

Club
AGORA
international

PART OF THE ROUND TABLE FAMILY



AGORA CLUB INTERNATIONAL

N°05 2019-2020

Dare to grow!

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1. Introduction of Chris Helsen, Int. President ACI

Hello ladies all over the world,

How are you all?

It seems like such a long time ago since we had our Agora travels to Botswana and Nepal for our International board meeting, installation of the National Board, our first African forum, our second ISP in Gaborone, Botswana **and** the charter of our new Agora Club in Nepal, the first Agora country in Asia!!!

What a joy, what a pleasure, what a success. Every event was of a great success and you will read about it in this newsletter.

You can enjoy an article of Chilufya Manakatwe, our International Vice President concerning the first African forum, her baby! Khurshida Khan of Agora Club Botswana captured the lovely moments of our second International Project, #keepagirlichildinschool, Palesa Pads, her baby!! And Samta Dhanawat, president of AC Nepal wrote about her baby, the charter of the first Agora Club in Nepal, in Asia.

And coming home from Nepal, we woke up in a new world. A world in lock down, all countries in different levels and difficulties. We were all lucky we arrived home safely!

Staying at home, social distancing and keep healthy is the new normal. Covid 19 is taking over.

We did not realized it but this was probably our last physical activity of our Agora year!!! From now we go for digital adventures!! This is a challenging time but sharing positive, creative events and ideas is not forbidden. Go for it.

Are we all ready for a digital challenge? ACI Totebags in the house!!

Do not forget: We have a new facebook PAGE instead of our facebook GROUP:
https://facebook.com/agoraclubinternational/?modal=admin_todo_tour

Keep in touch ladies, with WhatsApp, email, messenger, zoom, house party! I am always available for you!

#Stayathome, #stayhealthy, #flattenthecurve, #fightthevirus #DARETOGROWINSIDE

Thinking of you all 😊



2. ACI African forum 29th February 2020 Gaborone Botswana



The ACI Board would like to inform you all that the first African Forum successfully took place in Gaborone Botswana on the 29th February 2020.

The initiative of the African Forum was to give members more involvement in the shaping of ACI. To give the African region a "united" voice. This forum gave the region a chance to bond, to get to know each other, renew old friendships and to create new and lasting friendships as a lot of the African ladies are unable to attend the international ACI AGM due to the high cost of airfares.

All countries in the Southern African region were represented except for Madagascar. However, we were able to speak to Dominique Gontare Ralitera, IPP via messenger at the Forum and she conveyed greetings and best wishes on behalf of AC Madagascar. We hope to see more ladies attend the next forum. May this be the beginning of a wave of growth and unity in the African Region.

Points for discussion

a) Circler world /Agora world

Anna Tabone, ACI IPP made the presentation. Anna explained that this is a web based platform created by Round Table with the scope of having all the Round Table family use it in an interactive way. Ladies Circle have committed to using the same platform, calling it circler.world, followed by 41er.world and hopefully Agora.world. This, in short, allows:

- i) Administration of membership data
- ii) Communication between members
- iii) Exchange of documents, pictures, event dates, etc.

Agora Tangent Club Germany took up the pilot for Agora world. Update on how the programme is progressing will be given at the ACI forum.

b) Brainstorming

We broke into four groups to brainstorm on the following

- i) The ACI travel fund
- ii) Growth in Africa
- iii) Side by side - 5 clubs 1 vision
- iv) ISP

We received very interesting and pertinent responses which will be shared at the next ACI Forum.

c) ISP feedback

Laura Van Zyl, president AC South Africa gave feedback on the ACI ISP

- i) There is a great need for reusable pads to keep the girl child in school
- ii) Fundraising was proving to be challenging but appealed to members to brainstorm ideas to fundraise.

The Forum was asked if there were any new rules from member countries.

ACI is looking for nominations for a new ACI Vice President and a New ACI Treasurer for 2020/21. We are also looking for a new web lady.

ACI is appealing to member countries for a host of the ACI AGM in 2022.

The ACI Secretary Mihaela Cracana informed the Forum about the upcoming charters and the ACI forum. The ACI website is up and running, please find time to visit it. Mihaela appealed for articles for our monthly newsletters.

Any other business raised from the floor

- i) Any donation for the ACI ISP should go through the ACI treasurer and account as follows:

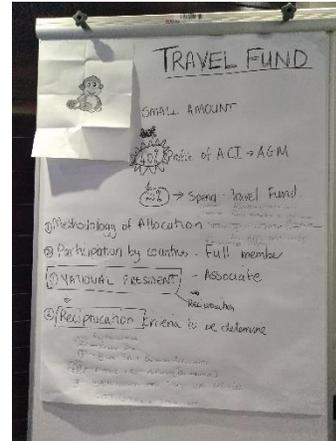
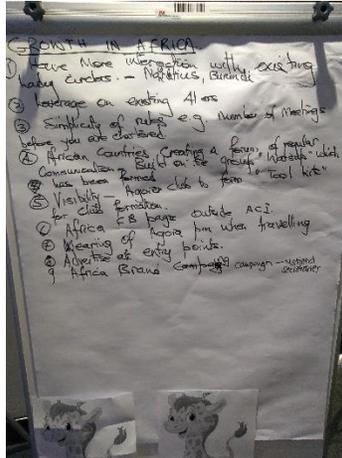
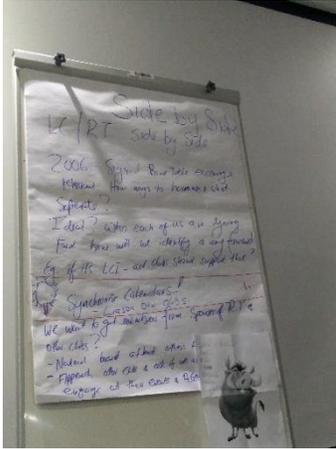
Agora Club International
BNP Paribas Fortis
Fortis Bank nv
Lokeren-Belgium
Account number:
IBAN: BE 25 001-6811249-82
BIC/SWIFT: GEBABEBB

- ii) Donor feedback is very important
- iii) Beverley Patterson, ISP Convener informed the Forum that Palesa pads would give back ACI 10% of the total number of pads purchased in the year

There being no other business, the meeting was closed. Date and venue of the next African forum will be communicated in due course.

*Written by
Chilufya Mwanakatwe - Vice President 2019/20*

Some images for you to enjoy!!



Brainstorm sessions

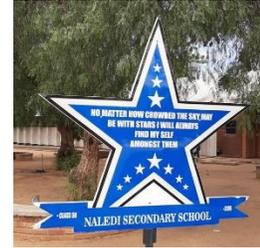


3. #KeepAGirlChildInSchool by Khurshida Khan (IPP AC Botswana)

Agora Club Botswana had great fun putting together the event #KeepAGirlChildInSchool. So many young girls are robbed of a basic need- education. They are unable to afford disposable pads during their menstruations, as a last resort they use leaves, newspaper and harmful substances to prevent their clothes from getting stained, this in turn causes harmful infections.

We applied to ACI to host the handover of reusable pads to these girls, the event was held at one of our less privileged schools Naledi Senior Secondary.

The girls had such a great time participating very enthusiastically and enjoying every moment. We commenced with a traditional dance in Setswana (Botswana's local language).





Chris, Mihaela, Chilufya and Anna as well as our South African sisters, Bev, Bongsi, Keletso led by their ever so humble leader Laura, added their own spice to this delicious afternoon treat. It was great to have our Zambian and Zimbabwean sisters join us as well. Not only did everyone support us, they also participated in our traditional dance. Mihaela had great fun explaining to the children how the pads could be used and showing them a few Romanian dance steps, she lightens everyone's mood with her spontaneous wit. We are ever so grateful to Bev for initiating such a noble cause. The girls were so grateful that they even took Anna's number

and communicated their appreciation. "The path of true love never did run smooth." Someone once said; I would use that as an analogy during this Palesa Pad project, thwarted with challenges from the very beginning, from despondence to frustration I found myself on the mobile with Chilufya for advice not even realizing the time.



I am so grateful for support from our awesome ACI board, Chris had barely settled from her flight and she just got into filling and sealing the buckets to be handed out. Chilufya, Laura and Taryn supported me whenever there was any uncertainty/ issue. Mihaela, you displayed true sisterhood, when my car broke down at such a crucial time, this is the true spirit of sisterhood in agora. We had a local nurse explain the facts of life to the girls who attentively hung on to her every word. Keletso from South Africa explained to everyone how the pads were used and kept

clean. Through Chris's suggestion we formed little circles and all the Agora's participated with zest and zeal, in showing the girls how the pads were used.

The students really enjoyed the afternoon, confidently came forward to display their own dancing talents, the afternoon ended with a Marimba band (Traditional African band), the students were handed a fruit and a lollipop each.

Thank you ACI for making this possible and thanks to my own sisters from Botswana who were present and who supported me all the way... all my love

Khurshida Khan (IPP –ACB)



4. Charter Agora Club Nepal – by Samta Dhanawat



Agora Club NEPAL spent the end of 2019 and beginning of 2020 preparing for the Charter.



One, which saw the Agora Club establishes a footprint in Nepal and Asia for the first time.

The charter is our greatest achievement so far as it is the first in Nepal and Asia. It was a pleasure to welcome our President, Chris Helsen to preside over the charter. We were honored to have Immediate Past President Agora Club International board, Anna Tabone from our God Mother Country Malta.



It was a joy for us to have Round Table International Asia Pacific Region Chairman, Tabler- Jayant Agarwal, Round Table Nepal President Saurabh Kedia, Ladies Circle Nepal President, Ladies Circle International Asia Pacific Region Secretary Arti Agarwal and circlers from Kathmandu Ladies Circle-1 at the charter.

What a great mix of pleasures this week had to offer! Ladies from Belgium, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Romania, and Malta greeted this new country NEPAL into the Agora International world. And, of course, the Agora Club International board, represented by President Chris, Vice-President Chilufya, Immediate Past President and Godmother Anna & Secretary Mihalela.



We had our charter at the Chandragiri Hills Resort at the height of 2551 meters above sea level, accessible by cable car. At the poolside, surrounded by the mountains and the Himalayan range.



We ended the charter celebration by playing Holi, a festival of colors with flowers that was around the corner.



The Gala dinner was a unique experience for our guests. Music, dance, best wines and fun games were an interesting part of it. Glad to get complimented by ACI President Chris who said “never ever had attended such a Gala dinner before.”



Samta Dhanawat
President AC Nepal 2020-2020

5. Events in Botswana and Nepal, an overview

As we have planned so many activities in Botswana, the int. board decided to have our second boardmeeting (our first was in Marrakech during the AGM) in Gaborone, Botswana. Initially everyone could join but in the end Vandana, our treasurer, had to cancel because her husband had an accident and needed the support of his wife. So pity for Vandana and for us all.

We arrived safely in Gaborone. Anna, Chilufya and myself was offered home stay in the house of Bilkiss, president of AC Botswana and Mihaela and her husband Petru was offered home say in the house of Khurshida Khan, IPP of AC Botswana.



Board meetings in different settings but mainly in the house of Bilkiss, the president AC Botswana.

Very intensive, creative, bonding, happy times!!!!

Lighting the candle of friendship, discuss lot's of items and of course have fun with each other!

But we were spoiled by the Botswana girls, they looked after us so carefully.

The Botswana agora members had as well a lot of **surprises** for us, before or after our hard work during the board meeting.

- Boat trip
- Spicy trip
- Safari
- Mountain bike (only me !)
- Meeting all the ladies in different locations

In that way we managed to get to know them very well!!!!So nice!

And Petru, Mihaela's husband discovered the city in his own 😊 but sometimes we took care of him!!



Our second International Project, #keepagirlchildinschool, Palesa Pads in Gaborone, well organized by the AC team with Khursida Khan taking the lead, was a big success. Cfr. Article of Khurshida previous in the newsletter!!

We reached more than 300 girls and once again we have sensed the need of our 'palesa pad' project, our ISP.

And our project reached twice the local newspaper



Well done AC Botswana, we are very proud of you all!!!

For the continuation of our beautiful project, we need your support 😊



**One-mission--5000-€--300-GIRLS-
#KeepAGirlChildInSchool👏**

We-need-your-help-to-make-this-ISP-a-success.👏

DONATIONS:👏

Account-number:-AGORA-CLUB-INTERNATIONAL👏

IBAN-BE-25-001-6811249-82👏

BIC/SWIFT:-GEBABEBB👏

**Please-mention:-DONATION-PALESA-PADS-AND-YOUR-NAME-
OR-NAME-CLUB-NAME👏**

Every girl should have the opportunity to attend school every day!

**Many girls in Africa miss 3 –5 days of school each month because they cannot afford sanitary pads.
Most girls eventually end up dropping out of school altogether**

With our project, Palesa Reusable Sanitary pads, we can provide a sustainable solution for up to 5 years, which is a girl's school career.

Installation of the National Board and our first African forum was next on our busy program

Installation of the national board of AC Botswana with president: Bilkiss Moorad.

Thank you, Bilkiss for taking the lead and wish you all the best with your Agora Club.

Our first African forum was an amazing success, as you can read the article of Chilufya in the newsletter.



Thank you Chilufya for our 'African outfit'.
Thank you ladies in Africa for your commitment.



But no event in Agora without a **gala party!**



SUPER

A very perfect ending for a perfect time in Botswana

Thank you all!!

TRANSFER FROM BOTSWANA TO NEPAL

Anna, Chilufya, Mihaela and her husband Petru and myself travelled to Nepal, different flight schedules!!

We said goodbye in Gaborone and said hello again in Nepal. Waaaaaaaaw

NEPAL



I arrived in Kathmandu, Nepal safely but my luggage did not!!!!!!so I had to adapt to the Nepalese lifestyle instantly, as you can see in the picture.

The ladies of Nepal welcomed us with a beautiful orange welcome scarf!



What a good excuse to go shopping with the ladies of AC Nepal, no luggage 😊

Our dress code for the charter was 'our dare to grow', shirt but no luggage so no shirt!!

The ladies of Nepal immediately did suggest: why not a sari. And as we were wearing an African outfit earlier in Botswana we were completely overwhelmed with the idea. Make a negative (no luggage) in a positive (shopping for a sari) Thank you ladies !!



We had a lovely time in Kathmandu with the energetic Nepalese ladies

As you can read in the beautiful article of our first AC president in Nepal, in Asia, Samta Dhanawat the charter was arranged on top of the mountain, with an amazing view!!

A few extra collages for you to enjoy!!

A big hug and a big thank you for organizing this amazing, unforgettable charter for us.





NAMASTE



6. Digital challenge



Are we all ready for a digital challenge? **DARE TO GROW Totebags in the house!!**

As we have to stay at home, in our house, in our apartment, it would be heart-warming to see the DARE TO GROW totebags travelling in your house, in your garden, in your bedroom, at your terrace, some where.....some how.....

My DARE TO GROW totebag with my dog, Elisatbeth, in my house, in the kitchen, in Genk, Belgium



Take a picture, sent it to our int. secretary Mihaela Cracana, m_cracana@yahoo.com or put it on Facebook/ Instagram of ACI

I hope we receive a lot of pictures so we can make a big collage for our next newsletter!!!!

Looking forward to see our ACI Totebag travelling in our lock down!!

Do not forget:

We have a new **facebook PAGE** instead of our facebook GROUP:
https://facebook.com/agoraclubinternational/?modal=admin_todo_tour.

7. Agenda

You can follow the updated agenda on the website. Most of the events are cancelled or postponed because of the lockdown in most of the countries

8. Vacancies in the International Board

VICE-PRESIDENT, TREASURER, WEB-LADY

We are looking only for 3 ladies to join us at the International board.
The vacancies are: **Vice President/ Treasurer / Web lady.**

You can call/WhatsApp/email all the members of the board for more information.

Dear ladies,

Do not stay in your comfort zone and go for the challenge!!!





STUCK IN THE CORONA TIME WITH YOU!!

