention was indicated by a one time arrangement; it showed that the NGOs in Turkey emphasized the need to be sensitive to this issue.

In the progress of negotiation about the draft legal regulation, known as " Law on Sexual Abuse" in the Commission of the Parliamentary; the problem of "child brides" has been created the one of the main item on the agenda for a while in politics and NGO's in Turkey. The draft law withdrew from



the commission especially after the sensitivity and opposition of the majority of NGO'ss and society to it.

Therefore,"See us" project that will be initiated and managed by Turkish Union will provide important support for steps to be taken in to prevent child abuse. T. C. In accordance with Article 41/2 of the Constitution; the state is obliged to take the necessary measures for the protection of children and establish the necessary organization for this purpose. Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; the offense of sexual activity by using a child's defenseless situation (such as mental, physical disability or addiction) has been charged as a liability to the States parties. Age of Marriage and Marry; According to Article 124/1 of the Turkish Civil Code (TCC) No. 4721, the age of marriage is 17 years old.

The third aspect is physical.

When viewed physically, it is understood that how dangerous this issue will be. According to the studies, pregnancies occurring in Adolescent age are more risky than pregnancies after 19 years of age. Many negative symptoms such as abortion, dead baby in the womb, premature birth, intrauterine growth retardation and anemia occur.

The struggle against this multidimensional social problem has to be carried out in a multifaceted manner. The priority is to provide a coordination between the relevant government departments, local governments and NGOs. As Turkish Union with the project of "See us ", the our main goals will be create awareness " early marriage of girls in Turkey" draw attention to the problem on this issue in both the government and community.





“See Us” project is realized the activities that are followed a specific order by Turkish Union. In the pre-preparation phase of the project, project’s logo, project’s poster, project’s brochure, billboard and badge designs were completed to be used in media and social media communication. The “See Us” Manifesto was written for project communication.

The manifesto that is prepared specifically to draw attention to child abuse is to be read by the Soroptimists in each program and share with the public. Besides, in order to emphasize the captivity and helplessness of children to community, the bridal veils with the project logo, which is the distinctive sign of the project, were produced and made ready for use famous people and Soroptimists during reading of the manifesto. In addition, It is targeted to bring the issue to the agenda of the media by preparing press releases and press kits on the cities.

Before World Girls' Day, the first step of the “See Us” Project was launched on 10th October 2019 under the auspices of the Governorship of Kocaeli, in the partnership of Kocaeli Bar Association and Kocaeli Provincial Directorate of Family, Labor and Social Services with a special panel that is organized in Kocaeli.

Kocaeli Governor’s Hüseyin Aksoy participated in the first program, the panel that was subjected in theme of “Children and Marriage”, “Children and Bride” should not be side by side, was realized by keynote speakers of lawyers, pedagogues, social workers and women's health experts. The famous artist Göksel was supported the project by attending the panel and speaking about the issue. “See Us” Manifesto were read by Soroptimists who were wear bride veils with the printed project’s logo.

Provincial Protocol, Press Members, Non-Governmental Organizations, Guidance Teachers, Preachers, 300 people consisting of risky groups and taken service by Social Service Centers were attended to the launch, the project was received wide press coverage.

Information Training within the scope of the awareness-raising activities to be carried out on December-January-February and March in the Kocaeli branch of the Project and the trainings were given by Kocaeli Provincial Directorate of Family, Labor and Social Services. The training topics are "Correct Communication with Adolescents", "Early Marriage Results" and "Legal Marriages at an Early Age". It has been decided that the trainings dealing with these issues will be given to the target audience by Psychologists, Sociologists and Lawyers. In this direction, starting from December 2019 until the pandemic process, the trainings were given to parents at eight schools in Derince, Körfez, Dilovası and Gebze districts determined by the Governorship, and a target audience of 629 people in total was reached with the panel and December trainings. It will continue in the schools determined by the Governorship after the pandemic process. It is aimed to reach 1000 people at the end of the training.

The project was continued with Panels and Information Trainings in Mersin and Karadeniz Ereğli. Three clubs organized trainings with the quarterly calendar that is created with the Mersin Provincial Directorate of Family, Labor and Social Services. The trainings for parents since February 2020 were completed at the end of March due to the pandemic. Topics of the trainings provided; Correct Communication with Adolescents is Early Marriage Results and Legal Marriages at an Early Age. With 10 trainings in total, 600 parents and adults were trained, with 400 people participating in the panel, a total of 1000 women and girls were reached in Mersin.







NO TO VIOLENCE!!!!...

(KARŞIYAKA SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

Karşıyaka Soroptimist Club have planned to organize activities in front of the monuments and squares, the best known in İzmir, in order to raise public awareness as part of the International Day “Violence Against Women” and to prevent harassment against violence (which has become more and more common in our society).

An awareness campaign from November 25 to December 12 was launched during 16 days of Activism.

At the 1st step, the club contacted the Metropolitan Municipality of Karşıyaka and requested that the monument of Women Rights and the Museum to be illuminated in orange during 16 days.

This had been a new realization by Karşıyaka Soroptimist Club during 2 years in collaboration with the City Council and it has allowed our campaign to reach a big population.

At the 2nd step, an official permission from the Prefecture of Discreet was asked to walk on both sides of İzmir Bay following a fairly long route and take together the public transport boat.

The 3rd step of the campaign was to prepare Soroptimist visuals as banners protesting violence, balloons, orange materials..

At the 4th step, some nice photos were needed to use for this campaign and to share on social networks and with the Soroptimist International of Europe.

A professional photographer took the photos with the club members few days before the launch of the campaign . These photos were shared by all club members on social networks during these 16 days of activism.

On Sunday, 25th of November, club members and scholarship holders met in front of the Monument of Women's Rights which was the starting point for the walk.

The public's interest and curiosity for our protest against the violence in front of the Clock Tower, the symbol of İzmir, was so strong, in taking also in consideration the dissatisfaction with the current situation. We continued to walk along the Ramblais of İzmir, during 6 kms.

The end of the walk was at Gundogdu Place in İzmir where the president of our club made a press speech.

We think that our project is very effective in attracting public attention and raising awareness.





MEZITLI WEAVING

(MEZITLI SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

This project aims to revive the production of traditional Mezitli fabric which is actually tends to become lost and for sure providing economic empowerment to women which is one of our basic focuses.

Mezitli Soroptimist Club convened with the project partners. Mezitli Municipality provided the 3 weaving looms and the building where they can be set up and also place for the workshops. They also help us to announce about this project .The university's teaching staff supported to teach weaving techniques. The club members organized all the workshops and mentored the participants, who got the training 3 days a week, for 10 months. In addition, we supported the project with the "Developing for the Future" training series.

The club members provided support in the subjects of outfitting and modeling with a training of 20 hours to women who learned different weaving methods. We sed the threads required for the looms as well.

Women who were able to make so many different articles (bags, house textiles etc.), presented these in different organizations to be sold. In these organizations (such as Sun Fest, New Year's Shopping Fest and our club's traditional Mother's Day Shopping Fest) the club members always joined them to help for both presenting and selling. In addition, they performed over 1000 product sales in line with the special requests from the Mersin Chamber of Shipping and the Mezitli Municipality. Some of the women who are motivated with the product sales have started to weave in their own homes. Now they have not only employment opportunity but also confidence to be able to produce and contribute to their family budget.

The partner, the Department of Textile of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Mersin University presented this project in various symposiums and reports.

Besides all Mezitli Soroptimist Club provided scholarships to two department assistants who helped women on the methods.

The devoted approach of our partners and the ambition of women make this project special.







VARIOUS VOCATIONAL WORKSHOPS OPENED FOR WOMEN IN PRISON

(ANKARA SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

Main objective of the Project was to teach women in Sincan Women's Prison and Detention House ("Prison") to spend their time effectively, learn a vocation and turn this vocation into income-generating activities when they are released. Project aims to (a) create a social life within the reality of prison life (b) enable prisoned women to earn their own money and lead their life in prison without the need for support of third parties and (c) teach these women to sustain their own lives when they are released.

In order to start the Project in Prison, a permission letter was written to the General Directorate of Adult Recovery Unit. Under the leadership of both previous and current presidents of our Club, with the financial help of our members and donors; we provided the supplies of handicraft, painting, knitting and doll making courses. We believe these courses improve the skills of women and help them sustain themselves once they're released. To exemplify, the traditional hand-embroidery course is taught 16 hours per week for a total of 361 hours, and the doll-making course using knitting needles and crochet is taught for 30 hours per week for a total of 320 hours.

Following the end of workshops; in a visit to Prison by our Club, products of the workshops were examined and information was obtained from the authorities. Considering the cost of supply and inability of the women to purchase these supplies, we must underline that supplies by our Club had a significant impact on the effectiveness of these courses. We hope the skills women learned in the workshops will help them to survive as a self-sufficient individual in free life and to prevent them from committing crimes and returning back to prisons.







THE WATER OF TOMORROW

(TURKISH UNION)

As is known, unconscious use of water is one of the main problems of today. Unaware that water resources are reducing every single second; billions of people disregard simple and easy methods which, if conveyed to water consumers correctly, can help save water resources and hence our planet. Main objective of our SI Turkey in "Water of Tomorrows" is to teach that adopting simple changes to our everyday life may have grave impact on saving water for future generations. In 2019 Finish (under the guidance of WWF and National Geographic) initiated a countrywide Project, Water of Tomorrows, in order to encourage Turkish people to combat unnecessary water waste and unconscious use of water resources. One of the main pillars of the Project is to educate citizens as regards to (a) conscience use of water (b) significance of preserving water resources. Project was promoted via visual, printed, digital press as well as street and social media adds. Considering that the average water consumption of water is 217liters per person in Turkey and cleaning is one of the main streams of consumption; teaching women how to rationally use water resources is crucial. In this regard, SI Turkey undertook the education pillar of the Project and included all voluntary Clubs in Turkey to spread the Project all around Turkey.



In order to create a uniform seminar, content of the presentation is prepared with collaboration of İda Eğitim (education institution). Each partner Club organized multiple seminars in different locations of Turkey targeting women and school children. Presentation was presented at nine different locations in four different cities (İstanbul, İzmir, İzmit, Ankara). Hundreds of participants were educated on how to help minimize water waste to save our water by using simple tips which can be adopted to everyday life. Second focus point of the Project was educating teachers and children. In this regard, partner clubs such as Alsancak and Ataköy organized seminars in schools. Presentation encouraged women, teachers and school children to convey what they learned to other members of their household. Therefore, although number of audience of the Project is around one thousand; impact of the project is.





HEALTH WORLD WITH STRING BAGS

(MEZİTLİ SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

In consideration of huge increase in use of nylon bags and products which takes lots of years to dissolve in nature, we wanted to carry out a project that draws attention and raise awareness on

environmental sustainability by producing and using string bags instead of nylon bags.

First of all, we have arranged string bag knitting courses for women between 4.11.2018 and 8.2.2019. Mezitli Municipality provided a place for our course; Atatürk Volunteer House. We have prepared a poster for an effective announcement and shared on our social media accounts. 110 women attended our course in total and got their Certificate of Participation.

We have also attended several festivals on different times and different places in our city aiming to sell our trainees products, string bags and to inform the crowd about “What to do for a clean and livable environment?” and prompt them to use string bags by explaining harms of nylon wastes.

Our project was a successful, multiphase project that reached hundreds of thousands of audience including man, women, children from every walk of life. News on our project reported by TRT (National Channel) and local press played a significant role in reaching large masses.



https://www.facebook.com/pg/mezitlisoroptimistkulubu/photos/?tab=album&album_id=2773473979414077

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=543051902846338>





PILOT VILLAGE HEALTH ACTIVITIES

(ADANA SOROPTIMIST CLUB)

A series of activities towards supporting women and children became possible via “Pilot Village” project, specifically addressing some health issues, in Zeytinli Village, an underdeveloped village in the outskirts of Adana, a home for poor inhabitants such as immigrants/seasonal agricultural workers. Needs of the people were identified through consultation with local authorities. Adana Soroptimist Club provided educational necessities and had the school library reorganized. Through this interactive process target activities were determined. We believed that eyesight was important in improving education standards. Thus, we organized eye-checkups to detect sight problems. A total of 108 women and children, were checked for visual acuity and refractive errors. Children with possible refractive errors were taken to the hospital for further evaluation, and some were prescribed eyeglasses.

The increase in frequency of breast cancer in women, and the diversity of origins among the inhabitants of our pilot village in mind, we organized an applied seminar in coordination with the Governorship of Adana. Eighty-women were informed about breast cancer, and self-examination techniques. They learned to differentiate between good/bad masses through practicing on model breasts. Afterwards, women were taken to KETEM, -the public center for breast cancer-, for further evaluation.

As the need for sanitary water appeared to be uppermost of importance, water coolers were delivered to the school. Also, considering the fact that sport activities contribute to the enhancement of physical, mental and psychological health of the students, we provided volleyball uniforms, sweatpants, sneakers and equipment necessary for physical education classes. Later, we took pride by the news of the success of the volleyball team, taking the 4th place in our city.

To finance these activities we organized a “New Year’s Fair” where we sold ornaments and souvenirs, hand-made by club members. We also invited an inspirational blogger with many followers who enthused women and students to fulfill their dream. With the news of these projects on published and social media, we increased the followers and recognition of our club and “Soroptimist’s”.

