

3rd European Interdistrict ZONTA Seminar
13-15 February 2009 in Bonn (Germany)

"Zonta's way forward: how to implement women's rights"

SPECIAL WARM THANKS

March 2009

Dear All

It was absolutely great to have had 205 Zontians registered to the Seminar, coming from all over Europe! Workshop Leaders and Participants: Your active participation in the 3rd European Zonta Interdistrict Seminar 2009 has made it a very productive and most successful Seminar.

We are especially happy and thankful to Zonta International President Beryl Sten that she has been with us all the time and has inspired us so much.

It was a great honour for us to listen to Irma Ertman, Ambassador of Finland to the Council of Europe, our wonderful keynotespeaker on Sunday morning.

Sincere thanks to Marianne Schmidt, former Zonta-Nachrichten, for the generous financial support.

We thank all of you!

Your European District Governors 2008-2010: Kari Vieth, Hela Prostedter, Jaana Sippus, Ausma Pavulans, Ute Scholz, Regula Dannecker, Brigitte Siller, Karin Saeger

Your Seminar-Team:

Annette Binder, Gabriele Brübach and Karin Nordmeyer

WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

Written by the Workshop Leaders

A ZONTA's credibility as a women's NGO – how to take advantage of ZONTA's strengths

Workshop Leader: Hela Prostedter, District 14 Governor, ZC Munich II
Facilitator: Barbara A. Devin, ZC Fuenf-Seen-Land

The outcome of the D14 Workshop has been directly related to some of our Biennial Goals 2008-2010: Credibility, Visibility - Cooperation with Unites Nations (UN) - Legislative Awareness and Advocacy (LAA) We would like to summarize findings and thoughts of the Workshop as follows:

1. ZONTA's strengths

The workshop outcome unmistakably depicts the uniqueness of Zonta which renders Zonta special and non comparable. Core of the uniqueness are mainly four strengths of Zonta:

- Internationality, because human rights are international, independent from gender.
- Width and depth of competences thanks to unique female intelligence and professional sensitivity.
- Unconditioned focus on women, because their status in the world suffers physically, socially and psychologically of problems which require substantial support to be solved.
- Highest level of status with UN, i.e. General consultative status which is granted to only 132 NGOs of altogether more than 7.000 NGOs being accredited at UN.

2. ZONTA's credibility

Since 90 years Zonta stands for an important Women's NGO. Importance and influence of NGOs, being in place to tackle the problems in the world, increase dramatically. Due to the complexity and severity of the

global problems UN needs reliable (cannot afford to neglect) support and cooperation with NGOs. They offer advocacy as well as operational work on site.

The acceptance of Zonta by the UN since its inception in 1948 represents the most precious source for credibility of Zonta mission and activities. In addition, members' big-hearted and enthusiastic identification substantially contributes to, or better, generates Zonta Credibility.

3. ZONTA's visibility

Moreover Zonta strengths are the basis for visibility. When strengths are converted into concrete measures, Zonta visibility will be enforced in the public and Zonta will anchor as distinctive brand for "advancing the status of women worldwide".

The conversion becomes most effective when each single member takes up responsibility and action. So each member should seek thorough knowledge about Zonta, which, in turn, generates identification with Zonta mission and goals.

4. Members identification with ZONTA

ZONTA's strongest PR factor is ZONTA members. They should develop their identification with ZONTA by:

- Building up knowledge about Zonta International
- Self assurance and pride to talk – unprompted – about Zonta (this applies internally in the club and more so in the public)
- Togetherness, because "unity is strength"
- Actions like wearing Zonta needle, have readily available business cards and flyer on "What is Zonta"
- Motivation and enthusiasm.

5. ZONTA members as advocacies

Professional diversity and high quality paired with substantial experience predestines Zonta members to build and to care a competent and emotional network to be used for the wellbeing of underprivileged women.

Zonta members are especially capable to strive for awareness of women's problems in the public and for advocacy at eye level with governments and other authorities. The highly regarded consultative status at UN as well as the European Commission proves Zonta competence for advocacy of women's affairs.

6. Interrelations of Biennial Goals and workshop outcome

Zonta service and advocacy support member identification based on facts and outcome information.

→ This in turn arouses interest of media, among donors, at governments and official authorities, followed by public documentation of Zonta project achievements.

→ At the same time, the lively interest of the groups mentioned leads to publication and communication about Zonta activities in the public as well as among members.

→ The result is visibility of Zonta – as an important women's NGO, the advocate of women's affairs – and thus Zonta goals and activities gain further credibility, the fruitful source to continue with service and advocacy.

B Making our Clubs fit for International Service - how to close the gap between the global and local level

Moderator / Introduction and motivation: Irene Wiese-von Ofen, Vice-President ZIF 2005-2007, ZC Essen I

Facilitators: Susanne von Bassewitz, ZC Düsseldorf II and Brita Gerling-Koehne, ZC Essen II

How could we describe the gap?

Hard facts (e.g. lack of money)

International projects are...

- perceived as being „too far away“ (no emotional connection, identification)
- not visible enough (not enough and not frequent enough information)
- in most cases running not long enough (2 years don't allow for really „taking them in“)
- ...and feedback (on longterm results) is lacking / members are not enough involved

How can we bridge the gap?

Too far away

- transfer a service topic (e.g. violence against women) to the local level -> initiate a local project with the same topic
- club service committee that introduces international projects to club members

Not visible enough

- one big instead of many projects
- consider a unique ZONTA project – no other NGO involved -> better branding
- get the media more interested in the project in order to create coverage
- have ZIF Ambassadors visit clubs

Duration of projects

- have projects for more than two years
- President-elect should continue successful projects instead of initiating new ones

Lack of feedback

- more information on current projects -> more frequent and more lively reports (videos of max. 10-15 min., DVDs to clubs)
- follow-up information on the project's success after ZI financing of the project has been discontinued (long-term success of an initiative started with ZI support)
- provide structured information on ZI global Web site: „need to know“ and „nice to know“
- make information easy to read -> Gov./AD to translate it into mother tongue

Empower ZIF Ambassadors

- Network (Web workspace etc.) for ZIF Ambassadors
- extend ZIF Ambassadors' term to four years in order to create continuity
- provide more and more frequent information to the Ambassadors (depth should exceed the amount given on the global Web site)
- one ZIF Ambassador per Area -> not only one for the District
- have one of the Ambassadors attend ZIF Board meetings to be able to report back to her colleagues (make reports from ZIF Board meetings available to Ambassadors)

Anything else?

- offer site visits to interested Zontians wherever local or political circumstances allow for that -> minimum ZIF Ambassadors

C ZONTA advocacy with respect to CEDAW – how to meet the challenge

Workshop Leaders / Facilitators: Ute Scholz, District 27 Governor, ZC Verden and Anna Lukasiak, ZC Gdansk

Introduction was made by Frieda Demey, ZC Brussels Zavel, she gave general information about the Cedaw Convention and what is understood under the name CEDAW.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women defines discrimination against women as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex..." It is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations.

Next Frieda explained that Zonta International service has been closely linked with the United Nations since Zonta expressed support for the fledgling UN in 1946. As an international non-governmental organization (NGO), Zonta brings women's concerns to the UN, suggests solutions, draws public attention to issues and encourages its members to participate at the local level.

Ute`s and Anna`s Presentations:

As the aim of the workshop was to present and further – discuss three CEDAW Articles:

Article 5 – Sex roles and stereotyping

Article 7 – Political and public life

Article 16 – Equality in marriage and family law,

Anna started with presentation of the latest existing Protocols of Poland, Ukraine and France concerning the above mentioned articles. Later Ute continued with Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg. This knowledge was the necessary food for thoughts of the workshop participants and resulted in a vivid discussion which lasted almost two hours. We tried to work out the answers to three questions.

Results of the workshop:

Question 1: Are women in your country fully aware of laws against discrimination?

- Women are focused on family more than on their rights and legal position. But the well-educated younger generation feels stronger, they are more focused on their rights, they know exactly what they want.
- All girls and women must be brought up and educated so that they know their legal position and boys must be educated in the same way.

Question 2: How do you observe the functioning of such laws in real life?

- Only one conclusion appeared to see a positive influence of the changing law. In Germany a paternity leave to bring up children is offered also for men. If they take it, in addition to a 12-month long paid maternity leave for mothers, fathers can take two more months of paid paternity leave. Not only does it mean more care about the family, but it also makes a change in thinking of men on the role of mother in a family.
- A very strongly stressed symptom of discrimination is a still existing difference in income between men and women for various reasons. Jobs occupied mostly by women are lower paid, jobs occupied by men are not only better paid but also thought to be more prestigious.
- Younger generation of women feels too safe. They are not aware of the possibility of losing the position they achieved. The danger – which was mentioned by a few workshop participants - comes from the immigrant families coming from the countries where women are still treated as the property of man. The mixing of cultures and social behaviors can work in two directions – for the benefit of the immigrants, but also for the change of mentality of European men.

Question 3: What can Zonta do to advocate those issues?

- "Red Handbag Day" –Women earn statistically 80% of the men's income. Therefore for about two and a half months they seem to work being unpaid! In some European countries lots of women carry a red handbag on one spring day, the exact day when they "start to work for money". It is March 20th in 2009. This idea should be promoted by Zonta.
- We should promote more our organization. We should wear Zonta pin in every situation, with every outfit.
- We should give a helping hand in mentoring and teaching immigrants.
- Zontians must promote the YWPA, JMK Awards and AEF as a tool to advocate .
- Zonta should put much effort to be more visible and recognized in the Union of Women's Organizations in each country

D Visibility - how to make ZONTA and ZONTA's vision better known in a world where branding is so important

Workshop Leader: Kari Vieth, District 13 Governor, ZC Copenhagen I
Facilitator: Poula Helth, ZC Frederiksberg

Identity as a Zontian and branding are closely related. The way you feel about the organization is very important for the individual Zontian, in "selling" Zonta. We want Zonta to be a leader in the voluntary sector engaging women to work with other women and to improve the status of women. Zonta has an important mission to do, but our brand is often not visible enough.

The workshop gave following suggestions to improve Zontas brand and visibility both within Zonta and out to "the world":

- Define the brand concept (core values, personal and emotional)
- Streamline and modernize Zontas brand- to get younger members
- The effect of Zonta projects shall be visible (output and outcome)
- ZI needs a PR policy
- Storytelling about Zontas project is important - and that we make a difference in the lives of women (success-stories)
- Zontiens shall be more outspoken and "assertive"
- Get an image as a professional and "busy" womens Club
- Media Communication - easier in a local level - than in bigger Cities. Use that knowledge !!

E ZONTA's response to the challenges women face in society – an outlook to our future actions and visions

Workshop Leader: Karin Saeger, District 30 Governor, ZC Pforzheim
Facilitator : Juliane Bardt, ZC Bonn-Rheinaue

Our recommendation for themes and topics:

- Education in all countries and among all levels (not only professional but also social skills)
Girls' primary and secondary education, especially in developing countries
Leadership training for women (e.g. conflict management, communication, self-presentation, networking, mentoring...)
Awareness and mindset change training (for boys and girls)
- Advancing professionalism and increasing women's share in leadership positions
"Zonta stands for the highest standards in the business and professional world... [Zonta] seeks cooperation rather than competition and considers the Golden Rule not only good ethics but good business." Marian de Forest (1919)
- Continue programs to prevent violence and combat poverty (especially micro-credits)

Our strategy recommendations:

European districts:

Promote Zonta's value proposition to attract new members:

- Internationalism (especially for younger, mobile women)
- Emphasize professional and personal networking

Local level:

- Keep focus of service projects on WOMEN's issues
- Improve leadership and management skills of Zontians (internal) – e.g. computing and administration training,...
- Invest in recruiting new, young members to ensure Zonta's future growth

F ZONTA advocacy mechanisms – how to implement legal instruments against trafficking

Workshop Leader: Jaana Sippus, District 20 Governor, ZC Vaasa

Fascilitator: Aune Brotherus-Kettunen, ZC Helsinki II

Zonta advocacy: our duty as individuals and Zontians

What can we learn from each other coming from different countries and culture ?

- Advocacy means to improve the legal, political, economic, health, professional and other human rights of women, men and children.
- Zonta International is engaged actively in these activities to improve the status of women.

We the members on ZI are in leading or independent positions, or have been prior to retirement. We therefore are socially and economically in good conditions at our society. We have to look around and recognize the needs for Advocacy. There are children, elderly people, insulted people, immigrants or other neighbours in need. There might be some acute disaster or injustice, that needs our action.

Example: In District 20 we have a Biennial project called "Yellow Rose". For the biennium 2007-2009 our Project is "Let's Read Together" in order to teach immigrant women to speak Finnish and to read.

Biennially every District sets its own goals for advocacy. Sometimes one big project can last through two biennial periods, if so decided upon.

- There may be one larger project or several smaller.
- The project has to be accepted at the District meeting
- There has to be a plan, a budget and the project has to be evaluated when carried out.

One third on the money collected by the Clubs should be given to ZIF. In the Clubs we are able to choose the Fund we want to increase. Most of the Service Fund projects, which are decided upon at the Biennial Convention, are carried out by Unifem, Unicef or other similar partners. This is a very good way of controlling the use of the money and to get the evaluation done with exactness which can be trusted. Service Fund answers to the acute problems as far as the resources allow.

In Finland we however feel, that among those other Funds of ZIF one more Fund should be established. The most important task for ZI is to improve the status of women in the developing world. Therefore we are going to propose to ZIF a New Fund as follows.

The Fund would grant biennially:

A. A scholarship to a private person or a research group for research work on the improvement of the status of women in developing countries or

B. An award to a private person or research group in recognition of exceptional work carried out in order to improve the status of women in developing countries.

Thinking of the Zonta goals, they in many cases are directed especially to improve the status of women in developing countries.

The financing:

- District 20 Zontians have agreed that, to honour the 60th Anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, they will donate one euro a week for twelve months as from 10 December 2008. If this new Fund will be accepted in ZIF this money, about € 93 000, will be donated for the initial capital of the Fund.

District 20 proposes also, that this new Fund would carry the name of Minister Helvi Sipilä to honour her incomparable career. She devoted her whole lifetime in pursuit of justice, equality and improvement of the status of women.

Some examples of her career:

- Being a barrister by profession she had her own lawyer's firm and already then she emphasized the importance of justice and equality
- She was United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Social development and Humanitarian Affairs
- She is the Mother of Unifem Organization within UN

- After retirement she established the first National Unifem Committee in Finland and assisted in establishing Unifem National Committees in many countries around the world
- She had a remarkable Zonta career being f.i. the first International President of ZI who came outside of USA

District 20 hopes, that all the European Districts would join us in this proposal and also would increase the initial capital in order to get a good start to the Fund. Minister Helvi Sipilä has accepted the proposal.

4. Proposal for discussion. Possibilities for joint European Programmes for Advocacy and the Helvi Sipilä Fund. Discussion on the present activities.

Advocacy means to improve the legal, political, economic, health, professional and other human rights of women, men and children. Zonta International is engaged actively in these activities to improve the status of women.

Our Duty as Individuals - everything starts at home. Therefore we, when being invited to become members of ZI behold a socially and economically good position at our society, have to look around and recognize the needs for Advocacy. There are children, elderly people, insulted people, immigrants or other neighbours in need. There might be some acute disaster or injustice, that needs our action.

1. Proposal for discussion:

How do we carry out our Activities for Advocacy as Individuals?

Our Duty as Zontians:

The Zonta Advocacy responsibilities are:

- To engage actively in the Advocacy activities.
- To develop resources.
- To report on successful outcomes (not so successful as well).
- To promote service projects.
- To work closely with executing organizations like Unifem.
- To review/monitor the legislation in different countries and to influence when needed for the improvement of the status of women.

All the Advocacy activities are carried out at club, district and ZI levels.

2. Proposal for discussion:

What are our Activities for Advocacy at Club Level, plan, execution, result and assessment?

3. Proposal for discussion:

What are our Activities for Advocacy at District Level, plan, execution, result and assessment?

4. Proposal for discussion: Possibilities for joint European Programmes for Advocacy.

New proposals for ZIF activities and discussion on the present activities.