



Hope & Homes for Children

20<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Dear Hanne, Soroptimist Federation Presidents and members,

This year January-June we have received £156,192 from Soroptimist International towards Project Sierra. This brings the total raised so far to just over £592,000. Please do thank, on our behalf, the many Soroptimists who have raised this wonderful amount through so many ventures and so much hard work.

There have been two study tours this year and I have been fortunate to join representatives from SI federations on both of these. It is always both fascinating and challenging to see the project through the eyes of experienced and committed people from different backgrounds. Thought-provoking questions and warm affirmations of what the project is achieving were the order of the day during the study trips. and when mixed with a ready dose of humour, as they always were, made them memorable experiences for everyone involved.

As we travelled from site to site during the study trips we were received with an exuberant welcome but even more special than that was the opportunity to listen to the individual stories of young women and children who have been helped by Project Sierra. Despite the fact that they have often experienced exploitation and neglect on a scale we could hardly imagine these young women and children do not see themselves as helpless victims. Through Project Sierra they have the hope, the skills and the support to build a better future for themselves and their families. This is a huge achievement and one which Soroptimist International can justly be proud of.

One aspect of the project that many people on both study trips commented on was the strong relationship between HANCI-SL, our partner in Sierra Leone, and the communities in which they are working. This strong bond of trust and understanding has enabled HANCI-SL to not only change the lives of individual women and children but also to change the attitude, behaviour and sense of responsibility which local communities demonstrate towards these most vulnerable members of their communities. It is humbling to realise that through Project Sierra we are not only improving the lives of individuals but also making a lasting impact on the communities who will take care of them and many more like them, in the future.

I would like to encourage you to keep up these fantastic efforts for so many young women and children who have no-one else to assist them in the present and give them hope for the future. In their name, and I know they would want me to say this, I want to thank Soroptimist International for all the work, commitment and compassion which you have shown to these many forgotten women and children, and assure you of the transformation you are helping to bring about in this often-forgotten corner of the world.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Glackin  
**Africa Regional Manager**

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