



ASIA
PACIFIC

BEYOND BARRIERS

BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE FUTURE 2025



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About Special Olympics Asia Pacific

Our Mission

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competitions in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

Special Olympics is a global movement that harnesses the transformative power of sport to foster inclusion and end discrimination against people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Founded in 1968, the organization offers year-round sports training and competitions in over 30 Olympic-type sports, alongside inclusive health, education, and leadership programs. Today, Special Olympics serves over 190 countries and territories, supported by a global network of coaches and volunteers.

With its regional headquarters based in Singapore, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) oversees and supports a diverse network of programs across 35 countries (including 5 programs in the process of rebuilding). Beyond sports, SOAP is committed to creating inclusive communities through holistic, evidence-based programming in healthcare, youth empowerment, and athlete leadership — championing the rights, voices, and inclusion of people with IDD in every aspect of life. Unified sports brings people with and without intellectual disabilities together to train and compete on the same team.

In partnership with governments, schools, corporations, and civil society, Special Olympics Asia Pacific advocates for a world where everyone — regardless of ability — is welcomed, respected, and given the opportunity to contribute meaningfully. Through sport and beyond, we are building a future defined by inclusion, compassion, and human potential.

PMD's Note: A Movement Built in Powerful Moments

When I look back at 2025, I think first and foremost about moments. I was privileged throughout 2025 to meet athletes, families, volunteers, and coaches in so many wide and varied settings that speak not only to the scale of what we do, but the numerous ways in which we work in so many different communities across the region. In these encounters with so many amazing people, I found moments of inspiration, elation, determination, and confidence.

An athlete scoring a glorious three-pointer in Kalimantan.
A parent beaming with pride and confidence in their child at the National Games in New Zealand.
A young person in Pakistan sending me a letter of thanks for the opportunity to improve her school, community, and nation through her volunteering.
A volunteer unwavering under pressure at the World Winter Games in Turin.

In 2025, we reached 637,015 athletes, a milestone that everyone across Special Olympics Asia Pacific should be immensely proud of. Yet beyond the numbers, what fills me with even greater pride is the work we have done to truly understand where gaps still exist in our programs and in our approach. Experiencing the depth of passion on the ground, alongside a shared sense of what I can only call a healthy dissatisfaction — the collective knowing that there is still so much more to do — has left me deeply happy with what we achieved in 2025 and even more motivated for what comes next.

We worked to understand where we are making progress and where gaps remain. This past year, we've strengthened data systems to further accelerate growth and expanded research into the value of inclusive education and sports, the economic cost of exclusion, the barriers that women and girls face in accessing sports, and more.

Correspondingly, we continued supporting country program leaders and boards to strengthen governance, safeguarding, and accountability.

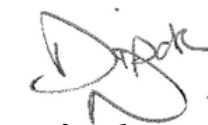
Asia Pacific, which encompasses more than half of the world's population, is incredibly diverse in ethnicity, culture, linguistics and socio-economic development. Progress does not move at the same pace everywhere. Our regional role is to ensure that no country program stands alone. We do this by connecting countries. We align standards. We open doors to partners. We share learnings and best practices across geographical borders. When we do this well, inclusion becomes more consistent and more resilient across the region.

What we are seeing across Asia Pacific is not the result of one team's effort. It reflects a movement choosing to grow stronger together. When each part strengthens, the whole region moves forward.

To our athletes, thank you for your determination and joy. To our coaches and volunteers, your consistency builds confidence and dignity. To our families and partners, your belief strengthens this movement. To our board and staff, your stewardship ensures that we grow with integrity.

We recognize barriers facing people with IDD across the Asia Pacific region remain. Access is still not equal. Opportunities for inclusion are still highly limited and often out of reach, but our resolve is clear. As we move into 2026, we will continue to expand opportunities, strengthen the foundations that safeguard athletes, elevate their leadership, and work together so that inclusion becomes the norm, not the exception.

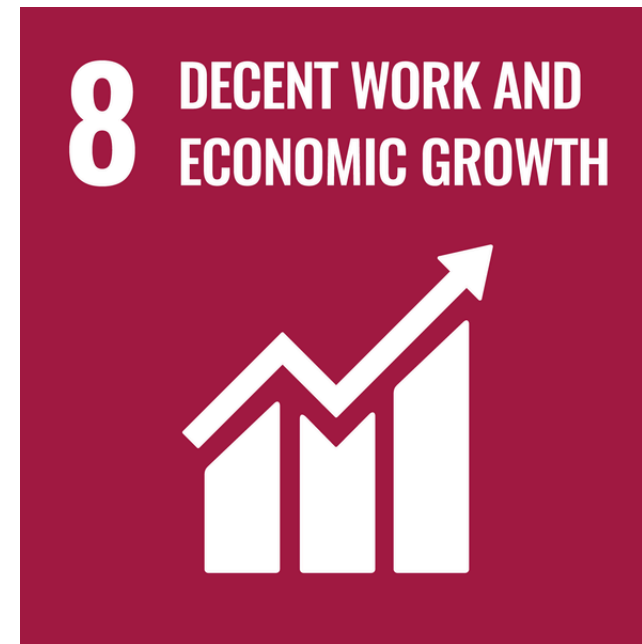
I look forward to many more powerful and impactful moments.



Dipak Natali
President & Managing Director
Special Olympics Asia Pacific



Our Focus



Sustainable Development Goals Supporting Inclusion

- People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) improve their physical well-being, skills, fitness, and health.
- People with IDD, teammates, families, volunteers, and others improve their social and emotional well-being.
- People without disabilities behave more inclusively.
- Organizations are more inclusive through the work of Special Olympics and influence of athletes.

Why Our Work Matters

Across the Asia Pacific, people with intellectual disabilities face significant barriers to sport, health care, education, and community participation. In many countries, inclusion depends not only on programming but also on the strength of the institutions delivering it.

This is where Special Olympics Asia Pacific comes in. As a regional office serving 35 countries, SOAP ensures that country programs are not operating in isolation. We strengthen leadership by reinforcing governance. Through targeted capacity building, board development, elevating safeguarding standards, and aligning systems, data, and strategy, we are able to identify and address gaps, coordinate expertise, and build strategic partnerships, including those with the Asian Development Bank; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, various embassies, amongst others.

In 2025, the region expanded to 637,015 athletes. That growth reflects more than increased activities. It reflects stronger boards, clearer accountability, improved financial oversight, and enhanced safeguarding frameworks across the region.

Ensuring the development of people and an organization that delivers impact in each country is the backbone of our work.

By building leadership capacity, improving compliance and accreditation systems, integrating data and analytics into decision-making, and strengthening financial sustainability, SOAP ensures that inclusion is embedded in durable systems, bringing together committed and passionate individuals who grow and build the infrastructure needed to change the landscape of supporting people with IDD in their countries.

In a region marked by diverse legal environments, resource disparities, and varying levels of disability awareness, this backbone matters. Strong governance protects athletes. Transparent systems build trust. Reliable data strengthens advocacy. Strategic partnerships open doors to policy influence and sustainable scale.

When regional systems are strong, we help country programs grow responsibly and gain trust so that more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can have opportunities, feel respected, and belong.



Special Olympics Asia Pacific Board of Directors



David Evangelista
Chair of the Board (Newly appointed)
CEO, Special Olympics Inc.



Raju Venkataraman
Vice Chair of the Board;
Chair, Audit Committee;
Leadership Coach and Corporate
Trainer



Chris Morris
Chair, Program Excellence Committee



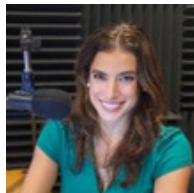
Ernest Bower
President & CEO, Bower Group Asia



Jessica Cho
Consultant;
Chair, Fundraising & Development
Committee

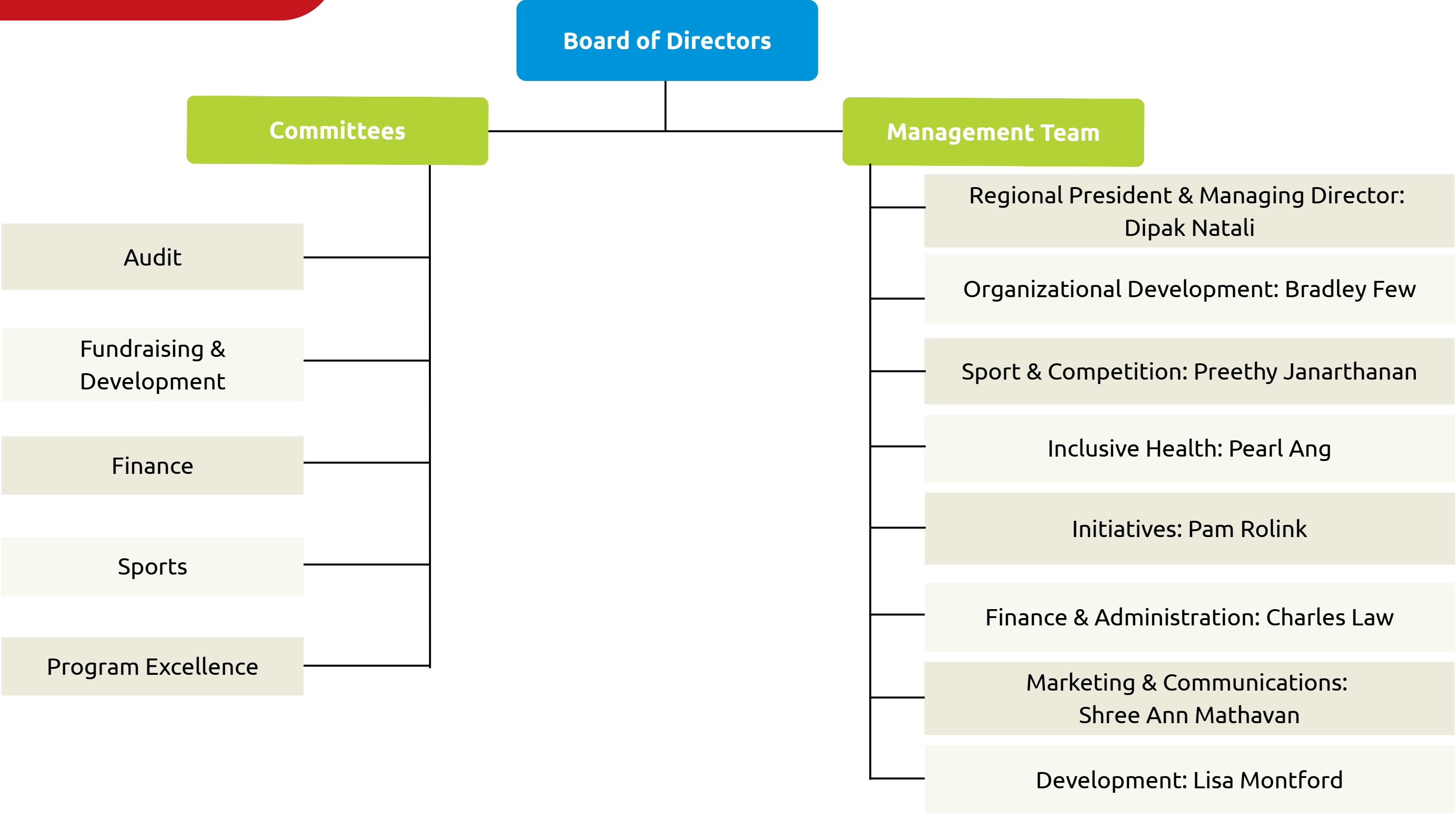


Philip Miao
Chair, Finance Committee;
Chief Financial Officer at PrinFu Pte Ltd



Pippa Woodhead
Podcast Host & Producer;
Fundraising & Development Committee

Organizational Structure



Our Reach & Impact

- Afghanistan (Inactive)
- American Samoa
- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Bharat (India)
- Bhutan
- Brunei Darussalam
- Cambodia
- Fiji
- Guam
- Indonesia
- Kiribati (Inactive)
- Laos
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Marshall Islands
- Micronesia
- Myanmar
- Nauru
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Nippon (Japan)
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Pilipinas (Philippines)
- Samoa
- Sri Lanka (Inactive)
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- Thailand
- Timor Leste
- Tonga (Inactive)
- Vanuatu (Inactive)
- Vietnam

Where We Operate

Special Olympics operates in **35 Asia Pacific** countries (including 5 programs in the process of rebuilding), advancing the inclusion mission through sports, health, youth outreach, and leadership programs with multiple partners across the region.

GROWING
THE GAME



**SPORT &
COMPETITION**

Sport & Competition: Growing the Game

Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) continued to expand opportunities for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to train, compete, and excel across the region. Through regional competitions, global events, partnerships with international sports federations, and investments in coach development, the region strengthened both athlete pathways and program capacity.

These efforts help ensure that athletes across diverse backgrounds can access meaningful sporting opportunities, from grassroots participation to international competitions. By strengthening coaching systems, building partnerships with federations, and supporting regional events, SOAP is helping programs deliver higher quality sport experiences while advancing inclusion through sport.





2025 Sport & Competition Highlights

- **123 athletes** and unified partners from **9 countries** in the Asia Pacific region participated in the Special Olympics World Winter Games Turin 2025.
- **62 athletes** and **17 unified partners from 10 countries** participated in the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025.
- **132 athletes** from **6 countries** competed at the Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025.
- **6,640 athletes** and unified partners reached through Macquarie-supported Unified Sports programs, **70+ coaches** trained through Unified Sports coach development.
- Gallagher funding and partnership resulted in the **first National Hockey ID Competition** (an adapted, inclusive version of the sport) launched in Malaysia.

World Winter Games Turin 2025

The Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy, marked an important milestone for the Asia Pacific region, with athletes proudly representing their countries on the global stage.

123 athletes and their unified partners competed together. People with and without IDD from Australia, Bangladesh, Bharat (India), Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nippon (Japan), Pakistan, and Singapore were represented across 8 winter sport disciplines, including alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, floorball, dance sport, figure skating, and short track speed skating.

Beyond competition results, the Games provided athletes with international exposure, opportunities for cultural exchange, and experiences that strengthened confidence and independence.

The event also reinforced the region's continued progress in expanding winter sports participation in countries where such opportunities are still emerging.

Inclusion in action

Unified partners are individuals without intellectual disabilities who train and compete with our athletes as equal teammates. Through this shared experience, they grow into leaders who carry inclusion into schools, workplaces, and communities.



Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025

This competition was a key milestone within the region's 10-year competition calendar and demonstrated growing regional capacity to host inclusive sporting events.

Hosted by Special Olympics Malaysia, the competition brought together 62 athletes with intellectual disabilities and 17 unified partners from 10 Asia Pacific countries, competing across 156 matches over 4 days.

The event also generated strong community engagement, enhanced public awareness, and showcased inclusive sport at both national and regional levels.

337 volunteers supported the competition, 162 health volunteers delivered screenings for the Healthy Athletes program, and 32 corporate partners contributed monetary and in-kind support. The partner reception created an important platform for dialogue and commitment toward inclusion in sport. 90% of volunteers surveyed expressed willingness to volunteer again for future events, indicating strong retention and positive engagement.

The event delivered important legacy outcomes, including increased national visibility for Special Olympics Malaysia and the inclusion of the program within the Ministry of Youth and Sports' annual Persons with Disabilities (PWD) League.



Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025

The Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025, held in Bandung, Indonesia, brought together athletes from 6 countries in the region - Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Thailand.

A key event highlight was equal participation from both male and female athletes, demonstrating ongoing commitment to fostering balanced opportunities and inclusive sport. The tournament served as a platform for athletes to demonstrate teamwork, sportsmanship, and months of dedicated training.

Hosted by Special Olympics Indonesia, the event also enhanced local athlete development, increased volunteer and community engagement, strengthened program capacity in running high-quality events, and created lasting networks that will support future inclusive sport programs nationwide.



Building Sustainable Coaching Systems

SOAP launched the Coach Developer Training (CDT) initiative to strengthen long-term coaching capacity across the region.

The program equips experienced coaches to become coach developers who train and mentor other coaches within their home countries. The training pathway combines online learning, an in-person practicum, and a two-year implementation phase during which coach developers deliver workshops locally.

CDT aims to create a pipeline of qualified coach developers who can deliver workshops within their programs, supporting coaches in meeting SOAP Certified Coach standards.

This approach strengthens sustainable coach education systems, improving coaching quality and consistency while advancing athlete development across the region.



Coach Developer Elangovan “Elango” Muthoo from Special Olympics Singapore quickly applied his new skills from the Coach Developer Training by delivering a Safe Sport workshop for local coaches. He also achieved the internationally recognized ICCE certification, which recognizes his expertise as a coach educator.

A volunteer with Special Olympics Singapore for over 25 years, Elango began as a unified partner and has since coached at both the World Games and Asia Pacific Games while also officiating in bocce and floor hockey competitions.

“Coaching is not just about technique or winning. It is about connection, empowerment, and helping athletes grow with confidence and resilience.”

**Elangovan “Elango” Muthoo, Coach Developer
Special Olympics Singapore**



Strengthening Sports Through Partnerships

Throughout the year, SOAP also strengthened partnerships with global sports federations and corporate partners, including the Badminton World Federation, Badminton Oceania, the International Hockey Federation (FIH), the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF), Macquarie Group, and Gallagher. These collaborations expanded access to sport, strengthened technical expertise, and enabled programs across the region to build sustainable sport development pathways.

Football for All Asia

As part of a FIFA Foundation-funded leadership program, SOAP organized a training session in Kuala Lumpur focusing on football and athlete leadership. It helped build understanding of people with IDD, inclusive coaching practices, and pathways for engaging with country programs.

Strengthening Badminton Standards with Badminton Oceania

Papua New Guinea athletes were supported in their participation at the regional badminton competition thanks to a collaboration with Badminton Oceania. Federation-led technical training and financial support strengthened national badminton structures and local coaching capacity in supporting inclusive sport and helped overcome barriers that previously limited international participation.

Expanding Unified Sports with Macquarie Group

Through support from the Macquarie Group, Special Olympics programs in Singapore and the Philippines expanded unified sports programming, reaching 1,382 participants directly and contributing to a broader reach of 6,640 athletes and unified partners. Weekly trainings included structured bowling coaching for 60 athletes in Singapore and 9 sessions for 731 athletes across 5 sports clubs in the Philippines. The support also helped Special Olympics Pilipinas establish 15 new clubs across 6 regions.

Coach development was a key focus, where 70 certified coaches were trained, contributing to a wider network of 232 coaches and 170 partners supporting unified sports across the region. Macquarie employees also contributed volunteer hours, fundraising, and strategic support, strengthening program sustainability and partnerships.

Hockey Partnerships Enabling Inclusion

In hockey, funding from Gallagher and partnerships with the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) enabled Special Olympics Malaysia to deliver Hockey IDD coaching and umpiring certification courses. Support from AHF Raja Ashman Shah Hockey Academy, including sponsorship of equipment for participants during the course, also culminated in the country's first-ever National Hockey ID Competition, strengthening national capacity to deliver inclusive hockey programs.

STRENGTHENING
SYSTEMS

INCLUSIVE HEALTH

Inclusive Health: Strengthening Systems

Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) supported country programs by leveraging evidence-based initiatives, strengthening partnerships, elevating athlete leadership through health messenger training, and advancing inclusive health throughout the region. Through regional coordination, capacity building, and shared learning, health initiatives generated robust, community-based impact.

2025 Inclusive Health Highlights

- Through MoveFit, **992 athletes, 462 families, and 84 coaches** were engaged across 2 countries, with 85% of athletes increasing moderate physical activity.
- Recruited **1,685 new Young Athletes, 1,228 families, 450 coaches, and 150 volunteers** across 4 countries.
- Over **2,400 athletes** screened at more than **40** Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® events.
- **20 regional athlete & youth leaders** trained as Health Messengers.



MoveFit Fitness Programming

MoveFit, a 12-week program promoting lifelong habits in physical activity, nutrition, and hydration, was launched in Special Olympics Malaysia and Vietnam with the support of the lululemon Here to Be Grant.

The program reached 992 athletes, 462 families, and 84 coaches, demonstrating strong community engagement and wide geographic impact.

Over half of the participants had reduced waist-to-hip ratios. Blood pressure improved for 65% of participants in Malaysia and 59% in Vietnam. Fitness gains were also significant, including improved cardiovascular endurance, strength, and flexibility. 85% of all athletes reported engaging in more regular moderate physical activity.

In addition to improved fitness, the program empowered athletes to build confidence, independence, and leadership by providing them with opportunities to lead sessions, reinforcing their role as active contributors within their communities. Schools are now planning to embed elements of MoveFit into their curriculum, while partnerships with universities and families are helping to sustain momentum beyond the initial program cycle to embed health practices within the community.



Young Athletes

"I saw how impactful this platform is in helping children with intellectual disabilities discover their potential, with the support of their families and the wider community, to become future athletes who may one day represent their countries on regional and global stages."

**Chu Keen Lim, Public Affairs Lead,
UPS, Southeast Asia & Oceania**

With support from The UPS Foundation, Young Athletes, an inclusive play and sports program for children with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), expanded to 33 locations across Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore.

The program recruited 1,685 new young athletes and engaged over 1,200 families, 450 coaches, and 150 volunteers (including UPS employees). These weekly sessions help strengthen athletes' fundamental motor and social skills, build confidence, and experience inclusion from an early age. Coach training and family-focused activities, such as health education family forums, were organized regularly to strengthen understanding of child development and empower families to actively support their children's growth both during sessions and at home.

Additionally, the past year saw several meaningful collaborations with schools, kindergartens, and local organizations, to support the recruitment of young athletes and session delivery. Collaboration with government agencies further enabled the delivery of Young Athletes coach trainings and supported trained educators in implementing programming within their own schools.

Regional Health Messenger Training

All 20 members of SOAP's Regional Athlete and Youth Leadership Councils were trained as Regional Health Messengers in 2025.

The training equipped athletes with knowledge on health and health systems to effectively lead, communicate, and advocate for inclusive health practices for all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This enables them to be better positioned as health advocates that promote inclusive health practices within their communities, in support of building inclusive health systems and addressing the health disparities faced by people with IDD.



Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®

More than 40 Special Olympics Healthy Athletes® screenings were conducted across 7 country programs, reaching over 2,400 athletes. Screenings were also integrated into the regional badminton and football competitions, where 521 athletes received free health screenings and health education across 5 disciplines, including Special Smiles, FunFitness, Strong Minds, Health Promotion, and Opening Eyes, supported by clinical directors, trained medical volunteers, and general volunteers.

Additionally, partnerships with universities and health institutions were strengthened, and medical volunteers were trained to provide effective health care and management for people with IDD.



Asia Pacific's Golisano Health Leader Recognized



“Every child deserves the chance to be seen early, supported early, and included fully. When we invest in early intervention, we open doors that might otherwise remain closed.”

Dr Toh Teck Hock, Pediatrician
2025 Global Golisano Health Leadership Award Recipient

For nearly two decades, Dr Toh Teck Hock has advanced early diagnosis and inclusive care for children with IDD. As a pediatrician and co-founder of the Agape Center in Sarawak, Malaysia, he has supported hundreds of children through early intervention (ECI). In 2023, Agape guided more than 200 preschoolers with IDD through the ECI program, with over 80% successfully integrating into preschool and many transitioning into mainstream primary education.

Beyond Sarawak, Dr Toh is a champion for inclusive health in the wider Malaysian and Asia-Pacific region. He is a clinical director for the health promotion discipline of Healthy Athletes for Special Olympics Malaysia and is a regional clinical advisor for health promotion for SOAP. He has also helped shape policies related to IDD inclusion through serving on various committees in the Malaysian Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.

Dr Toh's approach to his work emphasizes the power of both community-level engagement and country-level partnerships to create lasting, inclusive health systems.

EMPOWERED
TO LEAD



INITIATIVES

Initiatives: Empowered To Lead

Athlete and youth leadership remain central to the Special Olympics movement. Across Asia Pacific, leadership programs help athletes and young people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) build confidence, develop their voices, and take on meaningful roles within their communities and the movement.

In 2025, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) strengthened leadership pathways through Athlete Leadership training, youth-led initiatives, and the expansion of Unified Champion Schools (UCS). Together, these initiatives ensure that athletes and young people are not only participants in programs but also active leaders helping to shape a more inclusive future.

The region also onboarded the new Regional Athlete and Youth Leadership Councils (2025–2027) in Singapore, bringing together 14 leaders from 11 countries. These councils will help guide regional initiatives, contribute to strategic discussions, and ensure athlete and youth voices shape program priorities across the region.



2025 Initiatives Highlights

- **8 country programs** launched Unified Champion School (UCS) initiatives across the region, with **55 new UCS established**, engaging **1,952 athletes** and **1,638 unified partners** and indirectly engaging nearly **20,000 students**.
- **308 teachers and coaches** were trained to deliver UCS programming, and **284 youth leaders** were trained through Inclusive Youth Leadership initiatives in these **8 countries**.
- **14 athlete and youth leaders** onboarded at the Regional Athlete & Youth Leadership Councils 2025-2027.
- **10 youth-led** Innovation Grant projects across the region, led by **20 youth leaders** with and without IDD.
- **271 students from 9 inclusive schools** competed in Bhutan's first national UCS competition featuring athletics, bocce, and futsal.



Expanding Unified Champion Schools



Unified Champion School (UCS) programming continued to expand across Asia Pacific, helping create school environments where students with and without IDD learn and participate together.

In 2025, 8 programs — Bhutan, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam, Fiji, Maldives, Singapore, and Malaysia — began implementing UCS programming, engaging 1,952 athletes and 1,638 unified partners. The initiative trained 308 teachers and coaches, while 284 youth leaders strengthened their leadership skills through Inclusive Youth Leadership training.

Together, these efforts established 55 new UCS, indirectly reaching nearly 20,000 students across the region.

To support implementation across the region, SOAP also delivered a six-session UCS onboarding learning series led by the Regional Youth Leadership Council (2022–2024). The webinars engaged an average of 40 participants per session, including educators, coaches, staff, youth, and athletes. Participants explored topics such as building school partnerships, delivering quality unified sports, inclusive youth and athlete leadership, educator training, and community engagement. The series received positive feedback, with an overall rating of 4.7 out of 5, reflecting increased confidence among participants to implement UCS programming.

Advancing Inclusion in Education Systems

Special Olympics Bhutan marked an important milestone when the Ministry of Education and Skills Development signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with them to expand UCS programming nationwide.

Graced by H.E. Lyonpo Yeezang De Thapa, Minister of Education and Skills Development, the event highlighted Bhutan's leadership in inclusion. Her Excellency shared, "We are taking an important step toward deeper regional and global initiatives grounded in shared learning and collective responsibility."

The partnership was launched alongside Bhutan's first national UCS competition, involving 271 students from 9 inclusive schools competing in athletics, bocce, and futsal. Supported by MoESD, Bhutan Olympic Committee and Paralympic Committee, SELWA, UNICEF Bhutan, The Indian Embassy, The Mohamed Bin Zayed Foundation for Humanity, Lions Clubs International Foundation, Special Olympics Bharat (India), and SOAP, this MoU paves the way for Bhutan to join the Special Olympics Global Coalition for Inclusion in the near future — ensuring every student learns, plays, and belongs.



Unified School Impact Evaluation

In 2025, SOAP strengthened evidence for inclusive education, building from a global Unified Champion Schools evaluation, with a landmark partnership with Special Olympics Thailand and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT).

While the global study confirmed UCS improves school climate, mindsets, and students' social-emotional skills across 6 country programs, including those in India and Pakistan, the Thailand research explored sustainability within public education systems.

Engaging 480 students across 30 schools in Bangkok, Thailand, the study showed improvements in skill development and participation among students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), alongside more positive attitudes, empathy, and acceptance among peers without IDD. Findings highlight the role of educators, leadership, families, and the need for systems alignment. This research translates global insights into regionally relevant evidence to inform policy and scale systemic inclusion across Asia Pacific.



Representation at Global & Regional Platforms

Athletes and youth leaders from Asia Pacific also represented the region on global platforms. Unified youth leaders from Bharat (India) and Pakistan joined 50 young leaders from 25 countries at the Global Youth Leadership Summit during the World Winter Games in Turin.



Unified Youth Leadership in Action

Young people continue to play a vital role in advancing inclusion. In 2025, SOAP supported 10 youth-led Innovation Grant projects, led by 20 youth leaders with and without IDD.

In Pakistan, unified pair Talha Asif and Musa Faisal Hannan initiated a project to establish Unified Leadership Clubs across 6 schools, engaging more than 150 students in planning and leading inclusive activities together. Students with intellectual disabilities took on leadership roles, helping organize events and shape decisions within their schools. Schools reported increased confidence in students' leadership capacities, stronger collaboration between mainstream and special education students, and a shift toward more inclusive school cultures.



Strengthening Athlete Leadership

Special Olympics Australia hosted its largest Athlete Leadership Training in New South Wales since the pandemic, bringing together 34 Athlete Leaders and 24 mentors for a 1.5-day program focused on advocacy, leadership foundations, and Unified Leadership.

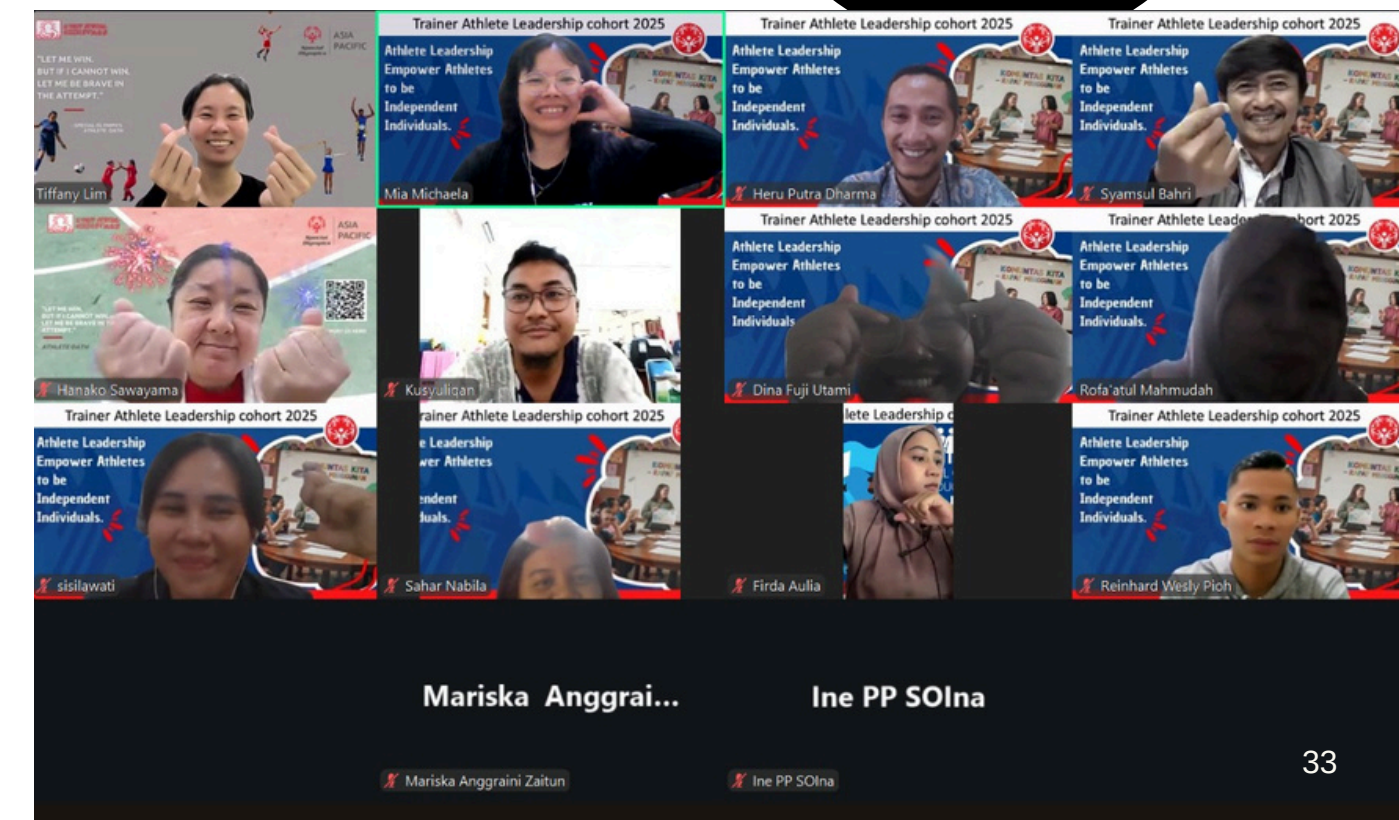
Athletes shared personal experiences, practiced public speaking, and reflected on their leadership journeys. With Australia preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2026 and host the National Games in Melbourne, athlete leaders are preparing to take on greater involvement in promoting inclusion and representing the movement.



Building Leadership Capacity in Programs

To strengthen leadership pathways at the local level, SOAP and Special Olympics Indonesia delivered a three-day Athlete Leadership Train-the-Trainer program for 13 participants from 4 sub-programs across Kalimantan, West Java, and West Sumatra.

Participants including board members, coaches, and former youth leaders gained practical skills to mentor athlete leaders and deliver leadership training within their clubs. The program also helped participants recognize that practices such as unified sports and athlete-led activities already support the foundations of athlete leadership.



AMPLIFYING
VOICES

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing & Communications: Amplifying Voices

This year Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) strengthened our digital presence, media visibility, and advocacy voice across the region by driving a consistent content strategy, media engagement, and thought leadership. We expanded reach while deepening the quality of storytelling. In addition to growth metrics, we established the movement as a credible authority on inclusive sport, health, education, and innovation.

2025 Marketing & Communications Highlights

- LinkedIn followers **increased by 200%**, surpassing **3,500**.
- YouTube subscribers **grew by 275%**, generating **2.4 million impressions**.
- A total of **324 million unique visitors** reached through media coverage across the year.
- More than **90 media features** for the Philippines' Global Coalition announcement.
- Over **273.5 million reach** for Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025.
- **66 pieces** of coverage generated for Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025.



Digital Growth & Engagement

In 2025, our social media strategy focused on expanding reach and deepening engagement across platforms, with particular emphasis on accelerating growth on LinkedIn and YouTube.

LinkedIn followers rose by 200%, surpassing 3,500 followers, while YouTube subscribers grew by more than 275%, generating over 2.4 million impressions.

Instagram and Facebook continued to demonstrate steady organic growth, driven by a consistent cadence of high-quality content. Collaborative posts with Special Olympics and other influential partners further amplified visibility and strengthened engagement across audiences.

Beyond growth metrics, our social media presence increasingly served as an educational and awareness-building platform. Through graphics, videos, short reels, and creative soundbites, we shared insights and perspectives from athletes, athlete leaders, unified partners, coaches, families, country programs, and healthcare leaders, reinforcing the movement's impact across Asia Pacific.



Thought Leadership & Advocacy

SOAP strengthened our regional and global voice through strategic storytelling and sharing evidence-based insights at both regional and global forums.

The communications team managed the on-ground production of a global video featuring Dr Toh Teck Hock of Special Olympics Malaysia, the Asia Pacific recipient of the prestigious Global Golisano Health Leadership Award. The video spotlighted Dr Toh's dedicated career in championing early diagnosis detection and early childhood intervention (ECI) for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, reinforcing the importance of inclusive health leadership in Asia Pacific.

SOAP-led research findings were further amplified at the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD) Asia-Pacific Congress 2025, where the team developed and designed a poster that distilled complex, evidence-based insights into a digestible format for external audiences. This effort reinforced SOAP's position as a thought leader in inclusive health and sport, driving systemic change through accessible knowledge-sharing.



Thought Leadership & Advocacy



Regional Communications supported Hanako Sawayama, Administrative Coordinator, Initiatives of SOAP, in her role as a panelist at the Zero Project Asia Pacific Symposium 2025: Powering Accessibility Innovation.

By polishing her script and messaging, SOAP's voice was represented with clarity and impact — delivered powerfully by an athlete leader with an intellectual disability — on this global platform dedicated to advancing accessibility and inclusive innovation.

The communications team oversaw the development of a SOAP opinion piece on *Inclusive AI in Asia*, bylined by regional president and managing director, Dipak Natali. Published by e27, Asia's leading tech and startup media outlet, the piece explored the future of inclusive AI in Asia, emphasizing both its potential to drive digital inclusion and the risks of reinforcing exclusion if communities are not directly engaged in shaping solutions.

Together, these efforts reinforced SOAP's credibility as a trusted voice on disability issues and a credible voice on inclusion across multiple sectors.

Ramping up Visibility Across Owned and Earned Media

Strategic content development across SOAP-owned channels, as well as media engagement around major competitions, resulted in over 324 million unique visitors reached across the region. ·

The communications team delivered its own comprehensive coverage of the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025, cutting across blogs, videos, and social content for all 9 participating countries in Asia Pacific as well as the Youth Summit. Highlights included a feature in Women Going Places with a Special Olympics Singapore athlete and a Winter Games Highlights video that garnered 124,000 views on YouTube. A pipeline of over 20 athlete and youth leader interviews with intellectual and developmental disabilities was gathered and released progressively over time. These efforts ramped up understanding of SOAP's mission and elevated awareness of people with ID across regional and global audiences.

The Philippines' entry into the Global Coalition for Inclusion generated over 90 media features with a reach of 12.8 million, positioning SOAP as a driver in advancing inclusive education through sport.

The Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025 achieved more than 60 press clippings and more than 273.5 million in reach, while the Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025 generated 66 pieces of coverage across international and national media outlets, reaching over 38 million monthly unique visitors, and achieved an estimated advertising value equivalent of IDR 195 million.

These efforts ensured that athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities were visible in mainstream media, strengthening public awareness and advocacy for inclusion.



Capacity Building with Partners

The communications team strengthened advocacy capacity across the region. In close partnership with public relations agency, Burson, 16 youth and athlete leaders received training on "Personal advocacy on social media" as part of onboarding for the Regional Athlete & Youth Leadership Council. This initiative not only built practical skills in digital storytelling but also amplified authentic voices from within the movement. Through curated interviews and soundbites, 7 young leaders were featured on SOAP's social channels, showcasing their perspectives and reinforcing the importance of inclusion in the public discourse.

In addition, during the Regional Leadership Conference, the communications team conducted 2 dedicated sessions with Country Program Leaders on "Best Practices for Events Communications". Drawing on successful case studies from India, Singapore, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand, these sessions provided practical frameworks and peer learning opportunities to enhance program visibility and stakeholder engagement.

Together, these efforts reflect the team's ongoing commitment to equipping leaders and young advocates with the tools to communicate effectively, inspire action, and strengthen the movement for inclusion across the region.



**ADVANCING
INCLUSIVE INSIGHTS**



RESEARCH

Research: Advancing Inclusive Insights

In 2025, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) continued to strengthen the movement through research and evidence that demonstrates the value of inclusion. Across the region, studies examined the economic costs of exclusion and the barriers women and girls with intellectual disabilities face in participating in sports, and also the impact of our programmatic work with Unified Schools.

These efforts aim to strengthen program design, inform advocacy, and support governments and partners with credible data. By connecting research with lived experiences and program outcomes, SOAP is helping to ensure that inclusive sports, health, and education initiatives are grounded in evidence and positioned to influence broader systems.

It strengthens the movement by showing not only why inclusion matters but also the measurable benefits it brings to individuals, communities, and societies.

Through collaborations with partners including KPMG and participation in platforms such as the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD), SOAP continued to strengthen its role as a credible contributor to global research and an advocate for more inclusive policies and practices supporting inclusion and inclusive sport, health, education, and participation of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

2025 Research Highlights

- Our study, in partnership with KPMG, estimated that the economic cost of exclusion in India as **INR 3.7 trillion annually, approximately 1% of GDP**. The value of inclusion through Special Olympics programming was also projected to be valued at **INR 2.6 billion across 10 years**.
- SOAP is also studying the barriers and motivations of girls and women with IDD in participating in physical activity. In a first for the region, SOAP is involving people with IDD in the research process. Research will be conducted in Guam, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Vietnam.

Thought Leadership and Research

SOAP contributed evidence-based insights to the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD) Asia-Pacific Congress 2025 in Singapore, which convened more than 500 researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

Pearl Ang, Director, Inclusive Health & Advocacy and Pam Rolink, Senior Manager, Initiatives of SOAP showcased 4 key studies, 2 in collaboration with research partners:

- Results from using an Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) Specific Health System Level Assessment in India and Pakistan.
- Evaluating the impact of a holistic child and family health program: Implications for early intervention in the Asia Pacific region.
- Motives for Participation in Physical Activity Among Women and Girls with Intellectual Disabilities: A Qualitative Study Protocol for Inclusive Research.
- Impact evaluation on how inclusive sports shape skills for school and the community for students with intellectual disabilities.



Measuring the Economic Cost of Exclusion

SOAP partnered with KPMG to examine the economic cost of excluding people with IDD in India.

The study estimates that exclusion results in an annual societal cost of INR 3.7 trillion, approximately 1% of India's GDP. These costs include additional healthcare expenses, limited educational access, and lost economic contributions from individuals with IDD and their caregivers.

The research also highlights the economic value generated through Special Olympics programming. Over a ten-year period, inclusive sports, health screenings, education, leadership, and employability initiatives could unlock INR 2.6 billion in societal value, demonstrating that inclusion delivers measurable economic and social benefits.



Advancing Research on Women and Girls in Sports

SOAP launched a regional study examining the barriers and motivation of girls and women with intellectual and developmental disabilities in sports and physical activities.

The early phase of the research focused on a literature review that encompassed 54 international studies. Among the small number of studies globally available, few focused on women and girls, and the small number of findings found women and girls with IDD have significantly lower physical activity levels than men.

In a first for the region, SOAP is involving people with IDD directly in the ongoing research process, to ensure research outcomes are more relevant and meaningful.

This has so far involved training and the pre-testing of interviews with athletes, coaches, parents, and country program leaders across Australia, India, and the Philippines, to better understand motivations and barriers to participation.

The next phase will be interviews conducted with country programs, including Pakistan, Guam, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Vietnam, for primary data collection.



The Rosemary Collaboratory

Special Olympics Bharat (India) and Pakistan were a part of the Rosemary Collaboratory, a research initiative that uses data to drive health systems improvements related to the inclusion of those with IDD, targeting barriers that have been identified and prioritized with the leadership of those with IDD.

In India, the study highlighted strong foundations for inclusive health, including supportive legislation, early identification systems, and scalable workforce platforms. However, gaps remain, including limited representation of persons with IDD in policymaking and challenges coordinating care as individuals transition into adulthood.

In Pakistan, the research identified strong disability legislation and community health infrastructure but noted challenges such as limited financing, workforce training gaps, lack of accessible health information, and fragmented disability data.

The findings informed multi-stakeholder discussions in India on strengthening inclusive health systems, while in Pakistan the Global Report on Intellectual and Developmental Disability Inclusion in Health Systems was launched in Lahore in November 2025 to advance dialogue with policymakers and stakeholders.

PHILIPPINES LEADS THE WAY:
FIRST IN THE ASIA PACIFIC TO JOIN THE
GLOBAL COALITION FOR INCLUSION



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DIPAK NATA
President and Managing Director
Special Olympics Asia Pacific

AKIKO THOMPSON-GUEVARA
Chairperson
Special Olympics Philippines

ANNY GARA
Executive Director
Department of Education

JOCELYN DR ANDAYA
NCR Regional Director
Department of Education

Organizational Development: Sustaining Impact

In 2025, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) strengthened country programs through leadership development, governance support, financial sustainability efforts, and strategic partnerships.

These foundations enabled good leadership, effective governance, and trusted partnerships, allowing us to better support the movement and, most importantly, the people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) that we serve.

2025 Organizational Development Highlights

- Expanded athlete reach to **637,015 athletes**
- **113 leaders from 23 countries** convened at the Regional Leadership Conference.
- **31 leaders from 12 country programs** graduated from the Unified Leadership Academy.
- Targeted growth investments advanced athlete outreach in India, Indonesia, and Bangladesh.



Global & Regional Leadership Alignment

In June 2025, SOAP hosted the first in-person Global Leadership & Organization Development Annual Meeting in Singapore. Representatives from 6 regions and headquarters convened for 4 days of strategic discussions and best practices both at the regional and the global level.

The meeting also brought together Asia Pacific's 3 largest Special Olympics programs, Bharat (India), Bangladesh, and Indonesia, whose leaders presented their athlete outreach models, recruitment strategies, and post-pandemic recovery plans.

The exchange strengthened alignment between global strategies and on-the-ground realities, creating clearer pathways for sustainable growth across the movement.



SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT: PROGRAM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

Sustainable Athlete Growth Through Systems

In 2025, the Program Emergency Relief Fund (PERF), through Special Olympics International, supported 3 key programs in the Asia Pacific, Bharat (India), Indonesia, and Bangladesh, to accelerate athlete growth while safeguarding long-term sustainability. Each program adopted a context-specific approach, combining structured planning, local ownership, and targeted outreach strategies.

PERF in India

In India, more than 50,000 athletes were mapped through coordinated outreach across schools and institutions. This was supported by the launch of a digital registration platform with unique athlete IDs, enabling systematic tracking across Sport, Health, and Education. A total of 1,200 special schools, NGOs, and inclusive institutions were formally registered, laying the foundation for a scalable, data-driven ecosystem.

This growth was driven by a coordinated set of national and state-level activations. In Sport, outreach included 12 National Sports Championships and nationwide events such as International Yoga Day. Health initiatives integrated athlete registration with 30 health screenings across multiple states, while youth and education efforts included Physical Education Teachers' Trainings across 7 states and 10 State Youth Summits. Together, these efforts strengthened institutional buy-in and created structured pathways for sustained athlete engagement.



SPECIAL HIGHLIGHT: PROGRAM EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND

Sustainable Athlete Growth Through Systems

PERF in Indonesia

In Indonesia, a club-based growth model was expanded across 22 provinces, targeting the establishment of 150 clubs nationwide. Through this approach, 503 new coaches were recruited, 735 volunteers engaged, and 4,580 new athletes were added through 19 competitions. The club structure created consistent access points for training and participation beyond school systems, while also contributing to improvements in athletes' motor skills, teamwork, discipline, and self-confidence.

Partnerships with local organizations further strengthened community inclusion and increased awareness among families and communities.

PERF in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, community mobilizers expanded outreach to underserved and hard-to-access populations, ensuring that athlete growth extended beyond urban centers and reached communities that are often excluded from formal systems.

Together, these approaches demonstrate how targeted investment in data systems, local ownership, and structured planning can translate into meaningful and sustainable athlete growth across diverse national contexts.



Leadership & Peer Learning

Unified Leadership Academy

The third consecutive Unified Leadership Academy, held in May, brought together athlete leaders, mentors, program staff, and regional representatives to strengthen inclusive leadership across Asia Pacific.

A total of 31 participants, both with and without IDD, from 12 country programs graduated from the academy. The program combined a series of virtual webinars with a three-day in-person training, ensuring both continuity of learning and deeper engagement.

The curriculum focused on practical leadership capabilities, including strategy development, good governance, financial sustainability, and operational planning. Participants worked on group projects designed to apply these concepts to real program challenges, strengthening their ability to lead within their organizations and communities.

Bank of America employees contributed to the program by serving as project mentors, providing guidance and real-world insights to participants. Subject matter experts from partner organizations also led sessions, bringing cross-sector perspectives into the learning experience.



Leadership & Peer Learning

Regional Leadership Conference

In October, 113 senior leaders from 23 countries gathered in Bangkok, Thailand, for the Regional Leadership Conference under the theme "Reclaiming Our Reach: Sharing Practices." Leaders offered proven ways to help athletes grow, boards grow, and operations get stronger, drawing on a combined 460 years of Special Olympics expertise. Rather than importing solutions, the highly interactive conference focused on learning directly from what country programs are already doing, adapting proven approaches, and avoiding the need to reinvent the wheel.

To support reflection rather than superficial action planning, participants were provided with logs to capture learnings and reflections, helping to sustain motivation and learning beyond the conference itself.

Voices and experiences of athletes were intentionally woven throughout the conference, reinforcing inclusion and ensuring discussions remained grounded in the lived realities of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). This focus helped ensure that leadership decisions, systems, and practices remain centered on athletes, which is fundamental to the long-term strength and credibility of the movement.



Partnerships & Systems Influence

Special Olympics Global Coalition for Inclusion

In April, the Philippines became the first country in the Asia Pacific to join the Special Olympics Global Coalition for Inclusion, marking a significant milestone in advancing inclusive education through sport.

The initiative is spearheaded by the Department of Education Philippines (DepEd) in partnership with Special Olympics Pilipinas, with a national commitment to engage at least 50,000 students across 500 schools through unified sports, where students with and without IDD learn and play together. In parallel, at least 2,000 educators will undergo structured training to implement inclusive practices effectively within school systems.

This partnership reflects strong government leadership and positions inclusive education not as a standalone program, but as a system-level priority embedded within national education structures.

In November, the commitment was reinforced through a strategic planning session convened by DepEd and Special Olympics Pilipinas, with participation from SOAP. The session focused on translating the Memorandum of Understanding into actionable plans, including the rollout of teacher training programs, expansion of unified sports in schools, development of inclusive youth leadership pathways, and the establishment of an evaluation framework to track progress and outcomes.



Partnerships & Systems Influence

INSPIRE Health Forum

By combining policy commitment, educator capacity building, and structured implementation planning, this partnership strengthens the foundation for long-term, systemic inclusion within the education system.

At the INSPIRE Health Forum hosted by the Asian Development Bank, Special Olympics received the Best Innovator Award for positioning inclusive sport as a cost-effective public health intervention. This is significant particularly in reducing the incidence and impact of non-communicable diseases among people with intellectual disabilities, a population often underserved in traditional health systems.

Chief of Health Operations, Annemarie Hill, represented Special Olympics at the forum, leading a panel discussion on inclusive health systems and their role in addressing health disparities. This elevated the organization's credibility within global health and development spaces and strengthened its positioning as a contributor to public health solutions.

The forum also featured a unified bocce experience. By bringing together participants of all abilities, the activity demonstrated in a tangible way how sport can support health intervention and serve as a catalyst for social inclusion.



Crisis Response & Safeguarding in Action

Following the earthquake in Myanmar in March, SOAP worked closely with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to connect with the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) in order to support families of athletes with intellectual disabilities in humanitarian relief distribution that included solar lamps, dry food, and mosquito nets.

The assistance brought light, sustenance, protection, and much-needed relief and hope, particularly for families who had to stay weeks on the road to avoid possible casualties caused by multiple further earthquakes.

The experience reinforced the importance of accurate data, coordinated communication, and safeguarding.



Financial Stability & Capacity Building

In February, SOAP conducted a two-day planning and fundraising workshop for country programs across Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos, hosted by Special Olympics Vietnam. The Christmas Records Trust (CRT) funded this initiative.

[\(Click here for more details in the Development section\)](#)

CHAMPIONS
OF INCLUSION



DEVELOPMENT

Development: Champions of Inclusion

In 2025, development efforts focused on deepening corporate partnerships, expanding regional engagement platforms, and strengthening fundraising capabilities across Asia Pacific. In a challenging global fundraising climate, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) sustained and grew strategic relationships by creating meaningful touchpoints through sport, leadership gatherings, and recognition platforms.

Beyond revenue, this work has strengthened long-term sustainability, increased corporate support and advocacy for inclusion, and built confidence within country programs to mobilize their own local partnerships. Ultimately, this effort guarantees the support of stronger, more resilient systems for athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) throughout the region.

2025 Development Highlights

- **Inaugural Champions of Inclusion Awards** launched on International Day of Persons with Disabilities (3rd December).
- Delivering **high-impact partner engagement platforms** at 2 regional sports competitions.
- **3 country programs** strengthened through targeted fundraising capacity building.
- **4 regional** leadership and governance convenings hosted in Singapore.
- **20+ corporate and foundation partners** actively engaged across events and platforms.
- **Multi-year partnerships** deepened with key global brands including Bank of America and UPS.

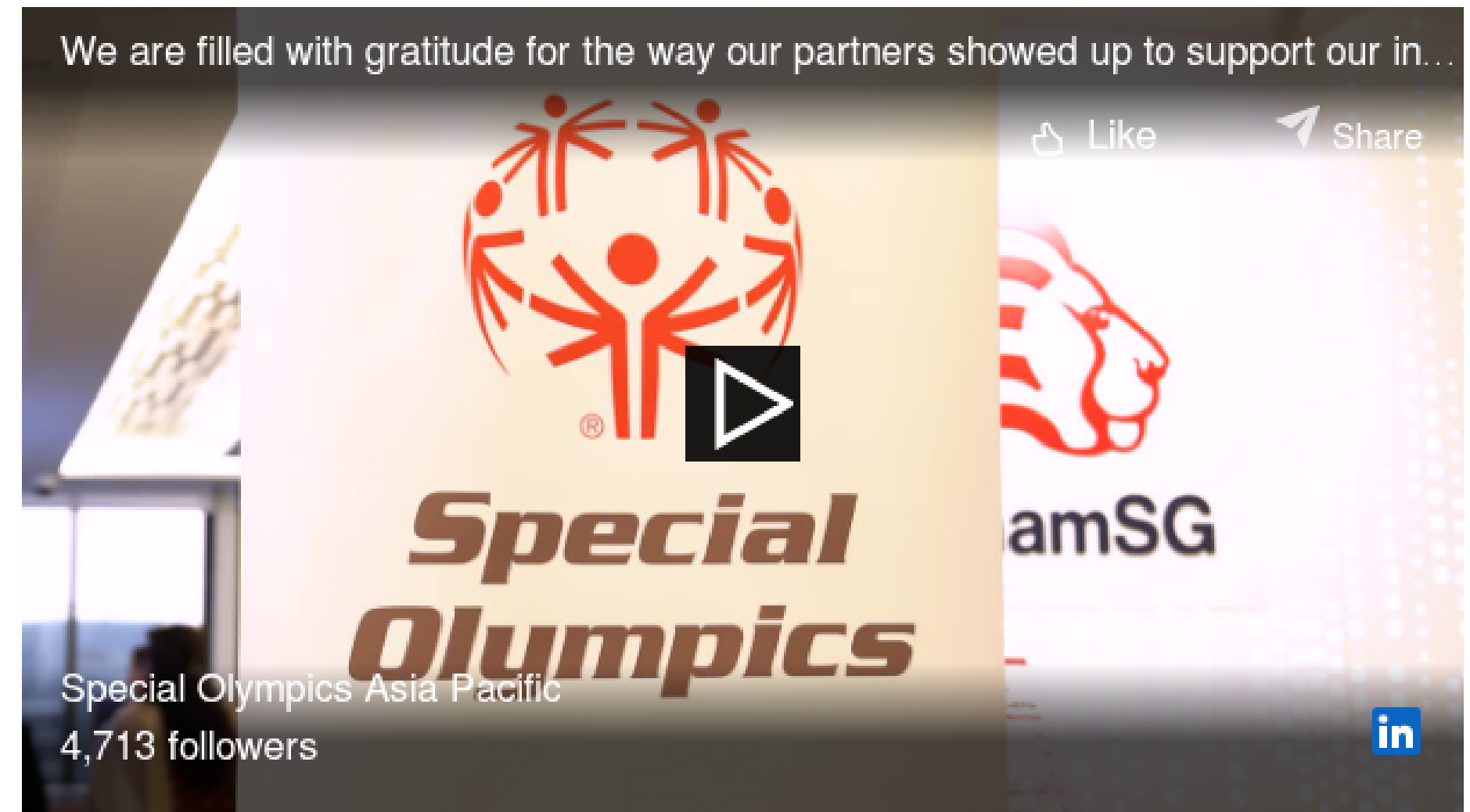
Building a Corporate Community for Change

In 2025, SOAP launched the inaugural Champions of Inclusion Awards on 3 December, aligning with International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The event brought together corporate leaders, ambassadors, advocates, and long-standing partners who are actively advancing inclusion across Asia Pacific.

The awards recognized excellence across multiple dimensions of partnership:

- Asia Pacific Flame - Macquarie Group
- Game Changer - UPS
- Heart of a Hero - Sarah McGrath, Ambassador of Ireland to Singapore
- Inspiration Through Action - Nicholas Leong
- Unified Vision - Bank of America
- Together We Shine - Lions Clubs International Foundation
- Trailblazer Awards - Lululemon and Avery Dennison
- Individual and Recognition Awards also honored significant contributions from Coca-Cola, Dr. Hsien-Hsien Lei (AmCham Singapore), Mavic, Decathlon, KPMG, Ipsos, Hilton, PayPal, Mastercard, and Medtronic

More than a celebration, this initiative positioned SOAP as a regional convenor of values-driven business leadership. It also strengthened cross-sector relationships and elevated athlete inclusion within corporate spaces. This helps us build long-term advocacy, not just sponsorship.



“Our relationship with Special Olympics came about through our employees who wanted to understand how they could strengthen their support on a regional level.”

Jasmine Chew, Regional Head (Asia)
Macquarie Group Foundation

Unified Leadership & Strategic Convenings

Unified Leadership is grounded in the Special Olympics Unified philosophy, where people with and without IDD participate, work, and learn together as equal partners. This approach breaks down barriers, challenges stereotypes, and builds mutual understanding.

In practice, it shifts leadership from being an individual to a shared responsibility. Across 2025 convenings, athletes, partners, and program leaders worked side by side across trainings, strategy, and decision-making spaces, strengthening leadership capabilities and ensuring programs are shaped by diverse perspectives and lived experience.

By embedding this approach into how we convene and build capacity, inclusion becomes an everyday leadership practice, strengthening both individuals and the systems they lead.



Unified Leadership & Strategic Convenings

Key events include:

- Unified Leadership Academy
- Global Organizational Development Team Meeting
- Coach Training Workshop
- Regional Athlete and Youth Leader Councils Onboarding

Huge thanks to our partners, Bank of America, Medtronic, Embassy of Ireland, PayPal, and Mastercard, for generously providing venues for our events.

Our events were further supported by the Unified Leadership Taskforce, including Rain Khoo, Heather Matla, and Shoon Lim, whose expertise shaped content for business leaders and teams across the region.

By embedding inclusion into leadership development spaces, we strengthened institutional credibility and positioned athletes as contributors, not beneficiaries.

Collectively, this support reinforces inclusion as a leadership practice across Asia Pacific.



Regional Fundraising & Capacity Building

Strengthening Financial Sustainability

In March 2025, SOAP delivered a two-day, action-oriented fundraising workshop in Ho Chi Minh City for Special Olympics programs from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Participants:

- Clarified fundraising value propositions
- Practiced live pitching and peer feedback
- Mapped partnership calendars through 2027
- Integrated safeguarding considerations into planning

Rather than lecture-based learning, the workshop, which was enabled by the Christmas Records Trust (CRT), focused on real-time application and refinement.

Country programs left with clearer messaging, defined funding priorities, and immediate next steps.

The workshop addressed a critical need to build long-term financial independence and grow capabilities in partnership development ahead of the 2027 World Summer Games.



Regional Competitions as Partnership Platforms

In 2025, our competitions created high-visibility opportunities for corporate engagement events alongside athlete excellence. They helped us strengthen regional visibility and demonstrated how sport can serve as a gateway to sustainable partnerships, which are vital in driving lasting, impactful change.

Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025

Supported by UPS and FWD Takaful, Special Olympics Asia Pacific Badminton Competition 2025 convened delegations and partners for a week of inclusive badminton. Corporate guests attended partner receptions, engaged with athletes, and observed Healthy Athletes, which offers complimentary health screenings and education for people with IDD.

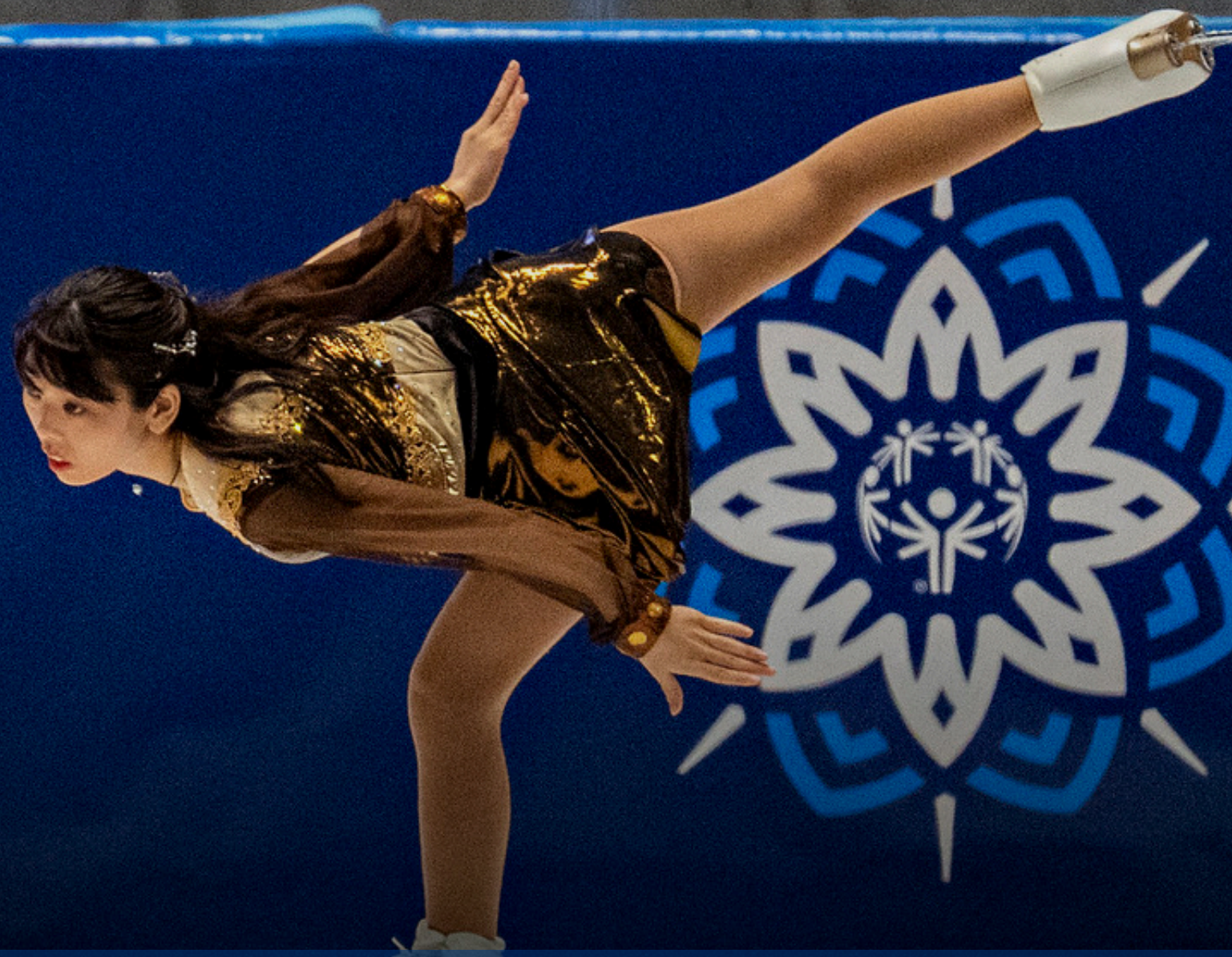
Special Olympics Southeast Asia Football Competition 2025

Partners like Lions Clubs International and Bank of America engaged with athletes through unified matches and Healthy Athletes tours.

Other partners include SD Guthrie Berhad, Decathlon, Baker Hughes, IFFCO, SG Support, NTT DATA Payment Services, HAYS, Avery Dennison, LaLiga, and Amyas Valora Foundation.



STEWARDSHIP
WITH PURPOSE



SPECIAL OF
WORLD WINT
TURIN

FINANCE

Finance: Stewardship with Purpose

Every contribution entrusted to Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) represents a belief that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) deserve opportunity, dignity, and inclusion. This leads to more athletes impacted, stronger programs supported, and more communities embracing inclusion across the Asia Pacific.

We continue to strengthen the systems that safeguard and steward these resources. Through strong financial oversight, transparent reporting, and adherence to fundraising regulations, we ensure that every dollar entrusted to the movement is used responsibly and in service of our mission.

Alongside financial stewardship, the team has worked to strengthen the administration of regional grants and funding distributed to programs. These improvements help support stronger governance standards, clearer reporting, and more effective program delivery across the region.

Together, these foundations enable SOAP to expand our work sustainably.



Financial Overview

SOAP recorded a total income of US\$3.1 million, reflecting an 11% increase from US\$2.8 million in 2024.

This growth was largely driven by strong public fundraising campaigns and continued support from corporate partners and donors who share our commitment to inclusion.

Total expenditure reached US\$2.9 million, an increase of US\$0.4 million compared to 2024. This increase reflects the continued expansion of regional initiatives in athlete development programs, the growth of inclusive sport, health programming, and capacity-building efforts.

Since late 2024, we have begun strengthening grant management through new guidelines, a central dashboard, and more selective review of grants to country programs.



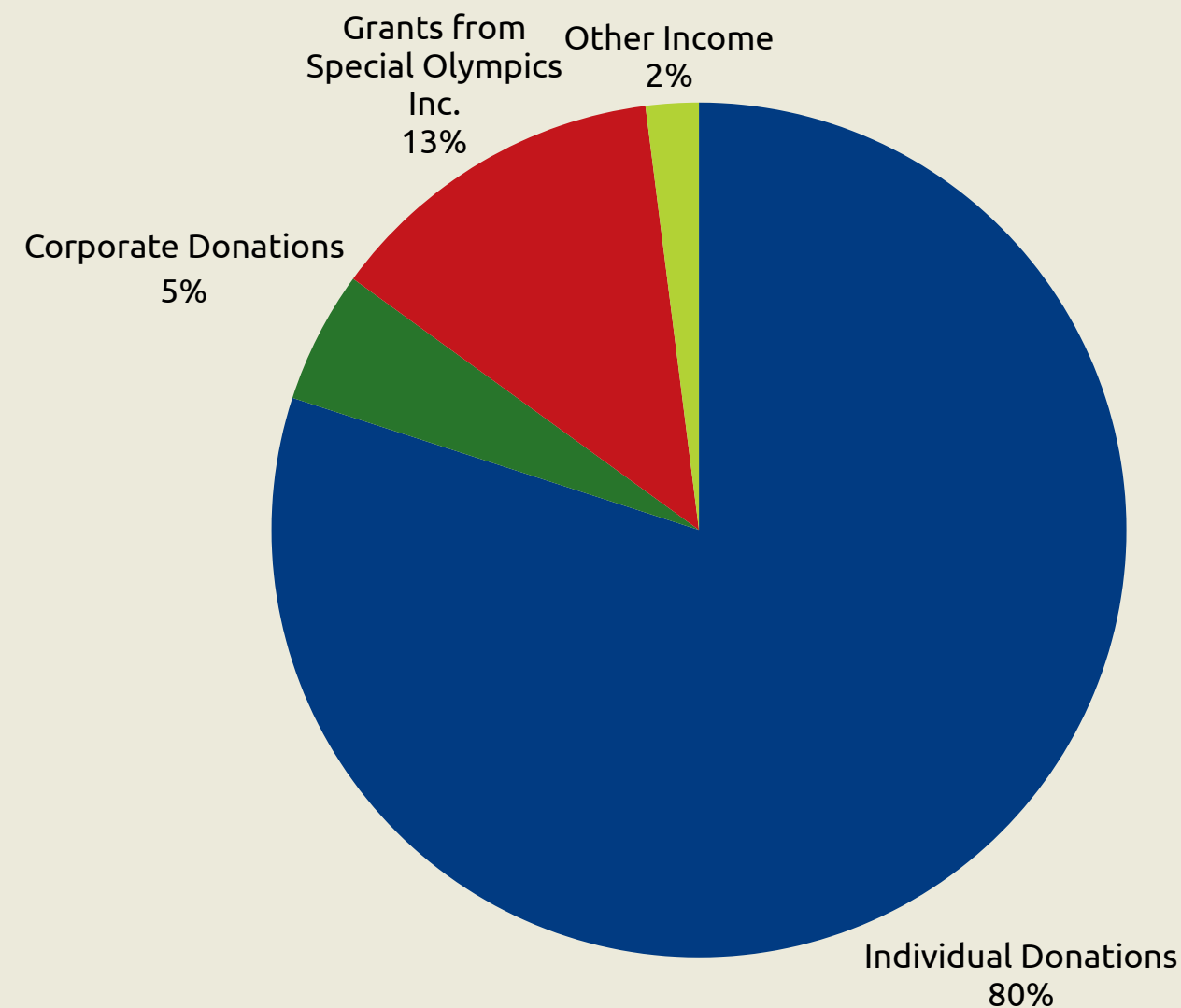
Where Our Resources Come From

Public support remains the cornerstone of SOAP's financial sustainability.

Additional revenue streams, including service income and interest income, contributed approximately US\$75,000.

SOAP also works alongside institutional partners and leverage on global initiatives to support programs and build capacity across the region. Looking ahead, we will work to diversify funding sources to strengthen long-term financial sustainability and resilience.

Sources of Income



US\$3.1M raised in 2025
Supporting programs, leadership development, and athlete opportunities across the region.

Governance, Compliance and Transparency



Strong governance and financial accountability remain central to the work of SOAP.

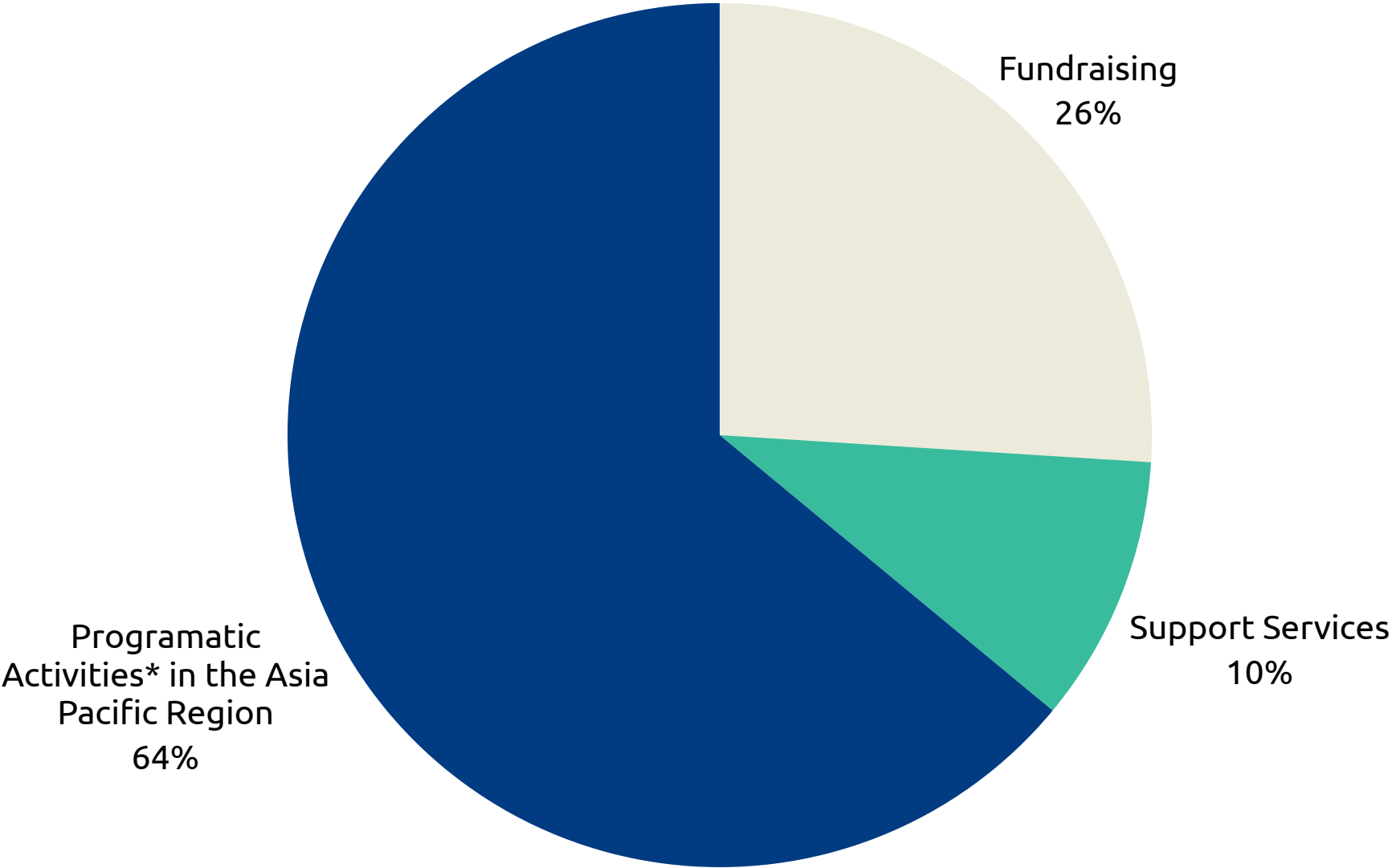
The organization maintains oversight through our Board of Directors and governance committees, which review financial performance, monitor risk, and ensure responsible stewardship of resources.

SOAP also complies with Singapore's regulatory framework for charities and public fundraising. Transparent financial reporting and strong compliance practices help ensure that resources are managed responsibly and that donors, partners, and communities can trust how contributions are used.

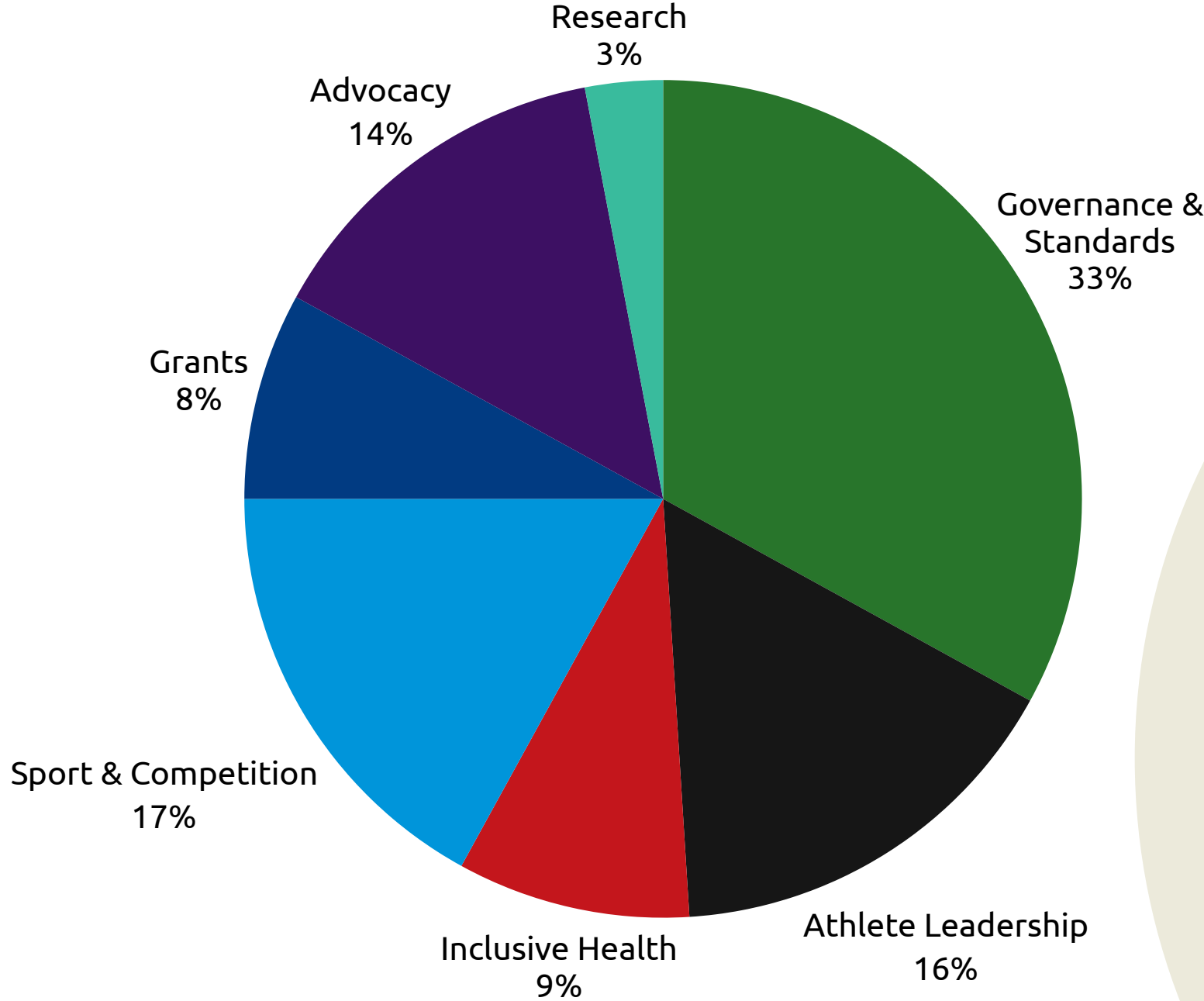
Continued efforts will be made to strengthen internal processes supporting the administration of regional grants and funds distributed to programs. These efforts enhance accountability, fortify governance standards, and guarantee the efficient utilization of resources to assist athletes and their communities.

Expenditure & Programmatic Activities

Areas of Expenditures



Breakdown of Programmatic Activities



*Program activities are planned events and programs that support athletes with intellectual disabilities. They can include sports training, competitions, health checks, learning workshops, and activities that build leadership skills

Governance

Role of the Governing Board

The Board's responsibilities in 2025 remain unchanged and are summarized here:

1. Set the organizational direction:

- Support the mission and purpose of the organization
- Ensure effective planning practices are followed

2. Ensure the necessary resources:

- Support and guide the organization leadership team on policies and guidelines, direction on strategic matters and performance expectations
- Ensure adequate financial resources
- Build and strengthen Board composition
- Enhance the organization's public standing

3. Provide oversight:

- Monitor and strengthen activities and initiatives
- Protect assets and provide financial oversight
- Ensure legal and ethical integrity

Attendance of Board Meetings

A total of three Board meetings and one AGM were held during the financial year. Attendance by Board members is summarized here:

NAME	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	Feb 18, 2025	Jun 11, 2025	Nov 4, 2025
Money S/O Kanagasabapathy (Resigned)	Apr 7, 2016	Apologies	Resigned	Resigned
Miao Yin-Wei Philip	Oct 23, 2020	Yes	Yes	Yes
Raju Venkataraman	Oct 11, 2018	Yes	Yes	Apologies
Goh Su Ping, Amanda (Resigned)	Oct 11, 2018	Yes	Apologies	Yes
Ernest Ziegler Bower IV	Jul 15, 2009	Apologies	Apologies	Apologies
Mary Davis (Resigned)	Nov 13, 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cho Jessica Mina	Feb 21, 2022	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pippa Woodhead	Mar 15, 2023	Yes	Apologies	Yes
Christopher Ian Morris	Aug 10, 2023	Yes	Yes	Yes

To enable succession planning and sustainability of the charity, the Board has a term limit of 10 years. An exception was made for Mr Ernest Ziegler Bower IV, who has served as Director for more than 10 consecutive years due to his expertise and contribution to the strategies and organizational development of Special Olympics Asia Pacific. No Board members were remunerated for their Board services in the financial year.

Our succession plan includes identifying committee members who are currently advisors to us in the various aspects of our work as potential candidates to progress to the Board.

Governance

Sub-Committees

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee assures the integrity of the organization and facilitates the external and internal audit of the organization for the Board to obtain independent information about the organization's activities. The Audit Committee's responsibilities include the following:

- To independently oversee the financial reporting, disclosure process, and monitor the choice of accounting policies and principles
- To review the audit plans and reports of the external and internal auditors, and consider the effectiveness of the actions taken by management on the auditors' recommendations
- To conduct periodic internal checks on key processes to ensure compliance with the established procedures, and report to the Board on the findings and recommendations for improvements
- To analyze and address the risks that are associated with the key processes
- To oversee regulatory compliance and whistleblower guidelines
- To report to the Board any financial irregularities, concerns, and opportunities; and
- To appoint qualified independent auditors and liaise with them on any significant matters arising

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee manages the organization's financial statements, budgeting, and overall financial affairs. The Finance Committee's responsibilities include the following:

- To review budgets prepared by staff, to help develop appropriate procedures for budget preparations consistent with organization's plans
- To ensure regular and accurate monitoring and accountability for funds and report to the Board on any financial irregularities and concerns
- To recommend financial guidelines to the Board (such as to establish a reserve fund or to obtain a line of credit for a specified amount)
- To work with staff to design financial reports and ensure that reports are accurate and timely
- To oversee short and long-term investments (unless there is a separate investment committee); and
- To advise the executive director and other appropriate staff on financial priorities and information systems, depending on committee member expertise

Governance

Fundraising & Development Committee

The Fundraising & Development Committee is responsible for overseeing the organization's overall fundraising approach and fundraising by the Board. The Fundraising & Development Committee's responsibilities include the following:

- To oversee various fundraising activities targeting the general public, including face-to-face fundraising campaigns, ensuring proper planning, outreach and solicitation, ethical practices, regulatory compliance, reporting of progress and appropriate spend of funds raised
- Work with staff to establish a fundraising plan that incorporates a series of appropriate vehicles, such as special events, direct mail, fundraising campaigns etc
- Work with fundraising staff in their efforts to raise money
- Identify and solicit funds from external sources of support
- Take the lead in certain type of outreach efforts, such as chairing a dinner/dance committee or hosting fundraising parties, etc
- Be responsible for involvement of all Board members in fundraising, such as having Board members themselves make some monetary contributions; and
- Monitor fundraising efforts to be sure that ethical practices are in place, that donors are acknowledged appropriately, and that fundraising efforts are cost-effective.

Sports Committee

The Sports Committee supports the operational development of SOAP's sports programming. The Sports Committee's responsibilities are:

- To monitor and assess outcomes of existing Sports program activity in line with the objectives of the organization
- To consider the development of new and innovative Sports initiatives or approaches and ensure they are aligned with SOAP's vision, mission and objectives
- To guide the development and support the enhancement of Sports initiatives with expertise, knowledge and networks; and
- To guide the evaluation process of activities undertaken by SOAP in the areas of Sports.

Program Excellence Committee

The Program Excellence Committee was formed in the second half of 2023. The Program Excellence Committee's responsibilities are:

- To support the development of in-country insight and experience to better inform SOAP and SOI decision-making within the region
- To guide and support the enhancement of Special Olympics activities within Special Olympics as it relates to each local setting
- To support Special Olympics country programs in developing effective governance structures, performance management and capacity; and
- To guide the evaluation process of activities undertaken by SOAP within the countries we operate in.

Governance

Reserves Policy

SOAP has a reserve policy for the long-term stability of its operations, and it ensures there are sufficient resources to support the charity in the event of unforeseen circumstances. SOAP has adopted an operating reserve policy, approved by the Board, to keep at least 15 months' equivalent of operational costs as reserves. For the year ended Dec 2024, SOAP's reserves, with the continued financial support confirmation from Special Olympics International, are adequate to fulfill the charity's continuing obligations.

Conflict of Interest Policy

All Board members and staff are required to comply with the charity's conflict of interest policy. There are procedures for Board members and staff to declare actual or potential conflicts of interests on a regular and need-to-basis. Board members also abstain and do not participate in decision-making on matters where they have a conflict of interest.

Whistleblowing Policy

SOAP has in place, a whistleblowing policy to address concerns about possible wrongdoing or improprieties in financial or other matters within the charity.

Remuneration Disclosure

Consistent with the values of public accountability and stewardship, no Board member received remuneration or director's fees for their service during the financial year. All members contributed their time and expertise on a voluntary basis. There were also no instances of paid staff holding concurrent Board appointments.

The remuneration of executive management and staff is benchmarked against industry best practices and relevant governance guidelines to ensure transparency, fairness, and alignment with the organization's mission.

Disclosure of remuneration

Annual Remuneration Band	Number of staff
Between S\$100,000 and S\$200,000	7
Above S\$200,000	1

* None of the above staff serve on the Board, and none of our staff are related to the Executive Head and any of the Board Members.

Governance

The Audit, Finance, Fundraising, Sport, and Program Excellence Committees each held two meetings during the year

a. Audit Committee

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	Jun 3, 2025	Oct 28, 2025
Raju Venkataraman	Chair	Nov 21, 2018	Yes	Yes
Mary Davis	Member	Nov 21, 2018	Yes	Yes
Miao Yin-Wei Philip	Member	Oct 23, 2020	Yes	Yes
Sylvester Heng	Member	Apr 11, 2023	Yes	Yes
Chaitanya Nangia	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Yes	Yes

b. Finance Committee

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	Jun 3, 2025	Oct 28, 2025
Miao Yin-Wei Philip	Chair	Oct 23, 2020	Yes	Yes
Raju Venkataraman	Member	Nov 21, 2018	Yes	Yes
Sylvester Heng	Member	Nov 21, 2018	Yes	Yes
Chaitanya Nangia	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Yes	Yes

c. Fundraising & Development Committee

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	May 15, 2025	Sep 23, 2025
Goh Su Ping, Amanda	Chair	Oct 11, 2018	Yes	Yes
Jessica Mina Cho	Member	Feb 21, 2022	Yes	Yes
Pippa Woodhead	Member	Mar 15, 2023	Yes	Yes
Jeremy Tan	Advisor	Feb 22, 2023	Apologies	Apologies

d. Sports Committee

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	May 20, 2025	Oct 29, 2025
Adrian Vincent	Chair	Oct 23, 2020	Yes	Yes
Chris Pardey	Member	Feb 23, 2023	Yes	Yes
Shehzad Haque	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Yes	Yes
Mosh Dutt	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Yes	Yes
Joscelin Yeo Wei Ling	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Apologies	Yes

e. Program Excellence Committee

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT	Mar 19, 2025	Jun 23, 2025
Christopher Ian Morris	Chair	Aug 10, 2023	Yes	Yes
Ben Haack	Member	Nov 7, 2023	Yes	Yes
Avenish Prasad	Member	Nov 7, 2023	Yes	Yes
Mallika Pradhan	Member	Sep 29, 2024	Apologies	Apologies

Looking Forward

In 2026, Special Olympics Asia Pacific (SOAP) will build on the strong foundations established in 2025 by deepening impact, expanding reach, and strengthening long-term sustainability across the region. Guided by our commitment to inclusion, SOAP will continue strengthening systems and partnerships that create more opportunities for people with IDD to thrive both on and off the field.

The **Organizational Development** team will balance core assurance work with a focus on advancing program growth and regional influence. Key priorities include census and data analysis, accreditation, grant oversight and reporting, relationship management, board engagement, targeted training, and strengthening systems, including monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL). The team will also support new program development, priority programs, wider rollout of the Global Coalition for Inclusion, and preparation for the inaugural Asia Pacific Inclusive Futures Summit in Singapore. Together, these efforts strengthen governance, accountability, partnerships, and opportunities for people with IDD across sport, health, and education.

The **Sport & Competition** department will strengthen athlete participation, coaching standards, and quality programming across the region, with an emphasis on capability-building and sustainability at the systems level. The Sports Directors Meeting will serve as a key regional platform to align leadership, strengthen strategic planning, and reinforce accountability for sport development outcomes.

Further efforts include improving technical capability and inclusive participation pathways, including expanding Unified Sport in schools, advancing coach development and MEL systems, and delivering a Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) Train-the-Trainer workshop to engage athletes with high support needs. These activities help us build a stronger and more inclusive sports system across all ability levels.

Competition-related activities will support athlete pathways, event readiness, and regional visibility. Priorities include hosting a regional 3x3 competition, managing the World Summer Games 2027 quota allocation process, and preparing for the 2026 Unified Football Cup. This combined approach will help us raise the profile of sports development by strengthening competitive opportunities and readiness for major events across the region.

The **Inclusive Health** team will progress athlete health and well-being through fitness programming, family engagement, and health screening activities across the region. These efforts aim to improve access to health services, promote healthy lifestyles, and strengthen support systems for athletes and families.

The **Initiatives** team will continue to advance athlete leadership, youth engagement, and inclusive education across the region. Priorities include sustaining athlete leadership in mature programs, expanding Unified Champion Schools, supporting government partnerships, deepening engagement through regional councils, and creating leadership opportunities for athletes and youth. The upcoming Regional Athlete Leadership Congress, led by athlete leaders will strengthen visibility, leadership, and drive systems change. Together, these efforts aim to strengthen program quality, broaden inclusion pathways, and elevate athlete and youth voices across Asia Pacific. The team will also focus on impact evaluation, educator training, and expanding athlete leadership into additional country programs.

Other support teams will continue to strengthen core enabling functions that underpin operational effectiveness, enhance thought leadership and advocacy, financial stewardship, and income generation across the region. Key priorities include improving donor journey management and advancing corporate fundraising, strengthening grant management, developing a regional risk framework and dashboard, supporting office relocation planning, and improving event standardization.

Collectively, these efforts aim to fortify organizational resilience, drive excellence and further growth of our movement across the Asia Pacific region.

Our Partners

In 2025, key partners played a vital role in advancing our mission. Their support enabled us to scale inclusive sports, leadership, health, and education initiatives across Asia Pacific, empowering athletes, families, and youth to thrive in more connected and inclusive communities.





Be a Champion of Inclusion

We are grateful for the unwavering support of our volunteers, partners, and donors. Every milestone we celebrate is made possible by your generosity. Your contributions enable us to expand programs, provide essential resources, and create opportunities for individuals of all abilities.

Join us in making a lasting impact.
Donate today.

If you'd like to support our work
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SPECIAL OLYMPICS ASIA PACIFIC LTD

Special Olympics Asia Pacific, Ltd (SOAP) is incorporated in Singapore as a company limited by guarantee. It is registered as a Charity under the Charities Act 1994.

Governing Instruments of Special Olympics Asia Pacific, Ltd: The Memorandum of Association (duly amended) and Articles of Association are the Governing Instruments of SOAP, Ltd. Both instruments have been lodged with the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority of Singapore (ACRA) and Sport Singapore.

Related Entity: Special Olympics, Inc (SOI) duly incorporated in Washington, DC in the United States, and a 501 (c)(3) corporation under the United States Internal Revenue Service Code, is the sole member of Special Olympics Asia Pacific.

Special Olympics Asia Pacific Unique Registration Number (UEN): 200906631E


Bankers: Bank of America NA, Overseas China Banking Corporation

Auditor: RSM SG Assurance LLP

Corporate Secretary: Liow Guo Yao of RHT Corporate Advisory Pte Ltd



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