



President's Statement to UN CSW69

Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific is a strong voice for women and girls in Asia Pacific for education, engagement and empowerment. We care about younger generations, emerging issues, and the right to a safer fairer and sustainable future. We respect CEDAW principles and the Beijing platform for action critical area # 12, and all others.

Our 13 diverse countries represent **across the spectrum** of poverty, sophistication, cultures and religions, governance systems, technological innovation and demonstrated gender equality.

What we do **have in common** is that no country has yet achieved legislation that protects adolescent girls, nor protects people from severe climate impacts, nor protects people from cyber crimes and digital corruption like disinformation. The findings of the UNESCAP 2025 SDG advance report show variable achievements on targets. The Pacific countries SR5 are very different from the South East Asian countries SR3.

What **SISEAP does has in common** in goodwill, partnerships, and promise. In Soroptimists we listen to community needs and address those in culturally appropriate ways to ensure a path to resilience and empowerment. So, the future looks brighter than the past.

In 2024, alone we empowered about 17,000 girls and over 27,000 women through 250 on the ground projects like food and water security, lifelong education and healthcare, and 106 advocacy projects to change laws and regulations for more sustainable communities. Our donations of money and in-kind with expertise, helps females, families and futures. Our \$AU96,000 in scholarships can change lives and options for girls and women and their communities. Our contribution to a better society is significant.

In September 2024, **Pact for the Future** set the scene for us through

- ❖ The Pact articles 8 and 31 addressing gender equality,
- ❖ the Global Digital Compact to strengthen our resolve for ethical digital pathways,
- ❖ investing in the youth through systems to support tomorrow's leaders and emerging challenges through the Declaration for Future Generations.

With over 60% of our population under 25 years old (UNFPA), their future needs to have a safer environment from climate, conflict and corruption. Young girls and women are at highest risk of danger, disease, distress, duress, and denied freedom through modern slavery and human trafficking.



Across all our demographics, our most vulnerable peoples need to leapfrog technological innovation for education, healthcare, e-commerce, entrepreneurship, opportunity, participation in governance and advancing equality.

We ask this UN assembly to advance opportunity to:

- ❖ Introduce and strengthen legal language to protect adolescents as defined as between nine to nineteen years of age
- ❖ Demonstrate more pathways for full and equal participation of girls and women to high quality education, economic empowerment, technology for life choices that deliver the rights to a fair, safe and sustainable future.
- ❖ Safeguard young girls, adolescents, and women from cyber attacks through laws that protect everyone.

Puan Joanne Yeoh
President SISEAP
8 February 2025.

SISEAP: Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Thailand.