



# BPW International

International Federation of Business & Professional Women

*Yasmin Darwich*

*President 2014 -2017*

“Making a Difference Through Leadership and Action”

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BPW International Health Committee Chairperson

A sound mind in a sound body for the best leadership

## **REPORT HEALTH COMMITTEE 2014-2017**

From the start of this triennium as Health Chair of BPW International I have advocated for the promotion of women’s leadership based on global Health, psychic, physical and social. And, both in my BPW position and as a trained medical doctor, I think this crucial fact helps the struggle to improve women’s health even in the minds of skeptics. Besides, I’m sure you’ll all agree that Empowerment, Leadership and Equality count for nothing when your Health is lacking. Taking into consideration the Women’s Empowerment Principles outlined by UNIFEM from the Health point of view, and in particular WEPs 1,2, 3 and 4, I prepared the triennial Action Plan developing the most critical aspects on Health indicated by WHO and U.N. as well.

I have identified, therefore, 5 goals to meet in this triennium:

***Objective 1 LIGHT ON THE WORLD:*** BPW International stands for Peace in the world respecting and supporting human rights and non discrimination.

***Objective 2 CALL FOR ACTION AGAINST NCDs:*** Non-communicable diseases affect everyone. In the 65th World Health Assembly, Governments and NGOs agreed to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by 25% by 2025.

***Objective 3 EQUALITY FOR WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES:*** Ensure the rights of persons with disabilities. Disabled women face double discrimination, and should receive double efforts. (E-1/E-2 RESOLUTIONS FOR BPW CONGRESS 2014 BY BPW NEW ZEALAND).

***Objective 4 WOMEN IN SCIENCE (WINS) ON BOARD:*** Building women for leadership in the Healthcare profession.

***Objective 5 WOMEN'S HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING AS HUMAN RIGHTS:*** Women's rights are human rights and human rights are women's rights. Women are half of the world's population, yet we still struggle for our voices to be heard, considered, accepted when it comes to morality, politics, social or economic equality. Violence against women continues to drive discrimination and remains a unique problem that affects women all over the world.

***Aware of the fact that the problems related to Health are today, more than ever, strictly connected to the economic, political, cultural and religious ones, and that however, despite globalization, each Country has its own priorities as far as Public Health is concerned, I wish to thank all the Members of the Committee for carrying out their jobs remarkably and responsibly, developing themes and implementing projects that are closer to their own local reality.***

The BPW International Commission for Health, in partnership with NFI (Nutrition Foundation of Italy) and with AOPI (Association of Italian Paediatric Hospitals), in full agreement with the WHO Global NCDs Action Plan 2013-2020 and the "25 by 25" (25% reduction of cardiovascular diseases by 2025), campaigned hard in these last few years to fight, through the Red Belt Project, against overweight, obesity, and sedentariness promoting cardiovascular risk awareness in women and in children to safeguard their future and the future of the world..

***In actual fact, the last WHO's call is for action against childhood obesity, almost a pandemic, with 42 million children under the age of 5 overweight or obese in 2013. Close to 31 million of these are living in developing countries. "Overweight and obese children are likely to stay obese into adulthood and more likely to develop non communicable diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular diseases at a younger age. Overweight and obesity, as well as their related diseases,***

*are largely preventable. Prevention of childhood obesity therefore needs high priority”.*

Several epidemiological studies have confirmed the **importance of abdominal circumference and its relationship with height (waist/stature ratio) as an indicator of abdominal fat and cardiovascular risk** (the optimal value of this parameter should be equal to or below 0.50), more effective and trusted than Body Mass Index (BMI) which describes the relationship between weight and height without considering the distribution of body fat.

The aim of the project is to fight against overweight, obesity and sedentariness and to monitor the waistline- height ratio in order to check the abdominal fat and to prevent future cardio-metabolic diseases in women and children. To meet this goal it's necessary to invest in health to reduce morbidity and disability, to spread knowledge of the multiple causes of female/children cardiometabolic diseases, to use better and safer indicators for the assessment of cardiometabolic risk and to lobby Health Care Institutions and Governments **to recognize sedentary lifestyle as a disease** which, in all ages, has to be cured with the right therapy that is the physical activity. The **“Tommy & Ollie for Health” Project** was set up in compliance with the limited resources of the planet and with the ethics in food to have access to healthy food as one of the fundamental rights of mankind.

Many studies have shown that lifestyle and eating habits play an important role in maintaining physical and mental wellbeing, usually defined by the term health and prevention of many "diseases" such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The study of the molecular mechanisms involved in the development of these diseases showed that many dietary compounds exert physiological roles and have a protective role. These compounds, such as vitamins, minerals, fibers, antioxidants, phytonutrients, are contained mainly in plant products and their derivatives, in fresh fruits, nuts, vegetables, legumes and unrefined grains. These vegetable foods should be regularly consumed for their nutritional properties.

***The Tommy & Ollie for Health project was officially presented:***

- ***at the New York Summit on my behalf by the BPW International Executive Secretary Catherine Bosshart whom I thank for that too.***
- ***On April 7th, on the World Health Day organized by the WHO dedicated this year to Diabetes ( beat Diabetes ) which is often***

*linked to Obesity in children, on the BPW International official website through a [short video](http://bpw-international.org/news) (<http://bpw-international.org/news>)*

- *at Fast ( Federation of Scientific and Technical Associations ) on June 14th at a seminar dedicated to food between Health, Knowledge and Flavours with important personalities in the medical-scientific field.*
- *At the First World Congress on the Mediterranean Diet held in Milan at the Palace of the Lombardy Region on 6-7-8- July 2016 with a poster. ( see attached file )*
- *At several other meetings on female Health I attended as consultant and invited speaker*

Tommy & Ollie was born from the collaboration of the members of the Health Committee with other professionals who, in different fields, have offered their precious contribution to its completion. The short video was made thanks to the free work of famed cartoonists and filmmakers. I thank the members of the Health Committee who have shared and promoted the project adapting it and enriching it according to the requirements of their own territories.

**The project is still underway and the preliminary results will be presented at the next European Congress in Zurich; the final ones at the International Congress in Cairo.**

## **EUROPEAN REGION**

**The European Region**, thanks to the efforts of Health Standing Committee members, has reported a great deal of activities, many of which are part of projects to be completed over the triennium. There has been a lot of interest, for example, in Mental Health, Nutrition and Healthy Diets and Life Styles.

## **BPW ESTONIA**

Estonian BPW, thanks to the efforts of ESTER EOMOIS, launched a new Health project "WOMEN MENTAL HEALTH".

It is a 3 year program with an aim to draw more attention on women health mental issues with focus on discussing and learning coping mechanisms in everyday activities not on mental disorders.

Recent studies show that women are up to 40% more likely than men to develop mental health conditions, according to new analysis by a clinical psychologist at Oxford University, at the same time many women do not seek help. BPW Estonia project focuses on raising awareness and preventive measures to business women challenges in every day issues such as work and life balance, stress, perfectionism and high expectations for success.

BPW Estonia project has 2 stages: First stage, the goal is to open discussions on mental health issues by organising seminars in BPW local clubs by club members themselves.

In 2016- 2017 Estonian clubs organize seminars in following topics: *How to balance work and life combining career and raising small children; How to let go perfectionism to meet others expectations but live your own life.; How to cope with gender stereotypes and higher expectations on women in society; How to keep mental health and physical health in balance; Mental disorders: Stress and depression – how to recognize them.*

Next stage 2017-2018 BPW Estonia plan to raise public campaign on women mental health issues that business professional women face with the goal to build evidence on the prevalence and causes of mental health problems in women as well as on the mediating and protective factors.

## **BPW FRANCE**

GISELE NISSAK, as always, is working hard on health issues, overall on the PREVENTION OF CARDIOMETABOLIC DISEASES, of prime importance for French women. She is planning with the President Geraldine Crevat and Marie Cristine to sew red belts, with goals on it. They are working on prototypes not to be sold, but to be worn by 20 members of BPW during the conference in Zurich.

The aim is to create red belts, like the famous EPD's red bag.

Thanks to Gisele, Geraldine and Marie Cristine for this fantastic initiative!

Thanks also to President Geraldine for sending the Tommy & Ollie's video to a local network in Nice.

## **BPW SPAIN**

MERCEDEZ PAREZ, in this triennium worked hard on her report "HEALTH TRIBUTE BY THE MERE FACT OF BEING A WOMAN" in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Oviedo on various mental health problems in women such as depression at menopause, suicide and gender. Gender is considered as a structural determinant of mental health. This increases the disparities associated with other important socioeconomic determinants such as income, employment, educational and social position. **The question is: is depression a gender disease? Do differential aspects exist between men and women?**

The WHO predicts that depression will be the second leading cause of the global burden of disease by 2020 behind the cardiovascular diseases. Without doubt women's health is inextricably linked to their status in society. It benefits from equality, and suffers from discrimination and it happens in both developed or no countries.

The difference is the type of triggers such as stress, roles of beauty, violence, ruthlessness, lack of promotion etc. In depression there are organic factors but others can be minimized with equality policies and especially education.

The goal is to reduce the number of women who are depressed in order to decrease the global burden caused by depression before 2020. This important work was presented by Mercedes at the N.Y. Summit last March and it will be presented again at the health Workshop of BPW International European Conference in Zurich.

Mercedes Perez is involved in the organization of the "II International Connecting Plus BPW Spain" that will be held in Valencia on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> 2016. In the Conference a special section will be dedicated to "**The ethical challenges facing the progress of Science**" which I will also have the pleasure to attend.

## **BPW TURKEY**

Health Committee, represented by SELDA ALEMDAR DINÇER organized and promoted:

1) A two-day Course project: “INTERNAL VOCATIONAL AND PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS ”. The task of this group of women in Turkey is to help dentists at the chair but they are not allowed to work within the mouth. The challenge is that these women are mostly trained on the job without getting any diploma. The state authorities however declared that all dental assistants have to get a vocational school diploma. The ones who have not received it is our target group.

**The aim via this Project is to empower women from this group by bringing them education from eminent dental academics who are experts in their own fields.**

In the first part of the two -days course, dental assistants get information about technical issues, and in the second part BPW Istanbul Club members specialized in personal development speak about the importance of personal development, self-confidence, communication and other topics which are crucial in the Office environment. This program has several collaborators from companies and NGOs such as dental chambers, Ivoclar, Hipp, Toothfriendly Turkey Association and BPW Turkey Istanbul Club.

At the end of the two days program, assistants receive a certificate from Toothfriendly Turkey and BPW Istanbul Club.

Until now, 4 courses have been held with 100 participants: 2 in Izmir and 2 in Istanbul.

## **2) THE “STEP BY STEP FOR MY HEART” PROJECT**

The aim of this project is to help “Women at work “ to erase awareness about nutrition and movement for a healthy heart”. Therefore, they organized several courses about nutrition and a special walking day.

### 2.a. Walking Tour in Princess Island

The first walking tour started in Büyükkada. The municipality has arranged the tour route and has provided free walls to put announcements in the island so that everybody could learn about this event. They are planning to continue “the walking tour” also in other places.

### 2.b. *Walking tour with Vodafone – November 2014*

This tour was organized with the “ Women’s heart organization” together in Istanbul under the umbrella of Vodafone.

### 2.c. *Seminar for the BPW members*

In accordance to the Project of nutrition and health and wellbeing, various seminars have been organized for club members and participants from outside with the participation of almost 100 people. They will continue to organize such seminars with good speakers also with collaboration with the municipalities.

## **BPW ITALY**

The "Tommy & Ollie for Health" project has met with a lot of acceptance by the Italian members of the International Health Committee.

## **CENTER DISTRICT: ANNA PARRINI E GIANNA FERRETTI**

ANNA PARRINI has developed the project "TOMMY & OLLIE FOR HEALTH" at the primary school in San Vincenzo Val di Cornia and at schools in Livorno thanks to the collaboration of Margherita Mazzelli, President of Club UNESCO. Training courses have been set up for teachers and parents to get them more involved in the fight against overweight and obesity in children and about 500 pupils from 6 to 11 years have been involved in learning about healthy food taking inspiration from two foods which are the symbol of the Mediterranean diet: Tomato and Olive Oil.



The children have made drawings and filled in questionnaires, whose statistical results are still being elaborated, which will allow to get information on the anthropometric parameters (waistline, height, body weight) which are useful for the assessment of a possible condition of overweight/obesity, on food, lifestyle and physical exercise. The project also includes the involvement in the next months of the schools within the main pediatric hospitals by spreading the basics of a healthy nutrition combined with movement and physical activity intended, above all, as opportunities to play. The idea of a **flash mob** in the main Italian squares as well as in Pediatric Hospital is taken into consideration getting all the children involved in a group performance of a ballet based on original choreography and music.

The project, with the title "EVERYONE BETTER-MANNERED AT THE TABLE", was presented at the "Festival of Round Table New Renaissance" organized by the FIDAPA- BPW-Italy Milano Club on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2016.

Anna Parrini has also arranged, with the collaboration of the cultural group "Sciarada" from San Vincenzo in Tuscany, a meeting titled "From genetic to epigenetic, how diseases have changed in the last few years" and, in synergy with the primary schools in San Vincenzo, a training course on the subject of adolescence and sexuality for pupils attending the 5th year of primary school.

GIANNA FERRETTI is working hard for the prevention of healthy life styles in young people and university students:

-**Survey on lifestyles, food and alcohol consumption in university students.** The project is organized in collaboration with the Municipality of Ancona and Healthy city office of Ancona. The results will be presented in October-November 2016 and conferences on topics concerning dietary habits and prevention of human diseases will be planned.

-From January to May 2016 scientific support to a project "**Food chains and human nutrition**" in schools of Osimo (AN). Prof. Tiziana Bacchetti (Fidapa Osimo-Castelfidardo Club) and Gianna Ferretti participated in 5 conferences on topics concerning food security, nutritional properties of foods, relationship between dietary habits and health in children and adult subjects. Teacher and parents participated in the conferences.

-Conference on "**Osteoporosis**" (Fidapa Ancona Club- Senigallia Club)

.Gianna Ferretti is also working on Tommy & Ollie project performing statistical analyses of the questionnaires handed out to the pupils of the Italian schools that have taken part in the project so far. The results will be presented at the European Congress in Zurich during the workshop of the Health International Committee and we will be informed about the lifestyles of the participants above all with regards to the presence or the lack of overweight or visceral obesity.

For the next autumn, she is also planning a meeting on "Diet and prevention of tumours". In that occasion she will also present the final results of the survey "Tommy and Ollie" of course!

## **SOUTH-EAST DISTRICT**

Thanks to GIULIA GALANTINO, Administration Manager of the Frantoio Oleario Di Molfetta Pantaleo & C. S.N.C., the TOMMY & OLLIE PROJECT was married by the Olive Oil Company, which has been active in the sector for three generations based on tradition, quality, passion, innovation and fantasy. In 2010 OLI'OLA' bruschetteria is created within the Olive Oil mill where the best Oils produced can be tasted with the classic combination of bread and Olive Oil.

This simple formula evolves quickly to to put forward a complete and innovative menu from which to taste all the produce of the Puglia cuisine through both classic and unusual combinations. This way Oliolà reinterprets the tradition of the "bruschetta" making it a gourmet dish. The Olive Oil mill started the project "ON THE DESKS OF THE OLIVE-OIL MILL OLI'OLA' BRUSCHETTERIA" in November and December and supported and promoted the BPW International "Tommy & Ollie for Health" project. An educational manor farm is indeed the ideal environment to allow a child to make a "real" and "original" contact with nature and with the farming world. Spending a day in the country, visiting an olive oil mill, picking olives and recognizing the qualitative characteristics of an Olive Oil are experiences unknown to most young people today capable of raising strong emotions and, at the same time, of developing the necessary ecological knowledge to better respect the environment and the resources of the territory.

The "from the country to the Olive Oil mill" course provided the pupils with the opportunity to find precise references to the land they live in

and to make them feel part of the process of reconstruction of the reality where they are called upon to be aware protagonists. That is why the Olive Oil Company decided to spread these activities to raise the children's awareness of the farming world to learn the respect for the environment around them and especially to understand the importance of a proper nutrition and the origin of the primary produce. Through these activities the Company managed to host **over 900 children** divided throughout the whole period of production (October- February), **coming from nursery, primary and secondary schools**. The questionnaires submitted to the pupils on lifestyles, nutrition and anthropometric parameters are underway and will be presented at the European Congress in Zurich.

Lucia Di Molfetta, Sales Manager of the Olive Oil mill-bruschetteria has no doubts in claiming that the actions carried out with the whole body have been lived, "absorbed" totally by each pupil who tried them first hand using their senses, becoming spendable knowledge. Indeed in every perceptive activity all the sense have been put into action, both individually and in relation to each other and have allowed the development of an emotional and mental awareness of what has happened as the participation in each moment has been full.

Olive Oil is not a dressing but a food and at a time when poor information is spread on Extra Virgin Olive Oil it is essential to turn the attention of the school world to the importance of a healthy and proper nutrition starting from the earliest years of life.

Tommy & Ollie for Health has also been brought to the schools by Giulia Galantino, Member of the Health committee, who involved **130 pupils** of the primary schools collecting as many questionnaires (life habits, nutrition, measurement of waistline, height ) still under development.

## **NORD-OVEST DISTRICT**

ALGA ROSSI, president of Milano Club, on the international Woman's Day on 24<sup>th</sup> February, organized the " Woman Award FIDAPA-BPW Italy" event, where, with the attendance of FIDAPA's major authorities , five women were awarded who stood out for their commitment to promoting Public Health, Science, Education, Culture and Entrepreneurship, thus acknowledging their excellent work and awarding their contribution to the Federation and to Society.

**A special award " ad memoriam" was given to Livia Ricci**, former International President, remembered and admired by everyone for her long-sightedness, dedication and love for the Federation. The

International Executive Secretary, Catherine Bosshart, present at the Ceremony, also on behalf of the International President Yasmin Darwich, made a speech remembering Her values which were totally compliant with those of the Federation. Catherine Bosshart gave the award ( a small statue of the Winged Victory- symbol of FIDAPA BPW-Italy) in memory of Livia to myself on behalf of her son.

Alga Rossi is organizing a task force of experts to bring, at the start of the autumn school term, the Tommy & Ollie project to primary and secondary schools in Milan and in other important cities in the Lombardy Region.

## **SICILY DISTRICT**

ROSAMARIA LA SCOLA, President of Sicily District-BPW Italy (90 Clubs and 3,500 members!) has worked extensively to bring up on her territory the issues related to **Women's Health and psychophysical well-being**; at the same time, she has also focused particularly on those Physical and Psychic Pathologies which seem to increasingly affect all the people resident there ( including compulsive gambling ).

- The project “ WHAT ARE WE PLAYNG AT?” against gambling addiction, was developed at two secondary schools in the village, included information-training of small group of students who, in turn would train other students to build a network suitable for the fight against compulsive gambling within the families. The students involved in the project have drawn up a document of summary and proposals submitted to the local authorities to try to contain the new addiction to gambling.
- A special project “ PREVENTING IS BETTER THAN CURING” has been realized last February, month of prevention with Fidapa-BPW Italy on the front-line at the service of the local territory. Some free services offered were: orthoptist, pain therapy, hearing check up, gastroenterologist, psychologist and psychotherapist, omeopathy and balanced nutrition, pedagogist learning disorders, gynaecologist, dentist.
- She is also promoting the project “PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS A TREATMENT FOR SEDENTARY LIVES” to all the schools aiming to

raise awareness among public opinion and Institutions of the importance of increasing the number of school hours dedicated to Physical Activity in order to tackle children's overweight and obesity which are growing considerably all over the world having serious repercussions in the health, social and economic sectors in poor Countries as well as in the rich ones.

- Thanks to RosaMaria and to all the presidents and the members of the largest BPW District BPW Italy for their huge work.

I wish to point out that the numerous meetings and projects mentioned below have involved prestigious personalities from the world of Medicine and Science; to all of them goes a special thank you.

**10th October 2015, Mistretta Club:** Presentation of the Project: "Is gambling worth it?"

**23rd October 2015, Taormina Club,** "Geobiology and Health". Connection between electromagnetic pollution and onset of some pathologies.

**29th October 2015, Paternò Club,** " Nutrition, physical activity, lifestyle and prevention of tumours".

**December 2015, Fiumefreddo Club,** "Dislexia, how to detect it and cure it"

**December 2015, Bronte Club,** "Celiac disease, let's learn about it": **9th December 2015,** at the second educational association in Bronte; **12th December 2015,** at the first educational association.

**January 2016, Ispica Club,** "Health and femininity, prevention in senology".

**January 2016, Giardini Naxos Club,**"Nutrition and psychophysical well-being, proper nutritional rules".

**24th January 2016, Francofonte Club,** "Pathologies, nutrition and physical activity".

**29th January 2016, Ravanusa-Campobello di Licata Club,** "Formative elements for a healthy harmony of your personality".

**30th January 2016, Catenanuova Club**, First meeting on Food and Health: “ The man is what he eats”. Food approach in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases and in neoplastic pathologies”.

**February 2016, Gravina-Catania Club**, “Preventing is better than curing”,

**10th February 2016, Cefalù Club**, “The female: the age of the mind, the age of the heart”.

**13th February 2016, Santa Teresa Riva Club**, ”The pain in the female universe”.

**19th February 2016, Venetico Club**, “ Gambling addiction, when playing becomes a problem, (from fun to addiction).

**19th February 2016, Ravanusa-Campobello di Licata Club**, “Disability, Law 104/92, health and medical-legal aspects.”

**20th February 2016, Siracusa Club**, “Music and Health”, in collaboration with Association of Wives Italian Doctors

**22nd February 2016, Siracusa Club**, Course of studies on: ”The officinal plants in our territory, aromatic and medicinal”.

**Petralie and Madonie Club**, Project: ”Emergency among young people: old and new addictions”.

Meetings with students to raise awareness:

1) **25th February 2016**, at the “ Comprehensive School in Castellana Sicula and Polizzi Generosa”.

2) **10th March 2016**, at the secondary school in Castellana Sicula.

3) **7th April 2016**, at the Comprehensive secondary school in Petralia Soprana and Bompietro.

4) **21st April 2016**, at the Comprehensive secondary school in Caltavuturo.

**26th February 2016, Floridia Club**, ”Vaccines for life, for the children, for the grandparents, for the mothers and for the fathers”. The subject matter is the importance of vaccinations and the future problems coming from the staggering drop in child vaccinations.

**28th February 2016, Partanna e Gibellina Clubs,** "Cardiopathies before and after menopause". Intervention of the President of the District Rosa Maria La Scola who provided information on the Red Belt project.

**28th February 2016, Francavilla Club,** Course of information-training for manoeuvres to unblock airways in children.

**1st March 2016, Avola Club,** "The discovery of DNA and the possible applications for the diagnosis and the cure of tumours".

**March 2016, Ragusa Club,** "Psychophysical well-being and nutrition with balancing of metabolic hormones". The problem raised in this congress is that we are all very careful on a healthy diet but we do not care much about what food does to our metabolism. Therefore, we have to balance carbohydrates, proteins and fats with every meal to optimize the secretion of our metabolic hormones.

**March 2016, Mazara del Vallo Club,** "We are what we eat; from mass consumption to sensible consumption".

**11th March 2016, Capo d'Orlando Club,** "Prevention of women's cardio-cerebrovascular diseases"

**19th March 2016, Capo d'Orlando Club,** "The marrow bone donor, an unknown hero" in collaboration with ADMO, LIONS, AVIS. Awareness campaign on the donation of the marrow bone with the contribution of recipients of transplants who set up a dialogue of solidarity, humanity and emotional involvement.

**March 2016, Messina Capo Peloro Club,** "I Chakra: the wheels of life"

**15th April 2016, Termini Imerese Club:** Convention on the celiac disease and the prevention of tumours to the colon:" Stomach, bowel and around".

**19th April 2016, Siracusa Club,** in collaboration with the Association of Italian Doctors' Wives "Robotics at the service of the people"

**Adrano-Biancavilla Club,** First National Day on Women's Health with the Convention: "Support research through education":

**21st April 2016, Biancavilla—22nd April 2016, Adrano**

**Conference, Video with interview to Nobel Prize Winner Prof. Rita Levi Montalcini (honorary member of FIDAPA BPW Italy) presented by Giuseppina Tripodi (member of Health Committee BPW International)** for many years assistant to Prof. Montalcini, who than talked about the subject of Education and Health; Prof. D. Doria, prevention; Prof. Patti, multiple sclerosis.

**The two meetings had informative and planning objectives.**

Financial support to the Rita Levi Montalcini Foundation for the project

- “ Education for 100 women in Mozambique”
- Collaboration with the centre for the multiple sclerosis in Catania, to monitor the disease which has a very high incidence especially in the villages of Adrano and Biancavilla
- Project of Education to Health for the pupils due to start the next school year.

At the meeting on 22nd April the President of the Sicily District Rosa Maria La Scola was present.

**22nd April, Trapani, Cittadella della Salute Club**, National Day on Women’s Health, Convention: “Women today and their psychophysical well-being”

**23rd April 2016, Comiso Club**,” Gender Medicine, health from the female side”.

**29th April 2016, Catenanuova Club**, “Earth, food, health, from our past to our future”.

**29th April 2016, Partinico**, Club, “The brain and ... around. Degenerative diseases and gender identities”.

**29th April 2016, Vittoria Club**,” Food a friend and an enemy. A healthy nutrition as an ally to psychophysical well-being”.

**30th April 2016, Bronte Club**, Art Gallery Sciavarrello, “Multiple sclerosis, get to know it to treat it”.

**18th May 2016, Santa Teresa Riva Club**, “Breastfeeding, well-being for mother and child”, in collaboration with UNICEF.



**21st May 2016, Comiso Club,** Day on prevention of Osteoporosis in women and elderly people,

**21st May 2016, Petralie e Madonie Club,** " Osteoporosis a silent epidemic".

**28th May 2016, Solarino Club,** "Environment Health and Lifesyles".

**30th May 2016, Siracusa Club,** "Popular medicine in the Sicily of our ancestors"

**3rd June 2016, Augusta Club,** " Feeding ourselves in order not to get ill"

**11th June 2016, Capo d'Orlando Club and Mistretta Club,** Sixth day on Stroke prevention.

**30th June, Marsala Club,** "A meal with the nutritionist, for a healthy nutrition and a proper lifestyle".

**1st July 2016, Santa Teresa Riva Club,** "Urinary incontinence in women".

3 July 2016 Palermo Mondello Club, District Convention " But ... what are we playing at?" 15 July, Merì, Valle del Mela Club, "United against bullying and homophobia"

## **THE AFRICA REGION**

### **BPW NIGERIA**

OLUSOLA LADOKUN works and spreads information on health in a tough environment as her Club is a small one and most of the Health Committee work that she has done, has been done alone. Apart from having isolated health talks at some Institutions of higher learning, Redeemers University and Lead City University, and some organizations like churches, what she eventually resolved to do was have some radio broadcasts.

She does this weekly on Lead City FM 89.1 and Petals FM 102.3. In this way she has a wider reach to woman folks and the male alike. Thank you to Olusola for her work; Considering the environment she lives and works in I think she couldn't do better than she is already doing now.

## **BPW KENYA**

BPW Health Committee, represented by MARY KARIUKI, thanks to Nakuru Bpw chapter was involved in a CANCER AWARENESS WALK to support cancer patients in Nakuru Hospice during the month of May 2016. This is an annual event where the Nakuru Club participates also offering financial support.

## **THE NORTH AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION**

### **BPW BARBADOS**

Thanks to the efforts of MARIANNE BURNHAM and NICOLE ALLEYNE, both members of the International Health Committee, last April 7th 2016, **BPW Barbados Health Committee** in observation of World Health Day, in association with the BARBADOS DIABETES FOUNDATION organized an interactive lecture on **Women and Diabetes** with a gynecologist, psychiatrist and diabetologist presenting. It is the first time 68 years after its foundation that the WHO dedicates the world health day to diabetes, recognizing the importance this disease deserves taking into consideration its diffusion which is taking on the demographic trend of a true pandemic. Diabetes affects 422 million people in the World and the number, especially among women, is set to double in the next 20 years.

The topics discussed during the meeting included: the Female Predicament, living and working with Diabetes, Depression, Sexual Health, Hormonal Issues, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, Pregnancy & Fertility issues, Heart Attack risk & More.

### **BPW BERKELEY**

MARIA C. DeSOUSA, in her report writes that during the past few years, in United States , in particular in California, where she resides, works have been focused, in collaboration with the Dominican University, on preventative medicine and alternative approaches to health care.

1- Breathing techniques with emphasis on Ayurveda, the ancient healing system from India, have been presented.

2- Dr. Vasant Lad, world renowned Ayurvedic physician was a as keynote guest speaker during the convention in Albuquerque, New

Mexico.

3- Breakout sessions on exploring different options for alternative therapy and diet have been arranged.

Future Goals:

Collaborate with Health care organizations to offer workshops on nutrition and exercise and promote healthy lifestyle changes.

## **THE LATIN AMERICA REGION**

BPW ARGENTINA

**Overweight and Obesity**, especially among children, is a global problem and is steadily affecting many low- and middle-income countries, particularly in urban settings. Overweight and obesity, as well as their related diseases, are largely preventable. Prevention of childhood obesity therefore needs high priority.

**The Latin America Region**, thanks to the efforts of Health Standing Committee represented by SARA LOUZAN ROSSI, reported that Argentina, following the “Tommy & Ollie project”, has worked on the issues of Cardiovascular diseases and Obesity paying particular attention to children and young migrants. Last May the new project “EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG, MIGRANTS ” started at primary schools with pupils from 5 to 9 and in a Public Pediatric Hospital in the north of Buenos Aires.

As the Argentinian Government, has welcomed 1500 people from Europe and Syria, Sara Louzan Rossi introduced in her project two more particular strategies of great current importance: 1) *Change the wrong attitudes of the teachers of migrants to the little pupils that have another language, different religion or different colour.* 2) *Give health loving the pupils and looking after them and their mothers and fathers too.* The project, which aims to promote a new culture linked to a proper nutrition and physical activity, involved specialists in cardiology, psychology, psychiatry and trainers for physical activity, since the beginning .

As per The project’s protocol, the pupils were given questionnaires to fill in about their food habits, their anthropometric measurements-

waist-height-ratio and their families. Two meetings with the teachers were organized talking about the problems of migrants coming from their countries in war, to Argentina, concerning their difficulties about different laws etc. The fitness trainer also organized a walk with pupils, their mothers and teachers. In the fight against obesity, practical lessons on how to make pizza, which was later consumed with their teachers, were also organized. The parents were advised to eat more fruit with them rather than sweets and chocolate. This Project has been also applied at a Pediatric Hospital in the north of Buenos Aires involving 100 children, 60 coming from the city, 30 from the surroundings or Province of Buenos Aires and 10 from other Argentinian provinces.

The questionnaire was answered by 18 children from 5 to 9 years old. All of them were overweight. The parents were from Latin America, Peru, Uruguay, Bolivia and 8 from Argentina. They were from 30 to 38 years old and two 45 years old.

Children used to eat hot-dogs, or bread with butter, or sweets, or sandwiches, chocolates and Coca Cola and no fruit, water or milk. Meetings with parents were organized where a psychologist talked about the need for prevention of cardiovascular risks and diabetes. The fitness trainer talked about the importance of physical activity, and the common use of bicycle to take care of their body. After these meetings, three mothers went together to the Cardiologist and one girl to Endocrinologist. Two girls were treated for diabetes, one was 5 years old and the other was 6 and there were also 9 boys and one girl with hypertension. The other 9 were overweight. Later on they were invited to make some pizza with Tommy and Ollie in the garden of the Hospital and they and the class enjoyed it.

The final conclusion is that in Argentina it is possible to organize campaigns at primary schools and at Paediatric Hospitals to treat NCDs, (cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, obesity and diabetes) particularly with girls for a new healthy childhood prevention, *because women's health and wellbeing are very important as well as human rights.*

The "EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG, MIGRANTS" project will be officially presented by Sara Louzan Rossi at the Health Workshop of the 15<sup>th</sup> BPW international European conference in Zurich from September 30<sup>th</sup> to October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

DORA MAURO has been fighting for years against killings of women with the project "NOT ONE LESS WOMAN, NOT ONE MORE FEMALE DEATH". This motto was written first by Mexican poet and activist

Susana Chavez Castillo, murdered for reporting crimes against women in Mexico. It was her who created the hash tag “not one less woman“ that became massive after 14-year-old Chiara Paez’ death in Argentina.

The project has two goals: educating women and helping them be healthy. The beginning of a relationship is all about courtship, flirting and romance. There is a lot of fascination and a great power of persuasion

involved, for women to believe everything men say, and so that women don’t realize about these men’s lies and manipulation. The man fulfills all of the woman’s emotional needs, but little by little, starts undermining her self-esteem, by humiliating and discrediting her and will later also start isolating her from her family and friends. He will treat her as an object, not as a human being, dehumanizing her. This presentation’s goal will be educational and health-related. It will be educational as some tips will be given to women so that they learn strategies to avoid being psychologically manipulated by these kinds of men and can separate from them before it is too late. Health-related as some tips to improve women’s health will also be given. Continuous and sustained abuse harms the immune system (psycho-neuro-immune-endocrine) because a body that has been abused over time is exposed to all kinds of diseases. Dora provides, with psychological tools, training to women in both health and education. Dora will present her work at the BPW international European Conference in Zurich starting with the emblematic case, which led the Mexican poet to create the motto “Not one more female death”, a symbol of the fight against systematic female murders in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico.

## **THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION**

### **BPW PHILIPPINES**

JEAN JUSTIMBASTE, member of BPW Ormoc, is also a member of WomanHealth Philippines and ,in the Health sector, she reports that they are advocating on the Reproductive Rights of Women. Since she is part of the Alternative Budget Initiative ( a national network of NGOs in the health sector), they are pushing for the increase of the health budget nationally as well as in the local government units. Universal health budgeting is the main push right now.

BPW Ormoc is a member of the Coalition of Ormoc Women, an aggregation of 30 NGOs and POs with programs and projects for women

and girls. Therefore they are into every issue that affects the lives of women and girls. Most of their members are also in this network representing their respective organizations and influencing decisions in the process (which is most important).

## **BPW NEW ZEALAND**

From the Asia Pacific Region, I would like to thank especially FAYE GARDINER and DIANNE GLENN who, despite pressing personal matters, still strived to promote important Health activities and projects in their Region. **Among the most important objectives of the Action Plan of the 2014-2017 Triennium there is the one about “Equality for women with disabilities”.** Due to its high value, we decided to present, in its entirety, the **SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND IMPEDIMENTS EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES ( please see below )**, because of its importance in solving health problems and other problems in different fields, of disabled women, hoping that **this great work could be an example and a stimulus for new laws of the governments that need it.**

Reported by **Dianne Glenn JP**, on behalf of BPW NZ which is the Lead Agency for this NCW Working Group.

Summarised April 2016 by **Faye Gardiner**, Past President BPW NZ.

### **Below we list only the issues regarding Health:**

- 1) the “Evidence of disparity, contributing factors and effect/impact on women with disabilities” and its relative**
- 2) “ Recommendations”**

#### EVIDENCE

- The criteria and considerations for health and reproductive related treatment of disabled women are not the same as for non-disabled women. Forced sterilisation is still legal in NZ. Girls with an intellectual disability can be sterilised without being informed and without their consent, abortions arranged on the basis of disability past the normal cut-off date for non-disabled fetuses and intellectually disabled mothers may have their babies removed at birth. These all contravene the UNCRPD.

- Breast and cervical screening facilities and mechanisms are not always physically suitable nor available within easy travel distance.
- Complaints by disabled women of health discrimination are not taken seriously by relevant authorities.
- New Zealand's Domestic Violence Act does not cover all disabled women, their domestic relationships and domestic households, such as when living in designated care facilities on a long-term basis.
- Lack of action with respect to the reinstatement with adequate funding of the Family Violence Taskforce, currently halted, where disabled women were represented, to continue the work on stopping violence against disabled women.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That New Zealand develop and fund effective violence prevention, early intervention, and refuge services that are appropriate and accessible to disabled women with particular focus on women with intellectual impairment.
2. That the Ministry of Health work with the Ministry of Justice to ensure that legislation covering disabled people provides the necessary protection to keep disabled women safe from serious harm.
3. New Zealand to make the same effort to protect the motherhood rights of disabled women as for non-disabled women and to ensure that the appropriate mechanisms and support are available through the relevant agencies.
4. That the Ministry of Health requires health agencies to provide breast and cervical screening services and equipment that are suitable for women with disabilities.

### CONSIDERATIONS

As chair of the BPW International Health Committee, as doctor and scientific journalist, I have attended in these last few months numerous meetings dedicated to the safeguard of Women's Health. Like the one on 22<sup>nd</sup> April dedicated to Rita Levi Montalcini, on the occasion of the "First National Day on Women's Health" organized by Italian Health Ministry and that one of 7<sup>th</sup> June on "Women and Diabetes" organized

by ONDA ( National Observatory on Women's Health ). At these meetings the countless problems affecting Women today more than ever were dealt with but also several projects aiming at solving social, cultural, economic and, of course, health problems were presented; a precious asset to safeguard in all the ages of our lives and today more than ever. We have now entered a new Era of Medicine, the most revolutionary ever, in which we went from **one size fits all** of last century (that is one type of Medicine is good for different types of patients and diseases with no difference in gender ), to a type of Medicine, that of the **4 P**, which, thanks to the analysis of the genetic makeup, can be even more **Predictive**, that is capable of telling us which diseases we might one day suffer from but, above all, which drugs are most suitable to hit the biological targets of that particular disease, for that particular patient. The treatment will then become more and more **Personalized** custom-made for an individual who is a world in itself: a world of proteins, a genetic world but also emotional and familiar, making sure the Medicine of the third millennium becomes increasingly **Participatory** with the patients who are set to play an important role in the decisions to make for their fate. But what we wish today is for medicine to become more and more **Preventive** because if it is true that genomics allows a better understanding of the causes of many diseases opening up to new possibilities to cure it is also true that our genetic patrimony represents approximately half of our Health condition whereas the rest is in our hands and in the capacity to choose a suitable lifestyle for our well-being as well as that of our children.

## CONCLUSIONS

*More than ever, the WHO and the United Nations found a strong ally in BPW International Federation through the members of the Health Committee, fighting NCDs as well as infectious diseases, not to mention*



*the common actions put in place to eliminate the various forms of violence against women.*

*This report shows that BPW members are all extremely active on all fronts even at a particular and hard time of political tensions like the current one which makes it all more difficult. It is also clear that the priority for most of the Clubs of all the 5 Regions is the promotion of Health & Wellbeing through safe food and healthy lifestyle. This means that we actually have entered the Era of Globalization, not only from an economic, political, scientific and cultural point of view, but also for the common purpose of achieving the objectives regarding the Health of Human Beings and that of our Planet. In this period more than ever a great help comes from the example of our founder Madeline Phillips who travelled throughout the World during the war bringing her message of sisterhood, female awareness to all the women urging them to carry on promoting the founding values of gender equality and human rights that no established power will ever have to remove from the face of the earth. I wish to thank all of BPW International Affiliates for the contributions they have undertaken in these few months of hard work and I trust them and the friends who will join along the way as many are the projects underway through which we expect to meet the targets set so as to strive towards Leadership, Equality, Wellbeing and Empowerment for all Women of all Nations.*

*Finally, I would once again like to thank our **President Yasmin Darwich** and all the **Regional Coordinators** for continuing on the same road as Madeline Phillips oblivious of dangers and always looking beyond the obstacles.*

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