



SOROPTIMIST  
Best for Women

*Improving the lives of women and girls  
through programs leading to social  
and economic empowerment.*

## Working As One: A Club Planning Tool

### Background

We define SIA's current Big Goal: *Increased Collective Impact* as the measurable change we can make in the lives of women and girls who face obstacles such as poverty, violence and teen pregnancy. It is about our organization all working together on the same programs with the same goals.

Clubs have told us their two biggest challenges are membership and public recognition. Historically, clubs and regions have identified projects to help women and girls in their local communities. With myriad projects across the federation – few with measured or reported impact – we cannot define or publicize our global work. This makes it difficult to gain recognition, members and supporters. Therefore, to meet our current Big Goal, we have asked clubs and region to focus on increasing the number of women and girls we reach through our Dream Programs.

We have made great progress so far, and we want to keep up the exciting momentum! Since we adopted our Big Goal in 2012-2013, we have:

- Increased the number of women empowered through the Live Your Dream Awards by 20%
- Increased the amount of funding given to women by 29%
- Launched Dream It, Be It, which empowered 20,000 girls in just two years
- Received the Summit Award from the American Society of Association Executives for Dream It Be It
- Attracted over 90,000 supporters to LiveYourDream.org
- Signed Torrid, our first retail corporate partner, attracted through LiveYourDream.org
- Increased our funds raised by 31%
- Slowed our membership decline from a 3% to a 1% loss rate

Our success with our current Big Goal is preparing us to achieve our 2021-2031 Big Goal: *Invest in the Dreams of Half a Million Women and Girls through Access to Education*. In our first Big Goal Exercise in 2016 our SIA clubs defined this as our next Big Goal and told us that the best way to achieve it is to **grow the impact of the Dream Programs**. We have set an ambitious goal but we have also given ourselves time to prepare.

### An Invitation

This club planning tool is another opportunity to clubs to participate in our change process. Clubs are invited to examine the projects that take time and resources to ensure they are helping us achieve our current and next Big Goal.

Planning involves more than deciding which new priorities and projects to take on. Sometimes we have to stop doing things. In the same way that pruning a rose bush allows the best buds to bloom, organizations must also go through necessary endings to grow and thrive. If all projects are given the same levels of support, hoping they all

will thrive, all projects compete for limited resources and no project truly flourishes. In order for Soroptimist to flourish, we must choose our priorities carefully.

What pruning could be done to allow your club to grow and thrive while devoting more resources to the Dream Programs?

## Assumptions

Before beginning, there are a number of assumptions that inform our process and activities. The primary assumption is that mission-based organizations have a tendency to do too much and have trouble letting go of projects and services regardless of how they are performing. Clubs are tempted to add projects to help their community in any way they can and to satisfy a diversity of members' interests. Also, there are people in our communities who are counting on us to do the same projects we have done in the past. If we don't make thoughtful choices, clubs can be overtaxed. Additional assumptions include:

- Our organization is stronger when we work together as one than if we are all pursuing different strategies in different communities.
- It is through the impact of our brand-unifying Dream Programs that we will gain global recognition.
- The global impact of our Dream Programs appeals to funders, potential members and other supporters.
- It is preferable to provide a limited number of high quality projects than to provide many mediocre projects.
- Clubs do not have the resources to respond to all the needs of women and girls or the needs of the community.

## Instructions for Club Presidents

### Step One: Planning

1. Review the Working As One PowerPoint presentation. Specific instructions are included in the PowerPoint notes.
2. Determine the timing and format of your conversation. Decide if you want to complete the activity during a regular club meeting or hold a separate meeting. This activity should be completed with at least half of the members of your club present. Reserve at least 1.5 hours for the 'Working as One' activity.
3. Invite your club members to participate in this club planning activity. Explain to members they are being invited to join an organization-wide conversation about how we can work as one towards the same goals to reach more women and girls who face obstacles.
4. Collect the materials you will need:
  - Flip chart paper
  - Markers
  - Dot stickers (yellow, red, blue, green)
  - Print one copy of the Vision, Mission and Objectives (slides 6, 7 and 11-14) and bring them with you as you will be taping them up on the wall to create the Strategic Plan/Challenge Map on the wall.
  - Print one copy of the Start – Stop – Continue worksheet for each member or group participating (page 4).

### Step Two: Facilitating Working As One

Following the activities and outlined in the Working as One PowerPoint, facilitate the conversation of your club.

1. Introduction
2. Reflection

3. Understanding the Strategic Challenge Map
4. Understanding Impact and Engagement
5. What is Stopping Us?
6. Club Activities
7. Stop, Start and Continue
8. Closing

### Step Three: Turning Dreams into Action

1. Compile and synthesize the information created by the groups and share back with the club.
2. Use the Club Road Map to understand the simple actions your club can make take to support our strategic direction.
3. Using the Turning Dreams Into Action Decision Tree, plan how you will put what you learned for your club to grow and thrive.

### Step Four: Take One Step

Participate in the Take One Step Campaign which will provide simple steps for clubs to take each month beginning in September 2018 to support our organizational change to help more women and girls and create better recognition for our organization.

| STOP  | START   | CONTINUE  |
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