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Soroptimist International



South East Asia Pacific

ACN 147 990 627



SOROPTIMISTS
EMPOWER CHANGE



SPAN

Soroptimist Programme Action News

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of the Programme Action News

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FROM OUR PROGRAMME CONVENOR



During late September and early October, much has happened in our countries and the world has moved internationally. Locally we celebrated Literacy Day (all age education), Teachers Day, Breast Cancer Awareness, International Day of the Girl Child, World Habitat Day for Urban Crises Response (actually preventing crises) your Sustainable Communities SDG11, Planetary Health Check (read more [HERE](#)) Older Persons Rights, Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and International Day of Peace.

Internationally, the world recognised **80 years** since the charter establishing Peace and Security under the United Nations. Very few women were signatories (8) to that declaration and one was Jessie Street, who also became the VP of the first **Commission on the Status of Women Committee in 1945**. Since then, almost all countries have women voicing gender equality. This is balanced by the new International Court of Justice in the Hague decision on Afghanistan crime of femicide, and major breaches of CEDAW and Human Rights, read more [HERE](#).

The UN General Assembly 80 last week released report on 80 years, read [HERE](#). There were powerful speeches by our Prime Ministers and Presidents from Indo-Pacific with voting for the two-state solution (both sovereign countries of Israel and Palestine), ceasefire, safe access to humanitarian aid, protection of aid workers, and the Right to Protect (R2P) civilians especially women and children. Peacekeeping and peace building must be invited. Genocide is evidenced by deliberate killing of mothers, children, maternity hospitals, schools and places of worship. This spells out the first of 5 indicators for genocide.

Conflict is occurring in more places now than post world war, including in our own Soroptimist Federation counties, read more [HERE](#). This is why the **women's participation in all phases of peace** is crucial - where women lead peace follows. Read more [HERE](#) Women currently participate in only 10% of peace negotiations. Where there are more women in politics, there is a direct correlation with a better peace index ranking. 2025 Peace Index, read [HERE](#)

One of the important issues at UNGA80 was the **Women Peace and Security** session recognising resolution 1325, after 25 years of implementation. Read [HERE](#). An open letter [HERE](#) urges all women's groups across all countries to endorse 4 things - stop arming conflict, uphold international law, defend women's rights and gender equality, and support civil society. Read it [HERE](#).

Locally and globally we celebrated the **International Day of the Girl Child on 11 October** and throughout that month. 'Girls' definition includes baby to adolescent towards adulthood (different ages - adult might be 18 or 21 depending on local laws, no matter the age of consent for marriage or 'legal' sexual intercourse). Where a local jurisdiction does not articulate marriage age, a man could legally marry a baby - thereby breaching (international) rights of the child, which is adopted almost

universally. A speech from UN Youth Queensland on International Day of Girl Child is [HERE](#).

We are preparing for **CSW70** with the theme for access to justice. SI statement is below. If you wish to **attend in person, please apply for your visa now** to avoid delays or rejection at the other end by authorities. SISEAP is facilitating ways to make many sessions to be online, so our members won't miss out.

What does this mean for your clubs? You should be proud of your grassroots work because you are implementing all of these resolutions for a better future. Your case studies demonstrate how our Federation is delivering. Please remember to put your work into the database so we can showcase good practices that suit our own sustainable communities.

PS I have not entered my donations into our club reporting yet - so I am guilty too. PPS, please look at the Top Tips about how to report your hours.

Dr **Donnell** **Davis,**
Programme **Convenor** **2024-2026**
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International Day of the Girl Child 11th October

The International Day of the Girl Child focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their human rights.



The 2025 SI campaign theme 'Educate Her, Empower Her' focusses attention to our tagline 'Educate, Empower and Enable' which underscores a core part of our mission. The title also reinforces the idea that education is a powerful pathway to empowerment for every girl. Supporting statement can be viewed [HERE](#)

We look forward to sharing International Day of the Girl Child club stories in upcoming editions.



16 Days of Activism Campaign

Soroptimist International 16 Days of Activism to End Gender-Based Violence 2025 campaign webpage is now available on the SI website and ready to share.

You can access it [HERE](#)

This year's campaign focuses on helping to prevent online violence against all women and girls, because online violence is real violence. There are many steps for awareness and advocacy for your clubs in your communities.

SI encourages all Soroptimists to participate by sharing and promoting the campaign content across social media between 25 November and 10 December. You'll find everything you need on the webpage, including:

- Downloadable suggested social media copy
- Downloadable campaign graphics

These can also be found on the SISEAP Trello board with additional resources that may be of use for the campaign. SISEAP website page with more information [HERE](#).

[SI 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM CAMPAIGN](#)

[SISEAP 16 DAYS TRELLO BOARD](#)



SISEAP Federation Public Speaking Competition

Don't miss this exciting opportunity to showcase the voices and talents of your region/country! Let's make this a truly vibrant and inspiring event with representation from across our federation.

This year's theme, "Empowered Voices, Sustainable Choices," encourages young people to explore how individuals and communities can make informed, ethical, and bold decisions that support a more sustainable and equitable future. The categories are:

12 years - 15 years
16 years - 19 years

Regions/Countries are encouraged to hold heats from which they should find a winner or max 2 winners to represent them in each category in the Federation level of the competition. Videos of their speeches should be submitted by the country or region by 10 December 2025. This will allow videos to be made of each finalist with a view to being able to showcase the speeches as part of the Federation activities for Education Day on the 24th of January 2026.

If you are participating please inform Cesarina Gigante or Anne Allan.

[GUIDELINES & DOCUMENTS](#)

FROM SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

CSW70

The seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 9 to 20 March 2026.

Priority theme: Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers.

Review theme: Women's full and effective participation and decision making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Agreed conclusions of the sixty-fifth session can be viewed [HERE](#).

SI have released their draft for CSW 70. This can be read [HERE](#).

FEDERATION PROJECTS

ROUND 10 CLOSES 31 October



Round 8 is being finalised with new charity grant rules.

We will announce the recipient & project in next eSPAN

Round 9 now closed.

Thank you to those who applied.

Does your club have a project which requires funding? Consider applying now for funding of **up to maximum of \$10,000 AUD to bring your club project to life**. Read the guidelines document and the supporting documents and then make your application. Programme Team member can assist you to complete your application. Judges are independent. Upon selection, will help with the new charity agreement.

Round 10 is now open & applications due by 31st October

[READ GUIDELINES & APPLY HERE](#)

PROJECTS & APPEALS



Your contribution assists in clubs continuing their valuable grass roots project driven work to improve the lives of women and girls.

By donating, you can ensure that even more transformative projects are funded and positive change continues. We are investing in our own projects in our own Region.

Watch our video to see how the SISEAP Brilliant Futures Fund winners are shaping the future for women and girls in their communities. Their stories are a testament to the amazing work supported by your contributions.

[BFF GRANT WINNERS VIDEO](#)

[DONATE NOW](#)

SI Foundation

With a focus on education, poverty prevention and human rights, striving to foster positive change and create a more inclusive world. Delivering short, medium and long-term projects internationally for women and girls. For further information, click [HERE](#)



**SOROPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL
FOUNDATION**

December 10 is Sotoptimist International Foundation Day, traditionally the day Soroptimists support the SI Foundation appeal, by donating via your club or individually to continue the foundations work.

UNITED NATIONS NEWS

United Nations News

We have the opportunity to sign this as the Status of Women Network of UNAA.



[READ AND SIGN HERE](#)

1. Stop arming conflict
2. Uphold international law
3. Defend women's rights and gender equality
4. Support civil society

UNGA80 in summary:

- UNGA80 annual report (stats) [United Nations Annual Report 2025 | United Nations](#)
- Foreign Minister Penny Wong addressed UNGA Women Peace & Security – hotlink summary [Durable peace is impossible without the full, equal and meaningful participation of women. At the High-Level Meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network at the UN, I reaffirmed... | Penny Wong | 21 comments](#)
- Commonwealth Foreign Ministers [Commonwealth Foreign Ministers unite at UN to champion multilateralism and drive reform | Commonwealth](#) SISEAP has 7 countries in the Commonwealth
- Prime Minister Anthony Albanese addressed UNGA – video hotlink [Albanese UN address urges Israel to accept 'share of responsibility'](#)

- Indonesian Prime Minister speech in UNGA80 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qoMDUfuGjFc>
- Australia and Pacific – Oceans policy and governance systems hotlinks
- Planetary Health-check [Planetary Health Check – Our planet’s vital signs are flashing red](#)

[UN DAYS](#)



[SISEAP EVENTS HERE](#)



SISEAP Conference

1-3 May 2026

Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

Early Bird Registrations close 31st January

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

SI Convention 2027

30 September to 2 October 2027

Soroptimist International (SI) is excited to announce that the 2027 Soroptimist International Convention will be held in the stunning city of Prague, in the Czech Republic.

Hosted by Soroptimist International Europe (SIE), this highly anticipated event will bring together Soroptimists from around the world to re-connect, collaborate, and advance our global mission of achieving human rights and gender equality for all women and girls.



[FIND OUT MORE](#)

SISEAP will be publishing a quarterly calendar, to view important dates for action and events, which can be viewed [HERE](#). The calendar is viewable from the front page of the SISEAP website, under the EVENTS tab.

AROUND THE FEDERATION



SI Yangon

On Friday, March 28, 2025, at 12:50 PM local time, a powerful earthquake magnitude of 7.7 struck near the city of Mandalay in Myanmar. This was followed by a strong 6.4 magnitude aftershock just minutes later.

Soroptimist International Yangon acted immediately. Read more [HERE](#).

SI Kota Kinabalu

Imagine losing your home in just one storm!

That's what happened here in Sabah after 4 days of continuous rain (the equivalent of 6 months of rainfall) caused devastating floods and landslides. Families were left without homes, food supplies, and even the most basic necessities.

To bring a little relief, Soroptimist International Kota Kinabalu (SIKK), together with our main sponsor MR.DIY Foundation @yayasanmrdiy, distributed nearly 100 Dignity Kits to women and girls in 3 relief centres.

More can be read on Facebook [HERE](#).



Families were left without homes, food supplies, and even the most basic necessities.





SI

Northern

Beaches

SDG.11

Hampers of Hope for young girls transitioning from crisis accommodation to independent living.

Secure Start is a dignity-first initiative that provides essential household items to young people transitioning from crisis accommodation into independent living. Developed in partnership with frontline youth services (Taldumande), it bridges the critical gap between emergency care and long-term stability by offering tailored starter kits with bedding, kitchenware, hygiene products, and other practical essentials. These kits meet immediate needs while reinforcing a sense of safety, autonomy, and respect. By working directly with caseworkers and support agencies, Secure Start ensures timely, targeted support that complements broader wraparound services.

Club members have a meeting to discuss the kind of items they think would be valuable and cross check this with the suggested items list received from Taldumande. The packs include doonas, doona covers, pillows, towels, cutlery etc. SI Northern Beaches members go out and purchase the items from money either been given in a grant or fundraised. All members are involved in the discussions, however generally 4-5 are involved in the purchasing, packing and delivering.



Jean Hailes Women's Health Week (1-5 September 2025) is Australia's largest event dedicated to the health and wellbeing of all women, girls and gender-diverse people.

This year, the theme was **'Say yes to you'** emphasizing women should prioritise their own health and wellbeing.

Several Clubs engaged with women's health in the last month:

SI Logan: Guest speaker at their monthly meeting were fortunate to have with us Saalihah Seedat at our monthly meeting. Saalihah is a Consultant Clinical Pharmacist, social entrepreneur, philanthropist, and mentor with a passion for leadership and social issues. Saalihah talked to us about The Keys to Healthy Ageing – Move Well, Eat Well, Connect Well. Key takeaways included Evidence-based lifestyle tips to support healthy ageing, practical ways to incorporate movement and healthy eating into a busy life and the importance of social connection for physical and mental wellbeing.

SI Beenleigh: Over the month of September, SI Beenleigh raised awareness to the symptoms and the benefits of early detection for Gynaecological cancers. They did this through their Gynaecological cancers Self check postcards and Facebook campaign. They also held a Pink Dinner meeting to bring awareness about breast cancer.

SI Moreton North: Had seven members attend the Women's Network Australia Women's Health Forum. SI Moreton North President Kassandra Behrendt gave a presentation on invisible disabilities, particularly those that affect younger generations and Marney Perna closed the forum with her 10 Top Tips on Stress Management. On our SIMNI information stall LBS their Mascot Bear had on her red knickers (G-String) and they shared their Dare to Be Aware Gynae Button Badges.

New Zealand has just released its September newsletter, which can be read [HERE](#)

SI

Damansara

Update

Soroptimist International Damansara was established 32 years ago and currently has 24 members, having just inducted two new members in September.

They undertake a range of projects and activities, with education assistance at the core of our work.

- **They provide tuition support to:** Rumah Aman, B2 Learning Centre, PADI, MRCLC, Sekolah Tunas Bakti - SID Gears 4 ward with STB.
- **Ongoing Projects & Activities:** Vision 2025 – Gift of Sight, BBBB – Building Bridges Beyond Borders & BBBB Online, Thriving Futures – Member bring a member initiative, Medical Assistance and Single Mothers Assistance.

Newer Initiatives:

- Stand with MRCLC – Help Keep Our School.
- Keep a Child in School (MRCLC).
- ARISE: Awakening and Rallying Inspired Students towards Empowerment, empowers students (ages 15–19) to envision their future, helps them set academic goals and adopt positive habits, encourages balanced routines between study and leisure.
- R.ED – Reimagine Education. Weekly workshops focusing on soft skills such as coding, entrepreneurship, sports, financial literacy, and even cooking—tailored to each student's needs.
- STEM with Mr. DIY: A collaboration with the National Science Centre to promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Educational toy workshops help children learn physics concepts through play.

Spelling Bee - Their annual inter-home Spelling Bee Competition is underway, with the finals to be held in person and all homes participating.

Read more in their newsletter [HERE](#)

PROGRAMME REPORTING DATABASE

October Tips

Calculating Service Hours and Donated goods

At a recent Programme of Service meeting we discussed the fields

- Service hours worked by a club and
- Total amount of goods donated in kind

and provide the following clarification

Service hours are those hours that club members are engaged with for a project or activity. This includes time actually spent at an event and also any preparation time, e.g. writing and requesting donations, collecting donations, sending out thank you's following the event etc.

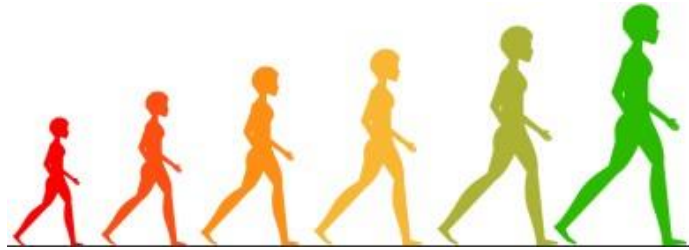
We use this figure in calculating the contribution made by Soroptimist members. For example in the calculation of Soroptimist volunteer hours used in our Impact Card circulated at CSW.

We appreciate that many clubs often have non-members assisting them and to recognise their contribution we recommend that their hours be included in the description section in the reporting data base on What You Did

Goods Donated in Kind - in this section we ask that you estimate the dollar value of any donated goods. If they are second hand, use their second hand value.

As always, if you need more clarification contact your Zone coordinators.

DID YOU KNOW?



Be the Change

A reminder to report your work as soon as you have completed it. The Programme team love hearing and promoting Club's advocacy and project work. It also helps provide ideas to other Clubs in the Federation. Only documented and peer reviewed reports can be use as evidence for our UN reporting. We report on our 8 objectives and 17 SDGs, as well as find special items through words searches. You can search all that too, anytime.

[Have you explored the updated Programme Members website page? All the information you will need is contained here.](#)

Quick Links

There are now dedicated articles to assist members in all aspects of programme. Use the quick links to quickly jump to the page.

Programme Reporting Database



Programme Downloads



Brilliant Futures Fund



CSW Information



Programme Committee



Best Practice Awards



Goals & Objectives



SI

Global

Voice

Newsletter

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Copy for the November 2025 eSPAN edition is required by **Saturday, 1 November 2025**. Please email your submissions to programme.donnell@siseap.org Thank you.



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