

Frequently Asked Questions for the new and improved Programme Focus Reports

1. Why do we need to report on our projects? I have submitted several reports but have never seen them used in any way?

Although it may be difficult to tell, SI uses your reports in many, many very important and strategic ways! Here is just a snapshot:

- **Global advocacy:** SI underpins all of our advocacy work at the UN and other multi-national events with the on the ground work that YOU do. It is vital that we understand the needs of women and girls to which you respond in your local communities, the kind of projects that are successful, and the issues which are of the utmost importance to you. For example, at the 64th Annual UN Department of Public Information/Non-governmental Organisations Conference, SI used several examples of club projects in agriculture, climate change, and sustainable development to strengthen our position as we worked on the draft resolution. Another example is our work at the Commission on the Status of Women and for the ECOSOC annual meeting – we submit official written statements for both and always use examples of club projects to explain our platforms and positions. We also draw upon the PFR database when researching for the development of new Where We Stand Statements. Read more here:
[CSW 55 official statement](#)
[ECOSOC 2011 official statement](#)
[ECOSOC 2010 official statement](#)
- **Publications:** We pull information from the Programme Focus Reports on a regular basis for our publications, most importantly the monthly Global Voice electronic newsletter. We report the total number of projects reported, the number of women and girls served, and the amount of money raised in the previous month. We also use examples from the PFR database in special publications, such as brochures for events. Read more here:
[CSW55 brochure](#)
[The Global Voice newsletter](#)
[64th Annual DPI/NGO conference one pager](#)
- **The Monthly Focus Files:** As you know, each month, SI focuses on a different specific issue facing women and girls. One week we showcase ways in which Soroptimists can take ACTION to address the issue. We pull information from the PFRs to analyse information and share your amazing work with the world!
[SI's monthly focus files](#)
- **The Global Impact Report and other annual reports:** The Global Impact Report would not have been possible without your PFRs! We pulled all sorts of information from the database to collect, analyse, and report to the world what Soroptimists have done under the banner of education and leadership. We used both statistics and project examples in the report. Report on your project using the PFRs and YOU might be featured in next year's report! We also collate statistics for our Quadrennial Reports and annual reports to the Board.
[Global Impact Report 2010: Educate to Lead](#)
[2007-2011 Quadrennial Report](#)

- **Best Practice Awards:** Each year, SI selects a set of ‘Best Practices’ from club projects under different topics or programme areas. Projects are selected from those reported via the PFRs.
[Best Practices 2010](#)
[Best Practices 2009](#)
- **NEW! Photos and press clippings:** The updated PFR database allows you to directly upload photos or press clippings which can be used in a variety of places, including website, publications, and posters!
- **UN agency accreditation:** Finally, we need to report our global activities to the various UN agencies with whom we have official relations. We need to be able to accurately report on our activities worldwide to be able to qualify for accreditation.

2. The report form is so long! Do I have to fill in the whole thing?

No! With this new and updated report form, you can submit a “PFR Star” (‘PFR*’) – an abbreviated and shorter version of the full report. To submit a PFR*, just fill in the questions which have a red asterisk (*). This provides SI with the bare minimum of information we need to make your report useable for the activities described in FAQ1 above. The longer report form allows you to provide more details about your work – this is helpful for projects which will be considered for inclusion in statements, reports, and publications.

3. I don’t understand the questions – it’s too complicated. What does it mean?

We get this question quite a lot. From July-August 2010, SI undertook a worldwide consultation from a variety of users and non-users to help us to create more user-friendly questions. The way we have now structured the PFR form should be a bit clearer. You can always click on the ‘Section Help’ button for further explanations, or visit the members’ section to download the Skill Up! Toolkit which includes information on measuring and reporting project work (coming Autumn 2011).

We are also providing two new resources to help you learn about the new PFR forms – a series of sample reports which can be downloaded from the PFR site and a short video tutorial which takes you through the form step by step and can be watched online or downloaded (right click and save). Coming Autumn 2011 will also be English as a Second Language (‘ESL’) video tutorials.

4. What’s the difference between a PROGRAMME, a PROJECT, and an ACTIVITY? What should our club report?¹

A programme is a collection “of related projects and ongoing operational activities managed as a whole” – for example, SI’s Educate to Lead work is a programme.

A project is an effort to provide a product or service designed to achieve a specific objective and contribute to a specific goal – a project will include more than one activity.

¹ <http://www.allpm.com/glossary.php>

An activity is any work performed to carry out a project (can also be described as a task). Activities generally require human, time, and/or financial inputs. The new PFR distinguishes between project and activities – when reporting on ONE PROJECT, you should include all of the ACTIVITIES performed. All of the PFRs together form the PROGRAMME of work undertaken by SI.

5. I submitted a report ages ago but haven't seen it on the database yet – is it lost?

The new PFR database introduces a system which should make this process easier and clearer. First, you can now save your report and come back to it at a later time if you cannot finish it in one sitting. Simply click 'Save Report', note down your reference number, and click 'Retrieve Reports' when you would like to come back to it. Second, if you include a contact email address, you will receive email notifications updating you on the status of your report. Your report is added to a queue and reviewed by your Federation in the order it was received. Once your report is approved, you will receive an email with your unique report number, which you can use to access your published report at any time. If your report is not approved, you will receive an email informing you and giving you a generic reason why the report was not approved (e.g. More information on how this project specifically fits within the SI mission, goals, and objectives; More or clearer information on the number of non-Soroptimist beneficiaries; More information on the project's achievements and outputs; or Other – please contact your Federation for more information). If your report was not approved the first time, you will then have the option to log in, retrieve your report, and edit as needed. Please note that this is a new system and will undoubtedly have a few problems and hiccups as we perfect the process!

6. The PFR system is only in English – why is this so?

SI is present in 124 countries and territories – which means hundreds of languages! Our staff is very limited and thus we do not currently have the capacity for translation. However, we understand that there are some excellent models out there for translating reports and we are exploring ways in which we can improve. We know this is terribly limiting as many wonderful projects go unreported due to language barriers, and we are trying to develop a cost effective solution. In the meantime, even if the English is not perfect, please do try to report anyway!