

Soroptimist International Statement

For the Commission on Population and Development, April 23 – 27, 2012

- *Soroptimists in Fiji organised an ongoing program with the Ministry of Agriculture training women and girls in sustainable production, using land which was otherwise lying fallow. The Soroptimists partnered with gender coordinators in the Ministry of Agriculture and reached out to groups of rural women to offer training and support. They continue education with the women on topics such as land utilisation, home gardens, vegetable production, and financial literacy. The Soroptimists have also created 'training gardens' and provided much needed agricultural tools. 200 women and 100 girls have been trained.*

bring these salient points to the attention of the governments. Policies, programmes, funding streams, and security measures must protect, respect, and fulfil the rights of women and girls. By ensuring that governments take all necessary steps to educate, empower, and enable opportunities for women as equal partners, we can begin to progressively realise poverty and hunger eradication, improvement in human development, and, most importantly to Soroptimist International, the positive transformative of the lives of women and girls in

need

This, distinguished delegates and ministers, is what is needed to eradicate poverty and hunger, to realise human development and potential, and meaningfully work towards the MDGs. Empowering women and girls with rights, resources, and recognition as equal partners is not optional; it is unquestionably necessary.

The project examples given at the beginning of this statement do just that. Locally relevant, simple, cost-effective, and empowering solutions make a difference. These examples put women at the centre of those solutions, empowering them with skills, confidence, and the resources and support they need to economically participate in society. The results are improvements in the communities as a whole, in inclusive, sustainable, and equitable ways.

With this in mind, Soroptimist International makes the following recommendations to promote productive capacity, employment, and decent work for all.